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"THAT COMES FROM THE DASH OF THE TARTAR BLOOD, NOTHING MORE; AND MY MOTHER WA
A FIN. SHE'LL NEVER ASK WHETHER FROM THE BLACK WATER OR THE BALTIC." (P. 170.)

fiction. Irish.

THE WORKS

OF

CHARLES LEVER.

VOL. I.

HARRY LORREQUER. TOM BURKE OF "OURS."

CHARLES O'MALLEY.

WITH FORTY ILLUSTRATIONS.

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CONTENTS.

HARRY LORREQUER.

PAGES

APTERS I. TO LVI. 1–228

TOM BURKE OF "OURS."

APTERS I. TO LXXXV. 229–628

CHARLES O'MALLEY.

APTERS I. TO CXXII. 629–1038

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

HARRY LORREQUER.

TO FACE PAGE

I was sent for, at a quarter to seven, to lace Desdemona's stays. 8

"To your quarters, sir," roared the little man with the voice of a lion. And, with a haughty wave of his hand, prevented all further attempt on my part to seek explanation. 9

There stood the accursed Nicholas glowering at her still. 21

"And is it there ye're lying on the broad of yer back, and me as sick as a dog forment ye?" 47

"Colonel Kamworth," said I, drawing myself proudly up, "for the expressions you have just applied to me, a heavy reckoning awaits you." 57

We jogged along through the rain, enjoying the joke just as if we were sitting by a good fire, with a jorum of punch between us. 80

"Does that hurt you, sir?" said I, in a soothing and affectionate tone of voice. 91

I marched on through the grinning crowd with the step of a martyr. 126

I saw my friend O'Leary about twelve feet from the ground, hanging on by some ash twigs that grew from the clefts of the granite. 163

"That comes from the dash of the Tartar blood, nothing more; and my mother was a Fin, she'll never ask whether from the Black Water or the Baltic. 170

"Whisht!" said Billy, "and keep the secret. I'm earning the rent for your honor. One must do many a queer thing that pays two pound ten an acre for bad land." 174

"Fairly caught, Guy," said Lord Callonby; "a bold stroke, if it only succeed." 227

TOM BURKE OF "OURS."

"Come along quick," said Darby, with a look of terror, "she's going to curse you" 247

One glance more I caught of his figure as we stood out to sea; he was kneeling on the beach, bareheaded, as if in prayer. 318

I looked up, and there were two ladies standing beside me. 320

I had now time to look at him by the light, and almost started back at the spectacle that presented itself. 353

TO FACE PAGE

I sprang up wildly to my feet—a sudden impulse of self-defense seized me—and with a wild shout for them to come on, I rushed forward..... 384

At this instant a heavy hand fell upon my shoulder, and, passing down my arm, seized me by the wrist..... 402

"I believe, sir," said I, "I comprehend your meaning; I hope there will be no fear of your mistaking mine." With that I drew off the long gauntlet glove I wore, and struck him across the face..... 420

I bent forward and received his blade in the muscles of my back—when, with a wheel round, I smashed the sword in me, and buried my own, up to the hilt, in his body. 428

The chair still continued to slide silently into the room, and already the arm of the man protruded within..... 461

"Minette! Minette!" I exclaimed; but with a wild shriek she let fall the burning wood, and fell senseless to the ground..... 557

Then, again, the idea flashed upon me, that death inevitable awaited me, and I fancied in the singing billows I could hear the wild shouts of demons rejoicing over my doom 578

"I find," said she, smiling, "I must give you another keepsake—this will not leave me." "Give it me, then, where it is," said I... 628

CHARLES O'MALLEY.

The gallant animal rose, as if rearing, pawed for an instant to regain his balance, and then, with a frightful struggle, fell backward, and rolled from top to bottom of the hill, carrying me along with him..... 644

TO FACE PAGE

"He wishes me just to sound your intentions—to make out how you feel disposed toward him."..... 648

"Stop, sir," shouted Sir George..... 682

The fair Judy, at this, threw her arms about his neck, and saluted him with a hearty smack, that was heard all over the room... 696

"I publish the banns of marriage between Charles O'Malley, late of his majesty's 14th dragoons, and —— Dalrymple, spinster, of this city."..... 716

With one spring he rose, and cleared it at a bound..... 763

"Oh! then, if they were in swarms forment me, devil receave the prisoner I'll take again."..... 790

"It was my first battle; my epaulettes were very smart things yesterday, though they do look a little passées to-day."..... 797

"Master Charles O'Malley, in foreign parts!" 823

"*Qui va là?*" shouted I again, and no answer was returned, when suddenly the huge object wheeled rapidly around, and without waiting for any further parley, made for the thicket..... 832

"'A boneen, sir,' says I. 'Isn't he a fine crayture?—av he wasn't so troublesome.'"... 891

"That was an Irish shout! The Eighty-eighth are at them!"..... 909

"Tear an ages! ain't I composin' it? av I was Tommy Moore I couldn't be quicker."... 923

"Gallant fellow!" "He has him! he has him, by ——!"..... 935

"The Fifth division was orthered up, bekase they were fighting chaps."..... 962

"Tear an ages! don't howld me—that's himself—devil a one else."..... 1027

HARRY LORREQUER.

PREFACE.

THAT some thirty years after the sketches which form this volume were written I should be called on to revise and re-edit them is strange enough to me; well remembering, as I do, with what little hope of permanence they were penned, how lightly they were undertaken, and how carelessly thrown together. But there is something still stranger in the retrospect, and that is, that these same papers—for originally they were contributed as articles to the *Dublin University Magazine*—should mainly have directed the course of my future life, and decided my entire career.

I may quote from a former preface that I was living in a very secluded spot when I formed the idea of jotting down these stories, many of them heard in boyhood, others constructed out of real incidents that had occurred to my friends in travel, and some again—as the adventures of Trevanion and the French duelist, for instance—actual facts well known to many who had formed part of the army of occupation in France.

To give what consistency I might to a mass of incongruous adventure, to such a variety of strange situations befalling one individual, I was obliged to imagine a character, which probably my experiences—and they were not very mature at the time—assured me as being perfectly possible; one of a strong will and a certain energy, rarely persistent in purpose and perpetually the sport of accident, with a hearty enjoyment of the pleasure of the hour, and a very reckless indifference as to the price to be paid for it. If I looked out on my acquaintances, I believed I saw many of the traits I was bent on depicting, and for others I am half afraid I had only to take a peep into myself. If it is an error, then, to believe that in these Confessions I have ever recorded any incidents of my own life, there is no mistake in supposing that—without being in the least aware of it—in sketching Harry Lorrequer, I was in a great measure depicting myself, and becoming, allegorically, an autobiographist.

Here is a confession which, if thirty odd years had not rolled over, I might be indisposed to make, but time has enabled me to look back on my work, and even on myself as I wrote it, with a certain degree of impartiality; and to feel, as regards both, as the great Paley said a man feels after he has finished his dinner: "That he might have done better."

It is perfectly unnecessary that I should say when and where I wrote these sketches; no thought of future authorship of any kind occurred to me, far less did I dream of abandoning my profession as a physician for the precarious livelihood of the pen. Indeed, their success, such as it was, only became known to me after I had left Ireland and gone to live abroad, and it was there—at Brussels—my publishers wrote to me to request a continuance of my Confessions, with the assurance they had found favor with the world, and flattering notice from the Press. Though I have been what the sarcastic French moralist called "blessed with a bad memory" all my life, I can still recall the delight—I cannot call it less—with which I heard my attempt at authorship was successful. I did not awake, indeed, "to find myself famous," but I well remember the thrill of triumphant joy with which I read the letter that said "Go on," and the entrancing ecstasy I felt at the bare possibility of my one day becoming known as a writer. I have had, since then, some moments in which a partial success has made me very happy and

very grateful, but I do not believe that all these put together, or indeed any possible favor the world might mete to me, would impart a tithe of the enjoyment I felt on hearing that Harry Lorrequer had been liked by the public, and that they had asked for more of him.

If this sort of thing amuses them, thought I, I can go on forever; and believing this to be true, I launched forth with all that prodigal waste of material which, if it forms one of the reasons of the success, is, strictly speaking, one among the many demerits of this story. That I neither husbanded my resources, nor imagined that they ever could fail me, were not my only mistakes; and I am tempted to show how little I understood of the responsibilities of authorship by repeating what I have told elsewhere, an incident of the last number of Harry Lorrequer. The MSS. which contained the conclusion of the story had been sent through the Foreign Office bag from Brussels, and possibly had been mistaken for a dispatch. At all events, like King Theodore's letter, it had been thrown to one side and forgotten. In this strait my publishers wrote to me in a strain that the trade alone knows how to employ toward an unknown author.

Stung by the reproaches, and they were not mild, of my correspondent, I wrote back, inclosing another conclusion, and telling him to print either or both—as he pleased. Years after, I saw the first sent MSS., which came to hand at last, bound in my publishers' library, and lettered "Another ending to H. L."

When the great master of fiction condescended to inform the world on what small fragments of tradition or local anecdote the Waverley Novels were founded, he best exalted the marvelous skill of his own handiwork in showing how genius could develop the veriest incident of a life into a story of surpassing power and interest. I have no such secrets to reveal, nor have I the faintest pretension to suppose the public would care to hear about the sources from which I drew either my characters or my incidents. I have seen, however, such references to supposed portraiture of individuals in this story, that I am forced to declare that there is but one character in the book of which the original had any existence, and to which I contributed nothing of exaggeration. This is Father Malachi Brennan. The pleasant priest was alive when I wrote the tale, and saw himself in print, and—worse still—in picture, not, I believe, without a certain mock indignation, for he was too racy a humorist, and too genuine a lover of fun, to be really angry at this caricature of him.

The amusing author of "The Wild Sports of the West"—Hamilton Maxwell—was my neighbor in the little watering-place where I was living, and our intimacy was not the less close from the graver character of the society around us. We often exchanged our experiences of Irish character and life, and in our gossipings stories were told, added to, and amplified in such a way between us that I believe neither of us could have pronounced at last who gave the initiative of an incident, or on which side lay the authorship of any particular event.

It would have been well had our intercourse stopped with these confidences, but unfortunately it did not. We often indulged in little practical jokes on our more well-conducted neighbors, and I remember that the old soldier from whom I drew some of the features I have given to Colonel Kamworth, was especially the mark of these harmless pleasantries. Our Colonel was an excellent fellow, kind-hearted and hospitable, but so infatuated with a propensity to meddle with every one, and to be a partner to the joys, the afflictions, the failures, or the successes of all around him, that with the best possible intentions and the most sincere desire to be useful to his neighbors, he became the cause of daily misconceptions and mistakes, sowed discord where he meant unity, and, in fact, originated more trouble and more distrust than the most malevolent mischief-maker of the whole country side.

I am forced to own that the small persecutions with which my friend Maxwell and myself followed the worthy Colonel, the wrong intelligence with which we supplied him, particularly as regarded the rank and station of the various visitors who came down during the bathing season; the false scents on which we sent him, and the absurd enterprises on which we embarked him, even to the extent of a mock address which induced him to stand for the "borough"—the address to the constituency being our joint production—all these follies, I say, more or less disposed me, I feel sure, to that incessant flow of absurd incident which runs through this volume, and which, after all, has really little other than the reflex of our daily plottings and contrivings.

I believe my old friend the Colonel is still living; if he be, and if he should read these lines, let him also read that I have other memories of him than those of mere jest and pleasantry—memories of his cor-

dial hospitality and genial good nature—and that there are few things I would like better than to meet and talk with him over bygones, knowing no one more likely to relish a pleasant reminiscence than himself, nor more certain to forgive a long-past liberty taken with him.

If there are many faults and blunders in this tale which I would willingly correct, if there be much that I would curtail or cut out altogether, and if there be also occasionally incidents of which I could improve the telling, I am held back from any attempts of this kind by the thought that it was by these sketches, such as they are, I first won that hearing from the public which for more than thirty years has never deserted me, and that the favor which has given the chief pride and interest to my life dates from the day I was known as Harry Lorrequer. Having given up the profession for which, I believe, I had some aptitude, to follow the precarious life of a writer, I suppose I am only admitting what many others under like circumstances might declare, that I have had my moments, and more than mere moments, of doubt and misgiving that I made the wiser choice, and bating the intense pleasure an occasional success has afforded, I have been led to think that the career I had abandoned would have been more rewarding, more safe from reverses, and less exposed to those variations of public taste which are the terrors of all who live on the world's favor.

Strangely enough, it is my old doctorial instinct which should suggest the consolation to this passing regret. The life of the physician has nothing so thoroughly rewarding, nothing so cheering, so full of hearty encouragement, as in the occasional friendships to which it opens the way. The doctor attains to a degree of intimacy and stands on a footing of confidence so totally exceptional, that if personal qualities lend aid to the position, his intercourse becomes friendship. Whether, therefore, my old career gave me any assistance in new roads, whether it imparted to me any habits of investigation as applicable to the full in morals as to matter, it certainly imparted to me the happy accident of standing on good terms with—I was going to say—my patient, and perhaps no better word could be found for him who has heard me so long, trusted me so much, given me so large a share of his favor, and come to look on me with such friendliness. It would be the worst of ingratitude in me if I did not own that I owe to my books not only the pleasant intimacies of my life, but some of my closest friendships. A chance expression, a fairly shadowed thought, a mere chord struck at random by a passing hand, as it were, has now and then placed me, as mesmerists call it, "*en rapport*" with some one who may have thought long and deeply on what I had but skimmed over; and straightway there was a bond between us.

No small satisfaction has it been to me occasionally to hear that out of the over abundance of my own buoyancy and light-heartedness—and I had a great deal of both long ago—I have been able to share with my neighbor and given him part of my sunshine, and only felt the warmer myself. A great writer—one of the most eloquent historians who ever illustrated the military achievements of his country—once told me that, as he lay sick and care-worn after a fever, it was in my reckless stories of soldier life he found the cheeriest moments of his solitude; and now let me hasten to say that I tell this in no spirit of boastfulness, but with the heartfelt gratitude of one who gained more by hearing that confession than Harry Lorrequer ever acquired by all his own.

One word now as regards the task I am immediately engaged in, and I have done.

My publishers propose to bring out in this edition a carefully revised version of all my books in the order in which they were written; each story to be accompanied by some brief notice explaining the circumstances under which it was written, and to what extent fact or fiction had their share in the construction.

If such notices may occasionally be but leaves of an autobiography, I must ask my reader to pardon me, and to believe that I shall not impose my egotism upon him when it be possible to avoid it, while at the same time he shall know all that I myself know of the history of these volumes.

If to go over again the pages I wrote so many years ago is in a measure to revisit in age the loved scenes of boyhood, and to ponder over passages the very spirit of whose dictation is dead and gone—if all this has its sadness, I am cheered by remembering that I am still addressing many old and dear friends, and have also for my audience the sons and grandsons, and, what I like better, the daughters and granddaughters, of those who once listened to Harry Lorrequer.

CHARLES LEVER.

TRIESTE, 1872.

CHAPTER I.

ARRIVAL IN CORK—CIVIC FESTIVITIES—PRIVATE THEATRICALS.

It was on a splendid morning in the autumn of the year 181— that the *Howard* transport, with 400 of his Majesty's 4–th Regiment, dropped anchor in the picturesque harbor of Cove; the sea shone under the purple light of the rising sun with a rich rosy hue, beautifully in contrast with the different tints of the foliage of the deep woods already tinged with the brown of autumn. Spike Island lay "sleeping upon its broad shadow," and the large ensign which crowns the battery was wrapped around the flagstaff, there not being even air enough to stir it. It was still so early that but few persons were abroad; and as we leaned over the bulwarks, and looked now, for the first time for eight long years, upon British ground, many an eye filled, and many a heaving breast told how full of recollections that short moment was, and how different our feelings from the gay buoyancy with which we had sailed from that same harbor for the Peninsula; many of our best and bravest had we left behind us, and more than one native to the land we were approaching had found his last rest in the soil of the stranger. It was, then, with a mingled sense of pain and pleasure we gazed upon that peaceful little village, whose white cottages lay dotted along the edge of the harbor. The moody silence our thoughts had shed over us was soon broken: the preparations for disembarking had begun, and I recollect well to this hour how, shaking off the load that oppressed my heart, I descended the gangway, humming poor Wolfe's well-known song:—

"Why, soldiers, why
Should we be melancholy, boys?"

And to this elasticity of spirits—whether the result of my profession or the gift of God—as Dogberry has it—I know not—I owe the greater portion of the happiness I have enjoyed in a life, whose changes and vicissitudes have equaled most men's.

Drawn up in a line along the shore, I could scarce refrain from a smile at our appearance. Four weeks on board a transport will certainly not contribute much to the *personnel* of any unfortunate therein confined; but when, in addition to this, you take into account that we had not received new clothes for three years—if I except caps for our grenadiers, originally intended for a Scotch regiment, but found to be all too small for the long-headed generation. Many a patch of brown and grey variegated the faded scarlet of our uniform, and scarcely a pair of knees in the entire regiment did not confess their obligations to a blanket. But with all this, we showed a stout, weather-beaten front, that, disposed as the passer-by might feel to laugh at our expense, very little caution would teach him it were fully as safe to indulge it in his sleeve.

The bells from every steeple and tower rang gayly out a peal of welcome as we marched into "that beautiful city called Cork," our band playing "Garryowen"—for we had been originally raised in Ireland, and still among our officers maintained a strong majority for that land of punch, priests, and potatoes—the tattered flag of the regiment proudly waving over our heads, and not a man amongst us whose warm heart did not bound behind a Waterloo medal. Well, well! I am now—alas! that I should say it—somewhat in the "sere and yellow;" and I confess, after the experience of some moments of high, triumphant feeling, that I never before felt within me the same animating, spirit-filling glow of delight as rose within my heart that day as I marched at the head of my company down George's-street.

We were soon settled in barracks; and then began a series of entertainments on the side of the civic dignities of Cork, which led most of us to believe that we had only escaped shot and shell to fall less gloriously beneath champagne and claret. I do not believe there is a coroner in the island who would have pronounced but the one verdict over the regiment—"Killed by the mayor and corporation," had we so fallen.

First of all, we were dined by the citizens of Cork—and, to do them justice, a harder drinking set of gentlemen no city need boast; then we were feasted by the corporation; then by the sheriffs; then came the mayor, solus; then an address, with a cold collation, that left eight of us on the sick-list for a fortnight: but the climax of all was a grand entertainment given in the Mansion House, and to which upwards of two thousand were invited. It was a species of fancy ball, beginning by a *déjeûner* at three o'clock in the afternoon, and ending—I never yet met the man who could tell when it ended! As for myself, my *finale* partook a little of the adventurous, and I may as well relate it.

After waltzing for about an hour with one of the prettiest girls I ever set eyes

upon, and getting a tender squeeze of the hand, as I restored her to a most affable-looking old lady in a blue turban and a red velvet gown, who smiled benignly at me, and called me "*Meejor*," I retired, to recruit for a new attack, to a small table, where three of ours were quaffing *ponche à la Romaine*, with a crowd of Corkagians about them, eagerly inquiring after some heroes of their own city, whose deeds of arms they were surprised did not obtain special mention from "the Duke." I soon ingratiated myself into this well-occupied clique, and dosed them with glory to their hearts' content. I resolved at once to enter into their humor; and as the "ponche" mounted up to my brain I gradually found my acquaintanceship extend to every family and connection in the country.

"Did ye know Phil Beamish of the 3—th, sir?" said a tall, red-faced, red-whiskered, well-looking gentleman, who bore no slight resemblance to Feargus O'Connor.

"Phil Beamish!" said I. "Indeed I did, sir, and do still; and there is not a man in the British army I am prouder of knowing." Here, by the way, I may mention that I never heard the name till that moment.

"You don't say, sir?" said Feargus—for so I must call him, for shortness' sake. "Has he any chance of the company yet, sir?"

"Company!" said I, in astonishment. "He obtained his majority three months since. You cannot possibly have heard from him lately, or you would have known that?"

"That's true, sir. I never heard since he quitted the 3—th to go to Versailles, I think they call it, for his health. But how did he get the step, sir?"

"Why, as to the company, that was remarkable enough!" said I, quaffing off a tumbler of champagne to assist my invention. "You know it was about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 18th that Napoleon ordered Grouchy to advance with the first and second brigade of the Old Guard and two regiments of chasseurs, and attack the position occupied by Picton and the regiments under his command. Well, sir, on they came, masked by the smoke of a terrific discharge of artillery, stationed on a small eminence to our left, and which did tremendous execution among our poor fellows—on they came, sir, and as the smoke cleared partially away we got a glimpse of them, and a more dangerous-looking set I should not desire to see: grizzly-bearded, hard-featured, bronzed fellows, about five-and-thirty or forty years of age; their beauty not a whit improved by the red glare thrown upon their faces and along the whole line by each flash of the long twenty-fours that were playing away to the right. Just at this moment Picton rode down the line with his staff, and stopping within a few paces of me, said, 'They're coming up: steady, boys; steady now: we shall have something to do soon.' And then, turning sharply round, he looked in the direction of the French battery, that was thundering away again in full force, 'Ah, that must be silenced,' said he, 'Where's Beamish?——'"

"Says Picton!" interrupted Feargus, his eyes starting from their sockets, and his mouth growing wider every moment, as he listened with the most intense interest.

"Yes," said I, slowly. And then, with all the provoking nonchalance of an Italian improvisatore, who always halts at the most exciting point of his narrative, I begged a listener near me to fill my glass from the iced punch beside him. Not a sound was heard as I lifted the bumper to my lips; all were breathless in their wound-up anxiety to hear of their countryman who had been selected by Picton—for what, too, they knew not yet, and, indeed, at that instant, I did not know myself, and nearly laughed outright, for the two of ours who had remained at the table had so well employed their interval of ease as to become very pleasantly drunk, and were listening to my confounded story with all the gravity and seriousness in the world.—"'Where's Beamish?' says Picton. 'Here, sir,' said Phil, stepping out from the line, and touching his cap to the general, who, taking him apart for a few minutes, spoke to him with great animation. We did not know what he said; but before five minutes were over, there was Phil with three companies of light-bobs drawn up at our left; their muskets at the charge, they set off at a round trot down the little steep which closed our flank. We had not much time to follow their movements, for our own amusement began soon; but I well remember, after repelling the French attack, and standing in square against two heavy charges of cuirassiers, the first thing I saw where the French battery had stood, was Phil Beamish and about a handful of brave fellows, all that remained from the skirmish. He captured two of the enemy's field-pieces, and was 'Captain Beamish' on the day after."

"Long life to him!" said at least a dozen voices behind and about me, while

a general clinking of decanters and smacking of lips betokened that Phil's health with all the honors was being celebrated. For myself, I was really so engrossed by my narrative, and so excited by the "ponche," that I saw or heard very little of what was passing around, and have only a kind of dim recollection of being seized by the hand by "Feargus," who was Beamish's brother, and who, in the fullness of his heart, would have hugged me to his breast, if I had not opportunely been so overpowered as to fall senseless under the table.

When I first returned to consciousness, I found myself lying exactly where I had fallen. Around me lay heaps of slain—the two of "ours" amongst the number. One of them—I remember he was the adjutant—held in his hand a wax candle (two to the pound). Whether he had himself seized it in the enthusiasm of my narrative of flood and field, or it had been put there by another, I know not, but he certainly cut a droll figure. The room we were in was a small one off the great saloon, and through the half-open folding-door I could clearly perceive that the festivities were still continued. The crash of fiddles and French horns, and the tramp of feet, which had lost much of their elasticity since the entertainment began, rang through my ears, mingled with the sounds "Down the middle," "Hands across," "Here's your partner, captain." What hour of the night or morning it then was, I could not guess; but certainly the vigor of the party seemed little abated, if I might judge from the specimen before me, and the testimony of a short plethoric gentleman, who stood wiping his bald head, after conducting his partner down twenty-eight couple, and who, turning to his friend, said, "Oh, the distance is nothing, but it is the pace that kills."

The first evidence I showed of any return to reason was a strong anxiety to be at my quarters; but how to get there I knew not. The faint glimmering of sense I possessed told me that "to stand was to fall," and I was ashamed to go on all-fours, which prudence suggested.

At this moment I remembered I had brought with me my cane, which, from a perhaps pardonable vanity, I was fond of parading. It was a present from the officers of my regiment—many of them, alas! since dead—and had a most splendid gold head, with a stag at the top—the arms of the regiment. This I would not have lost for any consideration I can mention; and this now was gone! I looke around me on every side; I groped beneat the table; I turned the sleeping sots wh lay about in no very gentle fashion; bu alas! it was gone. I sprang to my fee and only then remembered how unfit was to follow up the search, as table chairs, lights, and people seemed all rocl ing and waving before me. However, succeeded in making my way through or room into another, sometimes guiding m steps along the walls; and once, as I r collect, striking the diagonal of a room, bisected a quadrille with such ill-directe speed, as to run foul of a Cork dandy an his partner who were just performing th "*en avant:*" but though I saw them l tumbled in the dust by the shock of m encounter—for I had upset them—I sti held on the even tenor of my way. I fact, I had feeling for but one loss; an still in pursuit of my cane, I reached th hall-door. Now, be it known that th architecture of the Cork Mansion Hous has but one fault, but that fault is a gran one, and a strong evidence of how unsuite English architects are to provide building for a people whose tastes and habits the but imperfectly understand—be it known then, that the descent from the hall-doo to the street was by a flight of twelv stone steps. How I should ever get dow these was now my difficulty. If Falsta deplored "eight yards of uneven groun as being three score and ten miles a foot, with equal truth did I feel that thes twelve awful steps were worse to me tha would be M'Gillicuddy's Reeks in the day light, and with a head clear from cham pagne.

While I yet hesitated, the problen resolved itself; for, gazing down upon th bright gravel, brilliantly lighted by th surrounding lamps, I lost my balance, an came tumbling and rolling from top t bottom, where I fell upon a large mass o some soft substance, to which, in all prob ability, I owe my life. In a few seconds recovered my senses, and what was m surprise to find that the downy cushio beneath snored most audibly! I moved little to one side, and then discovered tha in reality it was nothing less than an alder man of Cork, who, from his position, concluded had shared the same fate wit myself: there he lay, "like a warrior tak ing his rest," but not with his "martia cloak around him," but a much more com fortable and far more costly robe—a scarle gown of office—with huge velvet cuffs an a great cape of the same material. Tru courage consists in presence of mind; an

here mine came to my aid at once: recollecting the loss I had just sustained, and perceiving that all was still about me, with that right Peninsular maxim, that reprisals are fair in an enemy's camp, I proceeded to strip the slain; and with some little difficulty—partly, indeed, owing to my own unsteadiness on my legs—I succeeded in denuding the worthy alderman, who gave no other sign of life during the operation than an abortive effort to "*hip, hip, hurrah,*" in which I left him, having put on the spoil, and set out on my way to the barrack with as much dignity of manner as I could assume in honor of my costume. And here I may mention (in a parenthesis) that a more comfortable morning-gown no man ever possessed, and in its wide luxuriant folds I revel while I write these lines.

When I awoke on the following day I had considerable difficulty in tracing the events of the past evening. The great scarlet cloak, however, unraveled much of the mystery, and gradually the whole of my career became clear before me, with the single exception of the episode of Phil Beamish, about which my memory was subsequently refreshed. But I anticipate. Only five appeared that day at mess; and, Lord! what specters they were!—yellow as guineas; they called for soda water without ceasing, and scarcely spoke a word to each other. It was plain that the corporation of Cork was committing more havoc among us than Corunna or Waterloo, and that if we did not change our quarters, there would be quick promotion in the corps for such as were "seasoned gentlemen." After a day or two we met again together, and then, what adventures were told!—each man had his own story to narrate; and from the occurrences detailed, one would have supposed years had been passing instead of the short hours of an evening party. Mine were, indeed, among the least remarkable; but I confess that the air of *vraisemblance* produced by my production of the aldermanic gown gave me the palm above all competitors.

Such was our life in Cork—dining, drinking, dancing, riding, steeple-chasing, pigeon shooting, and tandem driving—filling up any little interval that was found to exist between a late breakfast and the time to dress for dinner; and here I hope I shall not be accused of a tendency to boasting, while I add, that among all ranks and degrees of men, and women too, there never was a regiment more highly in estimation than the 4—th. We felt the full value of all the attentions we were receiving, and we endeavored, as best we might to repay them. We got up Garrison Balls and Garrison Plays, and usually performed once or twice a week during the winter. Here I shone conspicuously: in the morning I was employed painting scenery and arranging the properties; as it grew later, I regulated the lamps and looked after the foot-lights, meditating occasionally between angry litigants, whose jealousies abound to the full as much in private theatricals as in the regular *corps dramatique*. Then, I was also leader in the orchestra; and had scarcely given the last scrape in the overture before I was obliged to appear to speak the prologue. Such are the cares of greatness: to do myself justice, I did not dislike them; though, to be sure, my taste for the drama did cost me a little dear, as will be seen in the sequel.

We were then in the full career of popularity—our balls pronounced the very pleasantest, our plays far superior to any regular corps that had ever honored Cork with their talents—when an event occurred which threw a gloom over all our proceedings, and finally put a stop to every project for amusement we had so completely given ourselves up to. This was no less than the removal of our Lieutenant-Colonel. After thirty years of active service in the regiment he then commanded, his age and infirmities, increased by some severe wounds, demanded ease and repose; he retired from us bearing along with him the love and regard of every man in the regiment. To the old officers he was endeared by long companionship, and undeviating friendship; to the young, he was in every respect as a father, assisting by his advice, and guiding by his counsel; while to the men, the best estimate of his worth appeared in the fact that corporal punishment was unknown in the corps. Such was the man we lost; and it may well be supposed that his successor, who, or whatever he might be, came under circumstances of no common difficulty amongst us; but when I tell that our new Lieutenant-Colonel was in every respect his opposite, it may be believed how little cordiality he met with.

Lieutenant-Colonel Carden—for so I shall call him, although not his real name—had not been a month at quarters when he proved himself a regular martinet; everlasting drills, continual reports, fatigue parties, and ball practice, and Heaven knows what besides, superseded our former morning's occupation; and, at the end of the time I have mentioned, we, who

had fought our way from Albuera to Waterloo, under some of the severest generals of division, were pronounced a most disorderly and ill-disciplined regiment, by a colonel who had never seen a shot fired but at a review at Hounslow, or a sham battle in the Fifteen Acres. The winter was now drawing to a close—already some little touch of spring was appearing—as our last play for the season was announced, and every effort to close with some little additional *éclat* was made; and each performer in the expected piece was nerving himself for an effort beyond his wont. The Colonel had most unequivocally condemned these plays; but that mattered not—they came not within his jurisdiction—and we took no notice of his displeasure further than sending him tickets, which were as immediately returned as received. From being the chief offender I had become particularly obnoxious; and he had upon more than one occasion expressed his desire for an opportunity to visit me with his vengeance; but being aware of his kind intentions towards me I took particular care to let no such opportunity occur.

On the morning in question, then, I had scarcely left my quarters when one of my brother officers informed me that the Colonel had made a great uproar, that one of the bills of the play had been put up on his door—which, with his avowed dislike to such representations, he considered as intended to insult him: he added, too, that the Colonel attributed it to me. In this, however, he was wrong—and, to this hour, I never knew who did it. I had little time, and still less inclination, to meditate upon the Colonel's wrath—the theatre had all my thoughts; and indeed it was a day of no common exertion, for our amusements were to conclude with a grand supper on the stage, to which all the *élite* of Cork were invited. Wherever I went through the city—and many were my peregrinations—the great placard of the play stared me in the face; and every gate and shuttered window in Cork proclaimed "THE PART OF OTHELLO BY MR. LORREQUER."

As evening drew near my cares and occupations were redoubled. My *Iago* I had fears for—'tis true he was an admirable Lord Grizzle in Tom Thumb—but then—then I had to paint the whole company, and bear all their abuse besides, for not making some of the most ill-looking wretches perfect Apollos; but, last of all, I was sent for, at a quarter to seven, to lace Desdemona's stays. Start not, gentle reader, my fair Desdemona—she "who might lie by an emperor's side, and command him tasks"—was no other than the senior lieutenant of the regiment, and who was as great a votary of the jolly god as honest Cassio himself. But I must hasten on; I cannot delay to recount our successes in detail. Let it suffice to say, that, by universal consent, I was preferred to Kean; and the only fault the most critical observer could find to the representative of Desdemona, was a rather unladylike fondness for snuff. But whatever little demerits our acting might have displayed, were speedily forgotten in a champagne supper. There I took the head of the table; and in the costume of the noble Moor, toasted, made speeches, returned thanks, and sang songs, till I might have exclaimed with Othello himself "Chaos is come again;" and I believe I owe my ever reaching the barrack that night to the kind offices of Desdemona, who carried me the greater part of the way on her back.

The first waking thoughts of him who has indulged over night are not among the most blissful of existence, and certainly the pleasure is not increased by the consciousness that he is called on to the discharge of duties to which a fevered pulse and throbbing temples are but ill suited. My sleep was suddenly broken in upon the morning after the play by a "row-dow-dow" beat beneath my window. I jumped hastily from my bed and looked out, and there, to my horror, perceived the regiment under arms. It was one of our confounded Colonel's morning drills; and there he stood himself, with the poor adjutant who had been up all night, shivering beside him. Some two or three of the officers had descended; and the drum was now summoning the others as it beat round the barrack-square. I saw there was not a moment to lose, and proceeded to dress with all dispatch; but, to my misery, I discovered everywhere nothing but theatrical robes and decorations—there, lay a splendid turban, here, a pair of buskins—a spangled jacket glittered on one table, and a jeweled scimitar on the other. At last I detected my "regimental smallclothes," most ignominiously thrust into a corner in my ardor for my Moorish robes the preceding evening.

I dressed myself with the speed of lightning; but as I proceeded in my occupation, guess my annoyance to find that the toilet-table and glass, aye, and even the basin-stand, had been removed to the dressing-room of the theater; and my servant, I suppose, following his master's example,

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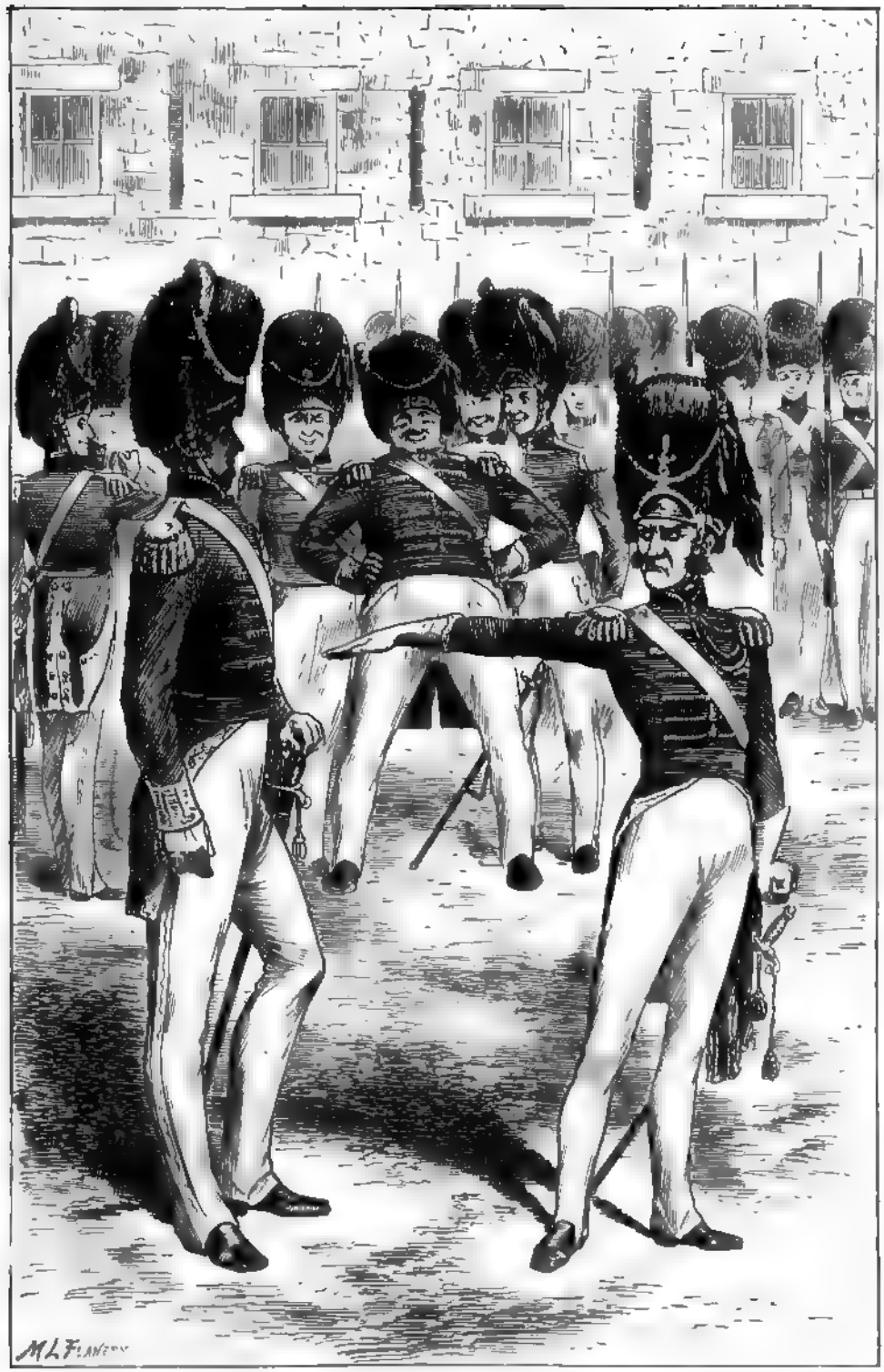
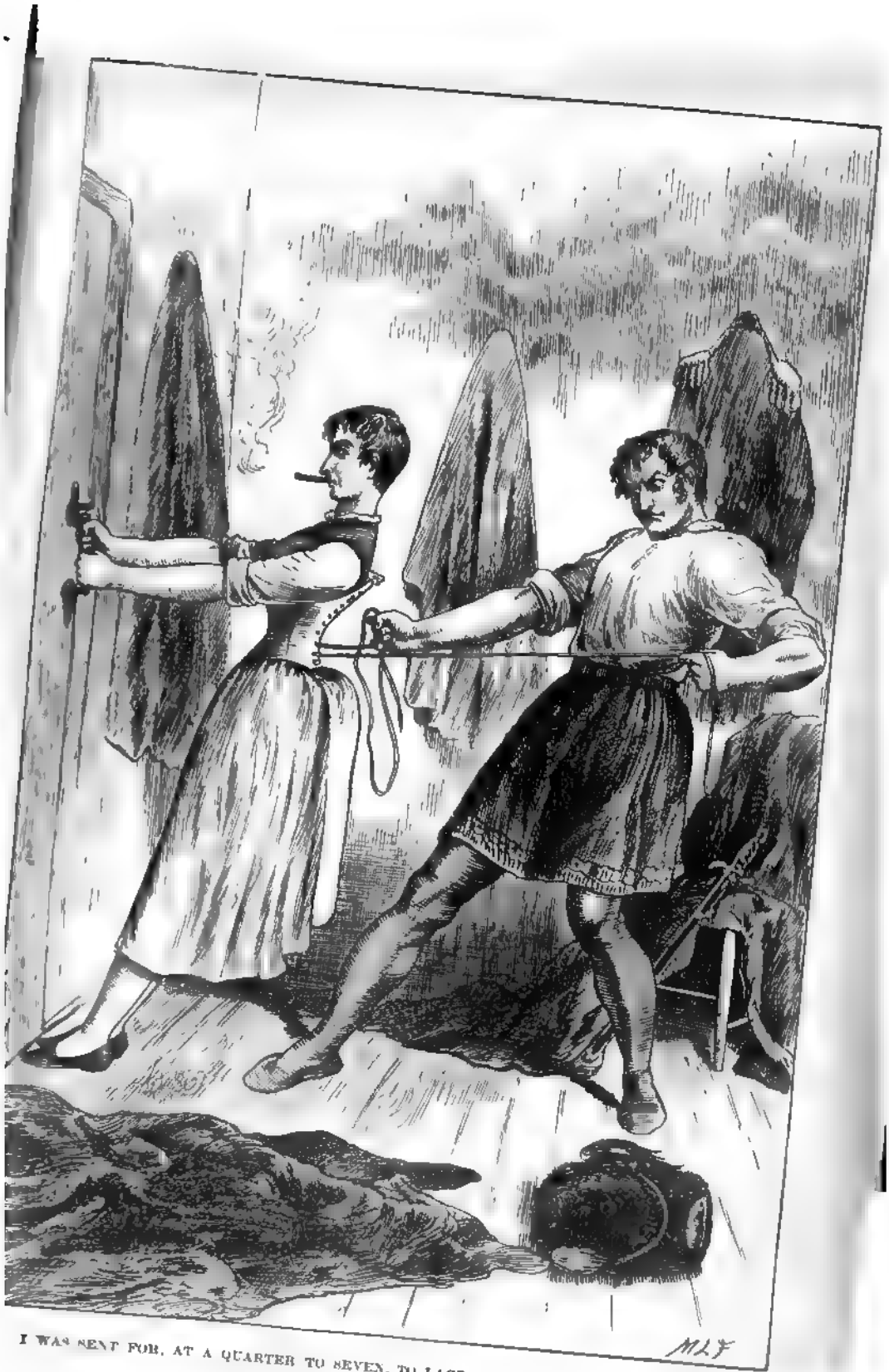


"TO YOUR QUARTERS, SIR," ROARED THE LITTLE MAN WITH THE VOICE OF A LION. AND, WITH A HAUGHTY WAVE OF HIS HAND, PREVENTED ALL FURTHER ATTEMPT ON MY PART TO SEEK EXPLANATION. (P. 9.)



I WAS SENT FOR, AT A QUARTER TO SEVEN, TO LACE DESDEMONA'S STAYS. (P. 8.)

was too tipsy to remember to bring them back, so that I was unable to procure the luxury of cold water—for now not a moment more remained, the drum had ceased, and the men had all fallen in. Hastily drawing on my coat, I put on my shako, and buckling on my belt as dandy-like as might be, hurried down the stairs to the barrack-yard. By the time I got down, the men were all drawn up in line along the square, while the adjutant was proceeding to examine their accouterments, as he passed down. The Colonel and the officers were standing in a group but not conversing. The anger of the commanding officer appeared still to continue, and there was a dead silence maintained on both sides. To reach the spot where they stood I had to pass along part of the line. In doing so, how shall I convey my amazement at the faces that met me—a general titter ran along the entire rank, which not even their fears for consequences seemed able to repress—for an effort, on the part of many, to stifle the laugh, only ended in a still louder burst of merriment. I looked to the far side of the yard for an explanation, but there was nothing there to account for it. I now crossed over to where the officers were standing, determining in my own mind to investigate the occurrence thoroughly, when free from the presence of the Colonel, to whom any representation of ill conduct always brought a punishment far exceeding the merits of the case.

Scarcely had I formed this resolve, when I reached the group of officers, but the moment I came near, one general roar of laughter saluted me, the like of which I never before heard. I looked down at my costume, expecting to discover that, in my hurry to dress, I had put on some of the garments of Othello. No: all was perfectly correct. I waited for a moment, till the first burst of their merriment over, I should obtain a clue to the jest. But there seemed no prospect of this, for, as I stood patiently before them, their mirth appeared to increase. Indeed, poor G——, the senior major, one of the gravest men in Europe, laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks; and such was the effect upon me, that I was induced to laugh, too—as men will sometimes, from the infectious nature of that strange emotion—but, no sooner did I do this, than their fun knew no bounds, and some almost screamed aloud in the excess of their merriment. Just at this instant the Colonel, who had been examining some of the men, approached our group, advancing with an air of evident displeasure, as the shouts of laughter continued. As he came up, I turned hastily round, and touching my cap, wished him good morning. Never shall I forget the look he gave me. If a glance could have annihilated any man, his would have finished me. For a moment his face became purple with rage, his eye was almost hid beneath his bent brow, and he absolutely shook with passion.

"Go, sir," said he at length, as soon as he was able to find utterance for his words —"go, sir, to your quarters; and before you leave them, a court-martial shall decide if such continued insult to your commanding officer warrants your name being on the Army List."

"What the devil can all this mean?" I said, in a half-whisper, turning to the others. But there they stood, their handkerchiefs to their mouths, and evidently choking with suppressed laughter.

"May I beg, Colonel Carden," said I—

"To your quarters, sir," roared the little man in the voice of a lion. And, with a haughty wave of his hand, prevented all further attempt on my part to seek explanation.

"They're all mad, every man of them," I muttered, as I betook myself slowly back to my rooms, amid the same evidences of mirth my first appearance had excited—which even the Colonel's presence, feared as he was, could not entirely subdue.

With the air of a martyr I trod heavily up the stairs, and entered my quarters, meditating within myself awful schemes for vengeance on the now open tyranny of my Colonel; upon whom, I too, in my honest rectitude of heart, vowed to have a "court-martial." I threw myself upon a chair, and endeavored to recollect what circumstances of the past evening could have possibly suggested all the mirth in which both officers and men seemed to participate equally; but nothing could I remember capable of solving the mystery: surely, the cruel wrongs of the manly Othello were no laughter-moving subject.

I rang the bell hastily for my servant. The door opened.

"Stubbes," said I, "are you aware——"

I had only got so far in my question, when my servant, one of the most discreet of men, put on a broad grin, and turned away toward the door to hide his face.

"What the devil does this mean?" said I, stamping with passion; "he is as bad as the rest. Stubbes"—and this I spoke with the most grave and severe tone—"what is the meaning of this insolence?"

"Oh, sir," said the man—"oh, sir, sure-

ly you did not appear on parade with that face?" And then he burst into a fit of the most uncontrollable laughter.

Like lightning a horrid doubt shot across my mind. I sprang over to the dressing-glass, which had been replaced, and oh! horror of horrors! there I stood as black as the king of Ashantee. The cursed dye which I had put on for Othello, I had never washed off—and there, with a huge bearskin shako, and a pair of dark, bushy whiskers, shone my huge, black, and polished visage, glowering at itself in the looking-glass.

My first impulse, after amazement had a little subsided, was to laugh immoderately; in this I was joined by Stubbes, who, feeling that his mirth was participated in, gave full vent to his risibility. And, indeed, as I stood before the glass, grinning from ear to ear, I felt very little surprise that my joining in the laughter of my brother officers, a short time before, had caused an increase of their merriment. I threw myself upon a sofa, and absolutely laughed till my sides ached, when, the door opening, the adjutant made his appearance. He looked for a moment at me, then at Stubbes, and then burst out himself, as loud as either of us. When he had at length recovered himself, he wiped his face with his handkerchief, and said, with a tone of much gravity,—

"But, my dear Lorrequer, this will be a serious—a devilish serious affair. You know what kind of man Colonel Carden is; and you are aware, too, you are not one of his prime favorites. He is firmly persuaded that you intended to insult him, and nothing will convince him to the contrary. We told him how it must have occurred, but he will listen to no explanation."

I thought for one second before I replied. My mind, with the practiced rapidity of an old campaigner, took in all the *pros* and *cons* of the case; I saw at a glance it were better to brave the anger of the Colonel, come in what shape it might, than be the laughing-stock of the mess for life, and with a face of the greatest gravity and self-possession, said,—

"Well, adjutant, the Colonel is right. It was no mistake! You know I sent him tickets yesterday for the theatre. Well, he returned them; this did not annoy me, but on one account: I had made a wager with Alderman Gullable that the Colonel should see me in Othello. What was to be done? Don't you see, now, there was only one course, and I took it, old boy, and have won my bet!"

"And lost your commission for a dozen of champagne, I suppose," said the adjutant.

"Never mind, my dear fellow," I replied; "I shall get out of this scrape, as I have done many others."

"But what do you intend doing?"

"Oh, as to that," said I, "I shall, of course, wait on the Colonel immediately; pretend to him that it was a mere blunder from the inattention of my servant—hand over Stubbes to the powers that punish" (here the poor fellow winced a little), "and make my peace as well as I can. But, adjutant, mind," said I, "and give the real version to all our fellows, and tell them to make it public as much as they please."

"Never fear," said he, as he left the room still laughing, "they shall all know the true story; but I wish with all my heart you were well out of it."

I now lost no time in making my toilet, and presented myself at the Colonel's quarters. It is no pleasure for me to recount these passages in my life, in which I have had to bear the "proud man's contumely." I shall therefore merely observe, that after a very long interview, the Colonel accepted my apologies, and we parted.

Before a week elapsed, the story had gone far and near; every dinner-table in Cork had laughed at it. As for me, I attained immortal honor for my tact and courage. Poor Gullable readily agreed to favor the story, and gave us a dinner as the lowest wager, and the Colonel was so unmercifully quizzed on the subject, and such broad allusions to his being humbugged were given in the Cork papers, that he was obliged to negotiate a change of quarters with another regiment, to get out of the continual jesting, and in less than a month we marched to Limerick, to relieve, as it was reported, the 9th, ordered for foreign service, but, in reality only to relieve Lieut.-Colonel Carden, quizzed beyond endurance.

However, if the Colonel had seemed to forgive, he did not forget, for the very second week after our arrival in Limerick, I received one morning at my breakfast-table the following brief note from our adjutant:

"My Dear Lorrequer,—The Colonel has received orders to dispatch two companies to some remote part of the county Clare, and as you have 'done the state some service,' you are selected for the beautiful town of Kilrush, where, to use the eulogistic language of the geography books, 'there is a good harbor, and a

market plentifully supplied with fish.' I have just heard of the kind intention in store for you, and lose no time in letting you know.

"God give you a good deliverance from the '*garçons blancs*' as the *Moniteur* calls the Whiteboys, and believe me ever yours.

"CHARLES CURZON."

I had scarcely twice read over the adjutant's epistle, when I received an official notification from the Colonel, directing me to proceed to Kilrush, then and there to afford all aid and assistance in suppressing illicit distillation, when called on for that purpose; and other similar duties too agreeable to recapitulate. Alas! alas! "Othello's occupation" was indeed gone!

The next morning at sunrise saw me on my march, with what appearance of gayety I could muster, but in reality very much chapfallen at my banishment, and invoking sundry things upon the devoted head of the Colonel, which he would by no means consider as "blessings."

How short-sighted are we mortals, whether enjoying all the pomp and state of royalty, or marching like myself at the head of a detachment of his Majesty's 4—th.

Little, indeed, did I anticipate that the Siberia to which I fancied I was condemned should turn out the happiest quarters my fate ever threw me into. But this, including as it does one of the most important events of my life, I reserve for another chapter.

"What is that place called, Sergeant?"—"Bunratty Castle, sir."

"Where do we breakfast?"—"At Clare Island, sir."

"March away, boys!"

CHAPTER II.

ATTACHMENT DUTY—THE "BURTON ARMS"—CALLONBY.

FOR a week after my arrival at Kilrush, my life was one of the most dreary monotony. The rain, which had begun to fall as I left Limerick, continued to descend in torrents, and I found myself a close prisoner in the sanded parlor of "mine inn." At no time would such "durance vile" have been agreeable; but now, when I contrasted it with all I had left behind at head-quarters, it was absolutely maddening. The pleasant lounge in the morning, the social mess, and the agreeable evening party, were all exchanged for a short promenade of fourteen feet in one direction, and twelve in the other, such being the accurate measurement of my "salle à manger;" a chicken, with legs as blue as a Highlander's in winter, for my dinner; and the hours that all Christian mankind were devoting to pleasant intercourse and agreeable chit-chat, spent in beating that dead-march to time, "the Devil's Tattoo," upon my rickety table, and forming, between whiles, sundry valorous resolutions to reform my life, and "eschew sack and loose company."

My front window looked out upon a long, straggling, ill-paved street, with its due proportion of mud-heaps and duck-pools; the houses on either side were, for the most part, dingy-looking edifices, with half-doors, and such pretension to being shops as a quart of meal, or salt, displayed in the window, confers; or sometimes two tobacco-pipes, placed "saltier-wise," would appear the only vendible article in the establishment. A more wretched, gloomy-looking picture of woebegone poverty I never beheld.

If I turned for consolation to the back of the house, my eyes fell upon the dirty yard of a dirty inn; the half-thatched cow-shed, where two famished animals mourned their hard fate,—"chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy;" the chaise, the yellow post-chaise, once the pride and glory of the establishment, now stood reduced from its wheels, and ignominiously degraded to a hen-house; on the grass-grown roof a cock had taken his stand, with an air of protective patronage to the feathered inhabitants beneath:

"To what base uses must we come at last."

That chaise, which once had conveyed the blooming bride, all blushes and tenderness, and the happy groom, on their honeymoon visit to Ballybunnion and its romantic caves, or to the gigantic cliffs and sea-girt shores of Moher—or with more steady pace and becoming gravity had borne along the "going judge of assize"—was now become a lying-in hospital for fowls, and a nursery for chickens. Fallen as I was from my high estate, it afforded me a species of malicious satisfaction to contemplate these sad reverses of fortune; and I verily believe—for on such slight foundation our greatest resolves are built—that if the rain had continued a week longer, I should have become a misanthropist for life. I made many inquiries from my landlady as to the society of the place, but the answers I

received only led to greater despondence. My predecessor here, it seemed, had been an officer of a veteran battalion, with a wife, and that amount of children which is algebraically expressed by *x*—meaning, an unknown quantity. He, good man, in his two years' sojourn here, had been much more solicitous about his own affairs than making acquaintance with his neighbors; and at last, the few persons who had been in the habit of calling on "the officer," gave up the practice; and as there were no young ladies to refresh Pa's memory on the matter, they soon forgot completely that such a person existed—and to this happy oblivion, I, Harry Lorrequer, succeeded, and was thus left without benefit of clergy to the tender mercies of Mrs. Healy of the "Burton Arms."

As during the inundation which deluged the whole country around I was unable to stir from the house, I enjoyed abundant opportunity of cultivating the acquaintance of my hostess, and it is but fair that my reader, who has journeyed so far with me, should have an introduction.

Mrs. Healy, the sole proprietor of the "Burton Arms," was of some five-and-fifty —"or by'r lady," three score years—of a rubicund and hale complexion; and though her short neck and corpulent figure might have set her down as "doubly hazardous," she looked a good life for many years to come. In height and breadth she most nearly resembled a sugar-hogshead, whose rolling, pitching motion, when trundled along on edge, she emulated in her gait. To the ungainliness of her figure her mode of dressing not a little contributed. She usually wore a thick linsey-woolsey gown, with enormous pockets on either side, and, like Nora Creina's, it certainly inflicted no undue restriction upon her charms, but left

"Every beauty free,
To sink or swell as Heaven pleases."

Her feet—ye gods! such feet—were apparelled in listing slippers, over which the upholstery of her ankles descended, and completely relieved the mind of the spectator as to the superincumbent weight being disproportioned to the support. I remember well my first impression on seeing those feet and ankles reposing upon a straw footstool, while she took her afternoon doze, and I wondered within myself if elephants were liable to the gout. There are few countenances in the world that, if wishing to convey an idea of, we cannot refer to some well-known standard; and thus nothing is more common than to hear comparisons with "Vulcan—Venus—Nicodemus," and the like; but in the present case I am totally at a loss for anything resembling the face of the worthy Mrs. Healy, except it be, perhaps, that most ancient and sour visage we used to see upon old circular iron rappers formerly —they make none of them now—the only difference being, that Mrs. Healy's nose had no ring through it; I am almost tempted to add, "more's the pity."

Such was she in "the flesh;" would that I could say, she was more fascinating in the "spirit!" but, alas, truth, from which I never may depart in these "my confessions," constrains me to acknowledge the reverse. Most persons, in this miserable world of ours, have some prevailing, predominating characteristic, which usually gives the tone and color to all their thoughts and actions, forming what we denominate temperament; this we see actuating them, now more, now less; but rarely, however, is this great spring of action without its moments of repose. Not so with her of whom I have been speaking. She had but one passion —but like Aaron's rod, it had a most consuming tendency—and that was to scold and abuse all whom hard fate had brought within the unfortunate limits of her tyranny. The English language, comprehensive as it is, afforded not epithets strong enough for her wrath, and she sought among the more classic beauties of her native Irish such additional ones as served her need, and with this holy alliance of tongues she had been, for years long, the dread and terror of the entire village.

"The dawning of morn, the daylight sinking,"

ay, and even the "night's dull hours," it was said, too, found her laboring in her congenial occupation; and while thus she continued to "scold and grow fat," her inn, once a popular and frequented one, became gradually less and less frequented, and the dragon of the Rhine-fells did not more effectually lay waste the territory about him, than did the evil influence of her tongue spread desolation and ruin around her. Her inn, at the time of my visit, had not been troubled with even a passing traveler for many months; and, indeed, had I had any, even the least foreknowledge of the character of my hostess, its privacy should have still remained uninvaded for some time longer.

I had not been many hours installed, when I got a specimen of her powers; and before the first week was over, so constant

and unremitting were her labors in this way that I have, upon the occasion of a slight lull in the storm, occasioned by her falling asleep, actually left my room to inquire if anything had gone wrong, in the same way as the miller is said to awake when the mill stops. I trust I have said enough to move the reader's pity and compassion for my situation—one more miserable it is difficult to conceive. It may be thought that much might be done by management, and that a slight exercise of the favorite Whig plan might avail. Nothing of the kind. She was proof against all such arts; and what was still worse, there was no subject, no possible circumstance, no matter, past, present, or to come, that she could not wind, by her diabolical ingenuity, into some cause of offense; and then came the quick transition to instant punishment. Thus, my apparently harmless inquiry as to the society of the neighborhood, suggested to her—a wish on my part to make acquaintance—therefore to dine out—therefore not to dine at home—consequently to escape paying half-a-crown and devouring a chicken—therefore to defraud her, and behave, as she would herself observe, "like a beggarly scullion, with his four shillings a day, setting up for a gentleman," etc.

By a quiet and Job-like endurance of all manner of taunting suspicions and unmerited sarcasms, to which I daily became more reconciled, I absolutely rose into something like favor; and before the first month of my banishment expired, had got the length of an invitation to tea in her own snuggery—an honor never known to be bestowed on any before, with the exception of Father Malachi Brennan, her ghostly adviser; and even he, it is said, never ventured on such an approximation to intimacy, until he was, in Kilrush phrase, "half screwed," thereby meaning more than half tipsy. From time to time, thus, I learned from my hostess such particulars of the country and its inhabitants as I was desirous of hearing; and among other matters, she gave me an account of the great landed proprietor himself, Lord Callonby, who was daily expected at his seat within some miles of Kilrush, at the same time assuring me that I need not be looking so "pleased and curling out my whiskers;" "that they'd never take the trouble of asking even the name of me." This, though neither very courteous, nor altogether flattering to listen to, was no more than I had already learned from some brother officers who knew this quarter, and who informed me that the Earl of Callonby, though only visiting his Irish estates every three or four years, never took the slightest notice of any of the military in his neighborhood; nor, indeed, did he mix with the country gentry, confining himself to his own family, or the guests, who usually accompanied him from England, and remained during his few weeks' stay. My impression of his lordship was therefore not calculated to cheer my solitude by any prospect of his rendering it lighter.

The Earl's family consisted of her ladyship, an only son, nearly of age, and two daughters; the eldest, Lady Jane, had the reputation of being extremely beautiful; and I remembered when she came out in London, only the year before, hearing nothing but praises of the grace and elegance of her manner united to the most classic beauty of her face and figure. The second daughter was some years younger, and said to be also very handsome; but as yet she had not been brought into society. Of the son, Lord Kilkee, I only heard that he had been a very gay fellow at Oxford, where he was much liked, and although not particularly studious, had given evidence of talent.

Such were the few particulars I obtained of my neighbors, and thus little did I know of those who were so soon to exercise a most important influence upon my future life.

After some weeks' close confinement, which, judging from my feelings alone, I should have counted as many years, I eagerly seized the opportunity of the first glimpse of sunshine to make a short excursion along the coast; I started early in the morning, and after a long stroll along the bold headlands of Kilkee, was returning late in the evening to my lodgings. My path lay across a wild, bleak moor, dotted with low clumps of furze, and not presenting on any side the least trace of habitation. In wading through the tangled bushes, my dog "Mouche" started a hare; and after a run "sharp, short and decisive," killed her at the bottom of a little glen some hundred yards off.

I was just patting my dog and examining the prize, when I heard a crackling among the low bushes near me: and on looking up, perceived, about twenty paces distant, a short thick-set man, whose fustian jacket and leathern gaiters at once pronounced him the gamekeeper; he stood leaning upon his gun, quietly awaiting, as it seemed, for any movement on my part, before he interfered. With one glance I

detected how matters stood, and immediately adopting my usual policy of "taking the bull by the horns," called out, in a tone of very sufficient authority,—

"I say, my man, are you his lordship's gamekeeper?"

Taking off his hat, the man approached me, and very respectfully informed me that he was.

"Well, then," said I, "present this hare to his lordship with my respects; here is my card, and say I shall be most happy to wait on him in the morning and explain the circumstance."

The man took the card, and seemed for some moments undecided how to act; he seemed to think that probably he might be ill-treating a friend of his lordship's if he refused; and on the other hand might be merely "jockeyed" by some bold-faced poacher. Meanwhile I whistled my dog close up, and humming an air, with great appearance of indifference stepped out homeward. By this piece of presence of mind I saved poor "Mouche;" for I saw at a glance that, with true gamekeeper's law, he had been destined to death the moment he had committed the offense.

The following morning, as I sat at breakfast, meditating upon the events of the preceding day, and not exactly determined how to act, whether to write to his lordship explaining how the matter occurred, or call personally, a loud rattling on the pavement drew me to the window. As the house stood at the end of a street, I could not see in the direction the noise came; but as I listened a very handsome tandem turned the corner of the narrow street, and came along toward the hotel at a long, sling trot; the horses were dark chestnuts, well-matched, and showing a deal of blood. The carriage was a dark drab, with black wheels; the harness all of the same color. The whole turn-out—and I was an amateur of that sort of thing was perfect; the driver, for I come to him last, as he was the last I looked at, was a fashionable-looking young fellow, plainly, but knowingly, dressed, and evidently handling the "ribbons" like an experienced whip.

After bringing his nags up to the inn door in very pretty style, he gave the reins to his servant, and got down. Before I was well aware of it, the door of my room opened, and the gentleman entered with a certain easy air of good breeding, and saying,—

"Mr. Lorrequer, I presume," introduced himself as Lord Kilkee.

I immediately opened the conversation by an apology for my dog's misconduct on the day before, and assured his lordship that I knew the value of a hare in a hunting country, and was really sorry for the circumstance.

"Then I must say," replied his lordship, "Mr. Lorrequer is the only person who regrets the matter; for had it not been for this, it is more than probable we should never have known we were so near neighbors; in fact, nothing could equal our amazement at hearing *you* were playing the 'Solitaire' down here. You must have found it dreadfully heavy, 'and have thought us downright savages.' But then I must explain to you, that my father has made some 'rule absolute' about visiting when down here. And though I know you'll not consider it a compliment, yet I can assure you there is not another man I know of he would pay attention to, but yourself. He made two efforts to get here this morning, but the gout 'would not be denied,' and so he deputed a most inferior 'diplomate;' and now will you let me return with some character from my first mission, and inform my friends that you will dine with us to-day at seven—a mere family party; but make your arrangements to stop all night and to-morrow: we shall find some work for my friend there on the hearth; what do you call him, Mr. Lorrequer?"

"'Mouche'—come here, 'Mouche.'"

"Ah, 'Mouche,' come here, my fine fellow—a splendid dog, indeed; very tall for a thoroughbred; and now you'll not forget, seven, 'temps militaire,' and so, sans adieu."

And with these words his lordship shook me heartily by the hand; and before two minutes had elapsed, had wrapped his box-coat once more across him, and was round the corner.

I looked for a few moments on the again silent street, and was almost tempted to believe I was in a dream, so rapidly had the preceding moments passed over; and so surprised was I to find that the proud Earl of Callonby, who never did the "civil thing" anywhere, should think proper to pay attention to a poor sub. in a marching regiment, whose only claim on his acquaintance was the suspicion of poaching on his manor. I repeated over and over all his lordship's most polite speeches, trying to solve the mystery of them; but in vain: a thousand explanations occurred, but none of them I felt at all satisfactory: that there was some mystery somewhere, had no doubt; for I remarked all throughout that Lord Kilkee laid some stress upon

my identity, and even seemed surprised at my being in such banishment. "Oh," thought I, at last, "his lordship is about to get up private theatricals, and has seen my Captain Absolute, or perhaps my Hamlet"—I could not say "Othello" even to myself—"and is anxious to get 'such unrivaled talent' even 'for one night only.'"

After many guesses this seemed the nearest I could think of; and by the time I had finished my dressing for dinner, it was quite clear to me I had solved all the secret of his lordship's attentions.

The road to "Callonby" was beautiful beyond anything I had ever seen in Ireland. For upwards of two miles it led along the margin of some lofty cliffs, now jutting out into bold promontories, and again retreating, and forming small bays and mimic harbors, into which the heavy swell of the broad Atlantic was rolling its deep blue tide. The evening was perfectly calm, and at a little distance from the shore the surface of the sea was without a ripple. The only sound breaking the solemn stillness of the hour was the heavy plash of the waves, as in minute peals they rolled in upon the pebbly beach, and brought back with them, at each retreat, some of the larger and smoother stones, whose noise, as they fell back into old Ocean's bed, mingled with the din of the breaking surf. In one of the many little bays I passed, lay three or four fishing smacks. The sails were drying, and flapped lazily against the mast. I could see the figures of the men as they passed backwards and forwards upon the decks, and although the height was nearly eight hundred feet, could hear their voices quite distinctly. Upon the golden strand, which was still marked with a deeper tint, where the tide had washed, stood a little white cottage of some fishermen—at least, so the net before the door bespoke it. Around it stood some children, whose merry voices and laughing tones sometimes reached me where I was standing. I could not but think, as I looked down from my lofty eyrie upon that little group of boats and that lone hut, how much of the "world," to the humble dwellers beneath, lay in that secluded and narrow bay. There, the deep sea, where their days were passed in "storm or sunshine,"—there, the humble home, where at night they rested, and around whose hearth lay all their cares and all their joys. How far, how very far removed from the busy haunts of men, and all the struggles and contentions of the ambitious world; and yet, how short-sighted to suppose that even they had not their griefs and sorrows, and that their humble lot was devoid of the inheritance of those woes which all are heirs to.

I turned reluctantly from the sea-shore to enter the gate of the park, and my path in a few moments was as completely screened from all prospect of the sea, as though it had lain miles inland. An avenue of tall and ancient lime-trees, so dense in their shadows as nearly to conceal the road beneath, led for above a mile through a beautiful lawn, whose surface, gently undulating, and studded with young clumps, was dotted over with sheep. At length, descending by a very steep road, I reached a beautiful little stream, over which a rustic bridge was thrown. As I looked down upon the rippling stream beneath, on the surface of which the dusky evening flies were dipping, I made a resolve, if I prospered in his lordship's good graces, to devote a day to the "angle" there, before I left the country. It was now growing late, and remembering Lord Kilkee's intimation of "sharp seven," I threw my reins over my cob "Sir Roger's" neck (for I had hitherto been walking), and cantered up the steep hill before me. When I reached the top, I found myself upon a broad tableland, encircled by old and well-grown timber, and at a distance, most tastefully half concealed by ornamental planting, I could catch some glimpse of Callonby. Before, however, I had time to look about me, I heard the tramp of horses' feet behind, and in another moment two ladies dashed up the steep behind, and came toward me, at a smart gallop, followed by a groom, who, neither himself nor his horse, seemed to relish the pace of his fair mistresses. I moved off the road into the grass to permit them to pass; but no sooner had they got abreast of me, than Sir Roger, anxious for a fair start, flung up both heels at once, pricked up his ears, and, with a plunge that very nearly threw me from the saddle, set off at top speed. My first thought was for the ladies beside me, and, to my utter horror, I now saw them coming along in full gallop; their horses had got off the road, and were, to my thinking, become quite unmanageable. I endeavored to pull up, but all in vain. Sir Roger had got the bit between his teeth, a favorite trick of his, and I was perfectly powerless to hold him. By this time, they being mounted on thorough-breds, got a full neck before me, and the pace was now tremendous: on we all came, each horse at his utmost stretch. They were evidently gaining from the better stride of their cattle, and will it be be-

lieved, or shall I venture to acknowledge it in these my Confessions, that I, who a moment before would have given my best chance of promotion to be able to pull in my horse, would now have "pledged my dukedom" to be able to give Sir Roger one cut of the whip unobserved. I leave it to the wise to decipher the *rationale*, but such is the fact. It was complete steeple-chasing, and my blood was up.

On we came, and I now perceived that about two hundred yards before me stood an iron gate and piers, without any hedge or wall on either side; before I could conjecture the meaning of so strange a thing in the midst of a large lawn, I saw the foremost horse, now two or three lengths before the other, still in advance of me, take two or three short strides, and fly about eight feet over a sunk fence—the second followed in the same style, the riders sitting as steadily as in the gallop. It was now my turn, and I confess, as I neared the dyke, I heartily wished myself well over it, for the very possibility of a "mistake" was maddening. Sir Roger came on at a slapping pace, and when within two yards of the brink, rose to it, and cleared it like a deer. By the time I had accomplished this feat, not the less to my satisfaction that both ladies had turned in their saddles to watch me, they were already far in advance; they held on still at the same pace, round a small copse which concealed them an instant from my view, and which, when I passed, I perceived that they had just reached the hall door, and were dismounting.

On the steps stood a tall, elderly-looking, gentlemanlike person, who, I rightly conjectured, was his lordship. I heard him laughing heartily as I came up. I at last succeeded in getting Sir Roger to a canter, and when a few yards from where the group were standing, sprang off, and hastened up to make my apologies as I best might for my unfortunate runaway. I was luckily spared the awkwardness of an explanation, for his lordship, approaching me with his hand extended, said,—

"Mr. Lorrequer is most welcome at Callonby. I cannot be mistaken, I am sure—I have the pleasure of addressing the nephew of my old friend Sir Guy Lorrequer of Elton. I am indeed most happy to see you, and not the less so, that you are safe and sound, which, five minutes since, I assure you I had my fears for."

Before I could assure his lordship that my fears were all for my competitors in the race—for such in reality they were—he introduced me to the two ladies, who were still standing beside him—"Lady Jane Callonby; Mr. Lorrequer; Lady Catherine."

"Which of you, young ladies, may I ask, planned this 'escapade,' for I see by your looks it was no accident?"

"I think, papa," said Lady Jane, "you must question Mr. Lorrequer on that head; he certainly started first."

"I confess, indeed," said I, "such was the case."

"Well, you must confess, too, you were distanced," said Lady Jane.

His lordship laughed heartily, and I joined in his mirth, feeling at the same time most terribly provoked to be quizzed on such a matter; that I, a steeple-chase horseman of the first water, should be twitted by a couple of young ladies, on the score of a most manly exercise. "But come," said his lordship, "the first bell has rung long since, and I am longing to ask Mr. Lorrequer all about my old college friend of forty years ago. So, ladies, hasten your toilet, I beseech you."

With these words, his lordship, taking my arm, led me into the drawing-room, where we had not been many minutes till we were joined by her ladyship, a tall, stately, handsome woman, of a certain age; resolutely bent upon being both young and beautiful, in spite of time and wrinkles; her reception of me, though not possessing the frankness of his lordship, was still very polite, and intended to be even gracious. I now found by the reiterated inquiries for my old uncle, Sir Guy, that he it was, and not Hamlet, to whom I owed my present notice, and I must include it among my Confessions, that it was about the first advantage I ever derived from the relationship. After half an hour's agreeable chatting, the ladies entered, and then I had time to remark the extreme beauty of their appearance; they were both wonderfully like, and except that Lady Jane was taller and more womanly, it would have been almost impossible to discriminate between them.

Lady Jane Callonby was then about twenty years of age, rather above the middle size, and slightly disposed toward *embonpoint;* her eye was of the deepest and most liquid blue, and rendered apparently darker by long lashes of the blackest jet—for such was the color of her hair; her nose slightly, but slightly, deviated from the straightness of the Greek, and her upper lip was faultless, as were her mouth and chin: the whole lower part of the face, from the perfect repose, and from the carriage of her head, had certainly a great

air of hauteur, but the extreme melting softness of her eyes took from this, and when she spoke, there was a quiet earnestness in her mild and musical voice, that disarmed you at once of connecting the idea of self with the speaker; the word "fascinating," more than any other I know of, conveys the effect of her appearance, and to produce it, she had, more than any other woman I ever met, that wonderful gift, "*l'art de plaire.*"

I was roused from my perhaps too earnest, because unconscious gaze, at the lovely figure before me, by his lordship saying, "Mr. Lorrequer, her ladyship is waiting for you." I accordingly bowed, and offering my arm, led her into the dinner-room. And here I draw rein for the present, reserving for my next chapter—My Adventures at Callonby.

CHAPTER III.

LIFE AT CALLONBY—LOVE-MAKING—MISS O'DOWD'S ADVENTURE.

My first evening at Callonby passed off as nearly all first evenings do everywhere. His lordship was most agreeable, talked much of my uncle, Sir Guy, whose fag he had been at Eton half a century before, promised me some capital shooting in his preserves, discussed the state of politics; and, as the second decanter of port "waned apace," grew wondrous confidential, and told me of his intention to start his son for the county at the next general election, such being the object which had now conferred the honor of his presence on his Irish estates.

Her ladyship was most condescendingly civil; vouchsafed much tender commiseration for my "exile," as she termed my quarters in Kilrush; wondered how I could possibly exist in a marching regiment (who had never been in the cavalry in my life!); spoke quite feelingly of my *kindness* in joining their stupid family party, for they were living, to use her own phrase, "like hermits;" and wound up all by a playful assurance that as she perceived, from all my answers, that I was bent on preserving a strict incognito, she would tell no tales about me on her return to "Town." Now it may readily be believed that all this and many more of her ladyship's allusions were a "Chaldee manuscript" to me; that she knew certain facts of my family and relations was certain, but that she had interwoven in the humble web of my history a very pretty embroidery of fiction, was equally so; and while she thus ran on, with innumerable allusions to Lady Marys and Lord Johns, who she pretended to suppose were dying to hear from me, I could not help muttering to myself, with good Christopher Sly, "An all this be true—then, Lord, be thanked for my good amends;" for up to that moment I was an ungrateful man for all such high and noble solicitude. One dark doubt shot for an instant across my brain. Mayhap her ladyship had "registered a vow" never to syllable a name unchronicled by Debrett, or was actually only mystifying me for mere amusement. A minute's consideration dispelled this fear; for I found myself treated *en seigneur* by the whole family. As for the daughters of the house, nothing could possibly be more engaging than their manner. The eldest, Lady Jane, was pleased, from my near relationship to her father's oldest friend, to receive me, "from the first," on the most friendly footing, while, with the younger, Lady Catherine, from her being less reserved than her sister, my progress was even greater; and thus, before we separated for the night, I contrived to "take up my position" in such a fashion as to be already looked upon as one of the family party, to which object Lord, and indeed Lady, Callonby seemed most willing to contribute, and made me promise to spend the entire of the following day at Callonby, and as many of the succeeding ones as my military duties would permit.

As his lordship was wishing me "good-night" at the door of the drawing-room, he said, in a half whisper,—

"We were ignorant yesterday, Mr. Lorrequer, how soon we should have the pleasure of seeing you here; and you are therefore condemned to a small room off the library, it being the only one we can insure you as being well aired. I must therefore apprise you that you are not to be shocked at finding yourself surrounded by every member of my family hung up in frames around you. But as the room is usually my own snuggery, I have resigned it without any alteration whatever."

The apartment for which his lordship had so strongly apologized, stood in very pleasing contrast to my late one in Kilrush. The soft Persian carpet, on which one's feet sank to the very ankles; the brightly polished dogs, upon which a blazing wood fire burned; the well upholstered fauteuils which seemed to invite sleep without the trouble of lying down for it;

and last of all, the ample and luxurious bed, upon whose rich purple hangings the ruddy glare of the fire threw a most mellow light, were all a pleasing exchange for the *garniture* of the "Hotel Healy."

"Certes, Harry Lorrequer," said I, as I threw myself upon a small ottoman before the fire, in all the slippered ease and *abandon* of a man who has changed a dress coat for a morning gown,—"certes, thou art destined for great things; even here, where fate had seemed 'to do its worst' to thee, a little paradise opens, and what, to ordinary mortals, had proved but a 'flat, stale, and most unprofitable' quarter, presents to thee all the accumulated delight of an hospitable mansion, a kind, almost friendly, host, a condescending Madame Mère, and daughters too! ah, ye Gods! But what is this?" And here for the first time lifting up my eyes, I perceived a beautiful water-color drawing in the style of "Chalon," which was placed above the chimney-piece. I rose at once, and taking a candle, proceeded to examine it more minutely. It was a portrait of Lady Jane, a full-length too, and wonderfully like; there was more complexion, and perhaps more roundness of the figure than her present appearance would justify; but if anything was gained in brilliancy, it was certainly lost in point of expression, and I infinitely preferred her pale, but beautifully fair countenance, to the rosy cheek of the picture. The figure was faultless; the same easy grace the result of perfect symmetry and refinement together, which only one in a thousand of handsome girls possess, was portrayed to the life. The more I looked, the more I felt charmed with it. Never had I seen anything so truly characteristic as this sketch, for it was scarcely more. It was after nearly an hour's quiet contemplation that I began to remember the lateness of the night, an hour in which my thoughts had rambled from the lovely object before me to wonder at the situation in which I found myself placed; for there was so much of "attention" toward me, in the manner of every member of the family, coupled with certain mistakes as to my habits and acquaintances, as left me perfectly unable to unravel the mystery which so evidently surrounded me. "Perhaps," thought I, "Sir Guy has written in my behalf to his lordship. Oh, he would never do anything half so civil. Well, to be sure, I shall astonish them at headquarters: they'll not believe this. I wonder if Lady Jane saw my 'Hamlet;' for they landed in Cork from Bristol about that time. She is indeed a most beautiful girl. I wish I were a marquis, if it were only for *her* sake. Well, my Lord Callonby, you may be a very wise man in the House of Lords; but I would just ask, is it exactly prudent to introduce into your family, on terms of such perfect intimacy, a young, fascinating, well-looking fellow, of four-and-twenty, albeit only a subaltern, with two such daughters as you have? *Peut-être!* One thing is certain—*I* have no cause of complaint; and so good night, Lady Jane." And with these words I fell asleep to dream of the deepest blue eyes, and the most melting tones that ever reduced a poor lieutenant in a marching regiment to curse his fate that he could not call the Commander of the Forces his father.

When I descended to the breakfast-room, I found the whole family assembled in a group around Lord Kilkee, who had just returned from a distant part of the county, where he had been canvassing the electors, and spouting patriotism the day before. He was giving an account of his progress with much spirit and humor as I entered, but, on seeing me, immediately came forward and shook hands with me like an old acquaintance. By Lord Callonby and the ladies I was welcomed also with much courtesy and kindness, and some slight badinage passed upon my sleeping in what Lord Kilkee called the "Picture Gallery," which, for all I knew to the contrary, contained but one fair portrait. I am not a believer in Mesmer; but certainly there must have been some influence at work very like what we hear of in magnetism—for before the breakfast was concluded, there seemed at once to spring up a perfect understanding between this family and myself, which made me feel as much *chez moi* as I had ever done in my life; and from that hour I may date an intimacy which every succeeding day but served to increase.

After breakfast, Lord Callonby consigned me to the guidance of his son, and we sallied forth to deal destruction amongst the pheasants, with which the preserves were stocked; and here I may observe, *en passant*, that with the single exception of fox-hunting, which was ever a passion with me, I never could understand that inveterate pursuit of game to which some men devote themselves—thus, grouse-shooting, and its attendant pleasures, of stumping over a boggy mountain from daylight till dark, never had much attraction for me; and, as to the delights of widgeon and wild-duck shooting, when purchased by sitting up all night in a barrel, with your

eve to the bung, I'll none of it—no, no! give me shooting or angling merely as a *divertimento*, a pleasant interlude between breakfast and luncheon-time, when, consigning your Manton to a corner, and the gamekeeper "to the dogs," you once more humanize your costume to take a canter with the daughters of the house; or, if the day look loweringly, a match of billiards with the men.

I have ever found that the happiest portions of existence are the most difficult to chronicle. We may—nay, we must, impart our miseries and annoyances to our many "dear friends," whose forte is sympathy or consolation—and all men are eloquent on the subject of their woes; not so with their joys: some have a miser-like pleasure in hoarding them up for their own private gratification: others—and they are prudent—feel that the narrative is scarcely agreeable even to their best friends; and a few, of whom I confess myself one, are content to be happy without knowing why, and to have pleasant souvenirs without being able to explain them.

Such must be my apology for not more minutely entering upon an account of my life at Callonby. A fortnight had now seen me *enfoncé*, the daily companion of two beautiful girls in all their walks and rides, through a romantic, unfrequented country, seeing but little of the other members of the family; the gentlemen being entirely occupied with their election tactics, and Lady Callonby being a late riser, seldom appeared before the dinner hour. There was not a cliff on the bold and rocky coast we did not climb, not a cave upon the pebbly beach unvisited; sometimes my fair companions would bring a volume of Metastasio down to the little river where I used to angle; and the "gentle craft" was oft abandoned for the heart-thrilling verses of that delightful poet. Yes, many years have passed over, and these scenes are still as fresh in my memory as though they had been of yesterday. In *my* memory, I say, "as for thee,"

> "Chi sa se mai
> Ti sovverrai di me?"

At the end of three weeks the house became full of company, from the garret to the cellar. Country gentlemen and their wives and daughters came pouring in, on every species of conveyance known since the Flood; family coaches, which, but for their yellow panels, might have been mistaken for hearses, and high barouches, the ascent to which was accomplished by a step-ladder, followed each other in what appeared a never-ending succession; and here I may note an instance of the anomalous character of the conveyances, from an incident to which I was a witness at the time.

Among the visitors on the second day came a maiden lady from the neighborhood of Ennistimon, Miss Elizabeth O'Dowd, the last of a very old and highly respectable family in the county, and whose extensive property, thickly studded with freeholders, was a strong reason for her being paid every attention in Lord Callonby's power to bestow. Miss Betty O'Dowd—for so she was popularly styled—was the very personification of an old maid; stiff as a ramrod, and so rigid in observance of the proprieties of female conduct, that, in the estimation of the Clare gentry, Diana was a hoyden compared to her.

Miss Betty lived, as I have said, near Ennistimon, and the road from thence to Callonby at the time I speak of—it was before Mr. Nimmo—was as like the bed of a mountain torrent as a respectable highway; there were holes that would have made a grave for any maiden lady within fifty miles; and rocks thickly scattered, enough to prove fatal to the strongest wheels that ever issued from "Hutton's." Miss O'Dowd knew this well—she had upon one occasion been upset in traveling it—and a slate-colored silk dress bore the dye of every species of mud and mire to be found there, for many a year after, to remind her of her misfortune, and keep open the wound of her sorrow. When, therefore, the invitation to Callonby arrived, a grave council of war was summoned, to deliberate upon the mode of transit, for the honor could not be declined, "*coûte qu'il coûte.*" The chariot was out of the question: Nicholas declared it would never reach the "Moraan Beg," as the first precipice was called; the inside car was long since pronounced unfit for hazardous enterprise; and the only resource left, was what is called, in Hibernian parlance, a "low-backed car," that is, a car without any back whatever; it being neither more nor less than the common agricultural conveyance of the country, upon which, a feather-bed being laid, the farmers' wives and daughters are generally conveyed to fairs, wakes, and stations, &c. Putting her dignity, if not in her pocket, at least wherever it could be most easily accommodated, Miss O'Dowd placed her fair self, in all the plenitude of her charms and the grandeur of a "bran-new green

silk," a "little off the grass, and on the bottle" (I love to be particular), upon this humble conveyance, and set out on her way, if not "rejoicing," at least consoled by Nicholas, that "It 'id be black dark when they reached the house, and the devil a one 'id be the wiser than if she came in a coach and four." Nicholas was right; it was perfectly dark on their arrival at Callonby, and Miss O'Dowd having dismounted, and shaken her plumage, a little crumpled by her half-recumbent position for eight miles, appeared in the drawing-room, to receive the most courteous attentions from Lady Callonby, and from his lordship the most flattering speeches for her kindness in risking herself and bringing "her horses" on such a dreadful road, and assured her of his getting a presentment the very next assizes to repair it,—"For we intend, Miss O'Dowd," said he, "to be most troublesome neighbors to you in future."

The evening passed off most happily. Miss O'Dowd was delighted with her hosts, whose character she resolved to uphold in spite of their reputation for pride and haughtiness. Lady Jane sang an Irish melody for her, Lady Callonby gave her slips of a rose geranium she got from the Princess Augusta, and Lord Kilkee won her heart by the performance of that most graceful step yclept "cover the buckle," in an Irish jig. But alas! how short-lived is human bliss, for while this estimable lady reveled in the full enjoyment of the hour, the sword of Damocles hung suspended above her head; in plain English, she had, on arriving at Callonby, to prevent any unnecessary scrutiny into the nature of her conveyance, ordered Nicholas to be at the door punctually at eleven; and then, to take an opportunity of quietly slipping open the drawing-room door, and giving her an intimation of it, that she might take her leave at once. Nicholas was up to time, and having disposed the conveyance under the shadow of the porch, made his way to the door of the drawing-room unseen and unobserved. He opened it gently and noiselessly, merely sufficient to take a survey of the apartment, in which, from the glare of the lights, and the busy hum of voices, he was so bewildered that it was some minutes before he recognized his mistress. At last he perceived her; she was seated at a card-table, playing whist with Lord Callonby for her partner. Who the other players were, he knew not. A proud man was Nicholas, as he saw his mistress thus placed, actually sitting, as he afterwards expressed it, "forenint the Lord;" but his thoughts were bent on other matters, and it was no time to indulge his vauntings.

He strove for some time patiently to catch her eye, for she was so situated as to permit of this, but without success. He then made a slight attempt to attract her attention by beckoning with his finger all in vain. "Oh, murther," said he, "what is this for? I'll have to spake afther all."

"Four by honors," said his lordship, "and the odd trick. Another double, I believe, Miss O'Dowd."

Miss O'Dowd nodded a graceful assent, while a sharp-looking old dowager at the side of the table called out, "A rubber of four only, my lord;" and now began an explanation from the whole party at once. Nicholas saw this was his time, and thought that in the *mêlée*, his hint might reach his mistress unobserved by the remainder of the company. He accordingly protruded his head into the room, and placing his finger on the side of his nose, and shutting one eye knowingly, with an air of great secrecy, whispered out, "Miss Betty—Miss Betty, alanah!" For some minutes the hum of the voices drowned his admonitions, but as, by degrees waxing warmer in the cause, he called out more loudly, every eye was turned to the spot from whence these extraordinary sounds proceeded; and certainly the appearance of Nicholas at the moment was well calculated to astonish the company of a drawing-room. With his one eye fixed eagerly in the direction of his mistress, his red scratch wig pushed back off his forehead, in the eagerness of his endeavor to be heard, there he stood, perfectly unmindful of all around, save Miss O'Dowd herself. It may well be believed that such an apparition could not be witnessed with gravity, and, accordingly, a general titter ran through the room, the whist party, still contending about odd tricks and honors, being the only persons insensible to the mirth around them. "Miss Betty, arrah, Miss Betty," said Nicholas, with a sigh, that converted the subdued laughter of the guests into a perfect burst of mirth.

"Eh," said his lordship, turning round, what is this? We are losing something excellent, I fear."

At this moment, he caught a glimpse of Nicholas, and, throwing himself back in his chair, laughed immoderately. It was now Miss Betty's turn; she was about to rise from the table, when the well-known accents of Nicholas fell upon her ear. She fell back in her seat—there he was: the messenger of the foul fiend himself would

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THERE STOOD THE ACCURSED NICHOLAS GLOWERING AT HER STILL. (P 21)

have been more welcome at that moment. Her blood rushed to her face and temples; her hands tingled; she closed her eyes, and when she opened them there stood the accursed Nicholas glowering at her still.

"Man—man!" said she at length, "what do you mean? What do you want here?"

Poor Nicholas, little guessing that the question was intended to throw a doubt upon her acquaintance with him, and conceiving that the hour for the announcement had come, hesitated for an instant how he should designate the conveyance. He could not call it a coach! it certainly was not a buggy—neither was it a jaunting-car: what should he say! He looked earnestly, and even imploringly, at his mistress, as if to convey some sense of his difficulty, and then, as it were catching a sudden inspiration, winked once more, as he said,—

"Miss Betty—the—the—the——"—and here he looked indescribably droll—"the thing *you know* is at the door."

All his lordship's politeness was too little for the occasion, and Miss O'Dowd's tenantry were lost to the Callonby interest forever.

CHAPTER IV.

BOTANICAL STUDIES—THE NATURAL SYSTEM PREFERABLE TO THE LINNÆAN.

"THE carriage is at the door, my lord," said a servant, entering the luncheon-room where we were all assembled.

"Now then, Mr. Lorrequer," said Lord Callonby, "allons, take another glass of wine, and let us away. I expect you to make a most brilliant speech, remember!"

His lordship here alluded to our intention of visiting a remote barony, where a meeting of the freeholders was that day to be held, and at which I was pledged for a "neat and appropriate" oration in abuse of the Corn-laws and the Holy Alliance.

"I beg pardon, my lord," said her ladyship, in a most languishing tone; "but Mr. Lorrequer is pre-engaged; he has for the last week been promising and deferring his visit to the new conservatory with me, where he is to find out four or five of the Swiss shrubs that Collins cannot make out—and which I am dying to know all about."

"Mr. Lorrequer is a false man then," said Lady Catherine, "for he said at breakfast that we should devote this afternoon to the chalk-caves, as the tide will be so far out that we can see them all perfectly."

"And I," said Lord Kilkee, "must put in my plea, that the aforesaid Mr. Lorrequer is booked for a coursing match—'Mouche *versus* Jessie.'—Guilty or not guilty?"

Lady Jane alone of all said not a word.

"Guilty on every count of the indictment," said I; "I throw myself on the mercy of the court."

"Let his sentence then be banishment," said Lady Catherine, with affected anger, "and let him go with papa."

"I rather think," said Lord Kilkee, "the better plan is to let him visit the conservatory, for I'd wager a fifty he finds it more difficult to invent botany than canvass freeholders—eh?"

"I am sure," said Lady Jane, for the first time breaking silence, "that mamma is infinitely flattered by the proposal that Mr. Lorrequer's company is to be conferred upon her for her sins."

"I am not to be affronted, nor quizzed out of my chaperon; here, Mr. Lorrequer," said Lady Callonby, rising, "get Smith's book there, and let me have your arm; and now, young ladies, come along, and learn something, if you can."

"An admirable proviso," said Lord Kilkee, laughing, "if his botany be only as authentic as the autographs he gave Mrs. MacDermot, and all of which he wrote himself, in my dressing-room, in half an hour. Napoleon was the only difficult one in the number."

Most fortunately this unfair disclosure did not reach her ladyship's ears, as she was busily engaged putting on her bonnet, and I was yet unassailed in reputation to her.

"Good-bye, then," said Lord Callonby; "we meet at seven." And in a few moments the little party were scattered to their several destinations.

"How very hot you have this place, Collins," said Lady Callonby, as we entered the conservatory.

"Only seventy-five, my lady, and the magnolias require heat."

I here dropped a little behind, as if to examine a plant, and in a half-whisper said to Lady Jane,—

"How came it that you alone, Lady Jane, should forget that I had made another appointment? I thought you wished to make a sketch of Craigmoran Abbey—did you forget that we were to ride there to-day?"

Before she could reply, Lady Callonby

called out—"Oh, here it is, Mr. Lorrequer. Is this a heath? that is the question."

Here her ladyship pointed to a little scrubby thing, that looked very like a birch rod. I proceeded to examine it most minutely, while Collins waited with all the intense anxiety of a man whose character depended on the sentence.

"Collins will have it a jungermania," said she.

"And Collins is right," said I, not trusting myself with the pronunciation of the awful word her ladyship uttered.

Collins looked ridiculously happy.

"Now that is so delightful," said Lady Callonby, as she stopped to look for another puzzle.

"What a wretch it is," said Lady Catherine, covering her face with a handkerchief.

"What a beautiful little flower," said Lady Jane, lifting up the bell of a lobelia splendens.

"You know, of course," said I, "what they call that flower in France—L'amour tendre."

"Indeed!"

"True, I assure you; may I present you with this sprig of it?" cutting off a small twig, and presenting it at the same instant unseen by the others.

She hesitated for an instant, and then, extending her fair and taper hand, took it. I dared not look at her as she did so, but a proud swelling triumph at my heart nearly choked me.

"Now, Collins," said Lady Callonby, "I cannot find the Alpen-tree I brought from the Gründenwald."

Collins hurried forward to her ladyship's side.

Lady Catherine was also called to assist in the search.

I was alone with Lady Jane.

"Now or never," thought I; I hesitated—I stammered—my voice faltered. She saw my agitation; she participated in, and increased it. At last I summoned up courage to touch her hand; she gently withdrew it—but so gently, it was not a repulse.

"If Lady Jane," said I at length—"if the devoted——"

"Halloa, there," said a deep voice without, "is Mr. Lorrequer there?"

It was Lord Kilkee, returned from his coursing match. None but he who has felt such an interruption can feel for me. I shame to say that his brotherhood to her, for whom I would have perilled my life, restrained me not from something very like a hearty commendation of him to the powers that——

"Down, dogs, there—down!" continued he, and in a moment after entered the conservatory, flushed and heated with the chase.

"Mouche is the winner—two to one—and so, Master Shallow, I owe you a thousand pounds."

Would to Heaven that I had lost the wager, had it only taken a little longer to decide it! I of course appeared overjoyed at my dog's success, and listened with great pretense of interest to the narrative of the "run;" the more so because, that though perhaps more my friend than the older members of the family, Lord Kilkee evidently liked less than them my growing intimacy with his sister; and I was anxious to blind him on the present occasion, when, but for his recent excitement, very little penetration would have enabled him to detect that something unusual had taken place.

It was now so nearly dark, that her ladyship's further search for the alpine treasure became impossible, and so we turned our steps toward the garden, where we continued to walk till joined by Lord Callonby. And now began a most active discussion upon agriculture, rents, tithes, and Toryism, in which the ladies took but little part; and I had the mortification to perceive that Lady Jane was excessively bored, and seized the first opportunity to leave the party and return to the house; while her sister gave me from time to time certain knowing glances, as if intimating that my knowledge of farming and political economy were pretty much on a par with my proficiency in botany.

"One has discovered me at least," thought I; but the bell had rung to dress for dinner, and I hastened to my room to think over future plans, and once more wonder at the singular position into which fate and the "rules of the service" had thrown me.

CHAPTER V.

PUZZLED—EXPLANATION MAKES BAD WORSE—A DUEL.

"ANY letters?" said her ladyship to a servant, as she crossed the hall.

"Only one, my lady—for Mr. Lorrequer, I believe."

"For me!" thought I; "how is this?" My letters had been hitherto always left in Kilrush. Why was this forwarded here? I hurried to the drawing-room,

"You don't mean to demand another shot," said Curzon.

"Faith do I," said the doctor, coolly.

"Then," said Curzon, "I must tell you most unequivocally I refuse, and shall now withdraw my friend; and had it not been for a regulation peculiar to our regiment, but never intended to include cases of this nature, we had not been here now; for, up to this hour, my principal and myself are in utter ignorance of any cause of offense ever having been offered by him to Mr. Beamish."

"Giles, do you hear this?" said the doctor.

But Giles did not hear it, for the rapid loss of blood from his wound had so weakened him, that he had fainted, and lay peaceably on the grass. Etiquette was now at an end, and we all ran forward to assist the wounded man. For some minutes he lay apparently quite senseless, and when he at last rallied and looked wildly about him, it appeared to be with difficulty that he recalled any recollection of the place, and the people around him; for a few seconds he fixed his eyes steadily upon the doctor, and with a lip pale and bloodless, and a voice quivering from weakness, said,—

"Fin! didn't I tell ye that pistol always threw high? Oh!"—and this he said with a sigh that nearly overpowered him —"oh, Fin, if you had only given me the saw-handled one, that *I am used to*——But it is no good talking now."

In my inmost heart I was grateful to the little doctor for his mistake, for I plainly perceived what "the saw-handled one he was used to" might have done for me, and could not help muttering to myself with good Sir Andrew—"If I had known he was so cunning of fence, I'd have seen him damned before that I fought with him."

Our first duty was now to remove the wounded man to the high road, about which both he himself and his second seemed disposed to make some difficulty. They spoke together for a few moments in a low tone of voice, and then the doctor addressed us—"We feel, gentlemen, this is not a time for any concealment; but the truth is, we have need of great circumspection here, for I must inform you, we are both of us bound over in heavy recognizances to keep the peace."

"Bound over to keep the peace!" said Curzon and myself together.

"Nothing less; and although there is nobody hereabout would tell, yet if the affair got into the papers by any means, why there are some people in Cork would like to press my friend there, for he is a very neat shot when he has the saw-handle." And here the doctor winked.

We had little time permitted us to think upon the oddity of meeting a man in such circumstances, for we were now obliged to contribute our aid in conveying him to the road, where some means might be procured for his transfer to Kilrush, or some other town in the neighborhood, for he was by this time totally unable to walk.

After half an hour's toiling we at last did reach the highway, by which time I had ample opportunity, short as the space was, to see something of the character of our two opponents. It appeared that the doctor exercised the most absolute control over his large friend, dictating and commanding in a tone which the other never ventured to resist. For a moment or two Mr. Beamish expressed a great desire to be conveyed by night to Kilrush, where he might find means to cross the Shannon into Kerry. This, however, the doctor opposed strenuously, from the risk of publicity; and finally settled that we should all go in a body to his friend Father Malachi Brennan's house, only two miles off, where the sick man would have the most tender care, and, what the doctor considered equally indispensable, we ourselves a most excellent supper, and a hearty welcome.

"You know Father Malachi, of course, Mr. Lorrequer?"

"I am ashamed to say I do not."

"Not know Malachi Brennan, and live in Clare! Well, well, that is strange! Sure he is the priest of this country for twelve miles in every direction of you, and a better man, and a pleasanter, there does not live in the diocese; though I'm his cousin that says it."

After professing all the possible pleasure it would afford my friend and myself to make the acquaintance of Father Malachi, we proceeded to place Mr. Beamish in a car that was passing at the time, and started for the residence of the good priest. The whole of the way thither I was occupied but by one thought, a burning anxiety to know the cause of our quarrel, and I longed for the moment when I might get the doctor apart from his friend to make the inquiry.

"There—look down to your left, where you see the lights shining so brightly, that is Father Malachi's house; as sure as my name is De Courcy Finucane, there's fun going on there this night."

"Why, there certainly does seem a great illumination in the valley there," said I.

"May I never," said the doctor, "if it isn't a station——"

"A station !—pray, may I ask——"

"You need not ask a word on the subject; for, if I am a true prophet, you'll know what it means before morning."

A little more chatting together brought us to a narrow road, flanked on either side by high hedges of hawthorn, and, in a few minutes more, we stood before the priest's residence, a long, whitewashed, thatched house, having great appearance of comfort and convenience. Arrived here, the doctor seemed at once to take on him the arrangement of the whole party; for, after raising the latch and entering the house, he returned to us in a few minutes, and said,—

"Wait a while, now; we'll not go in to Father Malachi till we've put Giles to bed."

We, accordingly, lifted him from the car, and assisted him into the house, and, following Finucane down a narrow passage, at last reached a most comfortable little chamber, with a neat bed. Here we placed him, while the doctor gave some directions to a bare-headed, red-legged hussey, without shoes or stockings, and himself proceeded to examine the wound, which was a more serious one than it at first appeared.

After half an hour thus occupied, during which time roars of merriment and hearty peals of laughter burst upon us every time the door opened, from a distant part of the house, where his reverence was entertaining his friends, and which as often as they were heard by the doctor, seemed to produce in him sensations not unlike those that afflicted the "wedding guest" in the "Ancient Mariner," when he heard the "loud bassoon," and as certainly imparted an equally longing desire to be a partaker in the mirth. We arranged everything satisfactorily for Mr. Beamish's comfort, and with a large basin of vinegar and water, to keep his knee cool, and a strong tumbler of hot punch, to keep his heart warm—homœopathic medicine is not half so new as Dr. Hahnneman would make us believe—we left Mr. Beamish to his own meditations, and doubtless regrets, that he did not get "the saw-handled one he was used to," while we proceeded to make our bows to Father Malachi Brennan.

But, as I have no intention to treat the good priest with ingratitude, I shall not present him to my readers at the tail of a chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRIEST'S SUPPER—FATHER MALACHI AND THE COADJUTOR—MAJOR JONES AND THE ABBÉ.

At the conclusion of our last chapter we left our quondam antagonist, Mr. Beamish, stretched at full length upon a bed practising homœopathy, by administering hot punch to his fever, while we followed our chaperon, Doctor Finucane, into the presence of the Reverend Father Brennan.

The company into which we now, without any ceremony on our parts, introduced ourselves, consisted of from five-and-twenty to thirty persons, seated around a large oak table, plentifully provided with materials for drinking, and cups, goblets, and glasses of every shape and form. The moment we entered, the doctor stepped forward, and touching Father Malachi on the shoulder—for so I rightly guessed him to be—presented himself to his relative, by whom he was welcomed with every demonstration of joy. While their recognitions were exchanged, and while the doctor explained the reasons of our visit, I was enabled, undisturbed and unnoticed, to take a brief survey of the party.

Father Malachi Brennan, P.P. of Carrigaholt, was what I had often pictured to myself as the beau idéal of his caste. His figure was short, fleshy, and enormously muscular, and displayed proportions which wanted but height to constitute a perfect Hercules; his legs so thick in the calf, so taper in the ankle, looked like nothing I know, except, perhaps, the metal balustrades of Carlisle-bridge; his face was large and rosy, and the general expression, a mixture of unbounded good humor and inexhaustible drollery, to which the restless activity of his black and arched eyebrows greatly contributed; and his mouth, were it not for a character of sensuality and voluptuousness about the nether lip, had been actually handsome; his head was bald, except a narrow circle close above the ears, which was marked by a ring of curly dark hair, sadly insufficient, however, to conceal a development behind, that, if there be truth in phrenology, boded but little happiness to the disciples of Miss Martineau.

Add to these external signs a voice, rich, fluent, and racy, with the mellow "doric" of his country, and you have some faint resemblance of one "every inch a priest." The very antipodes to the *bonhomie* of this figure, confronted him as croupier at the foot of the table. This, as I afterwards

learned, was no less a person than Mister Donovan, the co-adjutor or "curate." He was a tall, spare, ungainly looking man of about five-and-thirty, with a pale, ascetic countenance, the only readable expression of which vibrated between low suspicion and intense vulgarity; over his low, projecting forehead hung down a mass of straight red hair; indeed—for nature is not a politician—it almost approached an orange hue. This was cut close to the head all round, and displayed in their full proportions a pair of enormous ears, which stood out in "relief," like turrets from a watch-tower, and with pretty much the same object; his skin was of that peculiar color and texture, to which, not all "the water in great Neptune's ocean" could impart a look of cleanliness, while his very voice, hard, harsh, and inflexible, was unprepossessing and unpleasant. And yet, strange as it may seem, he too, was a correct type of his order; the only difference being, that Father Malachi was an older coinage, with the impress of Douai or St. Omer, whereas Mister Donovan was the shining metal, fresh stamped from the mint of Maynooth.

While thus occupied in my surveillance of the scene before me, I was roused by the priest saying,

"Ah, Fin, my darling, you needn't deny it; you're at the old game as sure as my name is Malachi, and ye'll never be easy nor quiet till ye're sent beyond the sea, or maybe have a record of your virtues on half a ton of marble in the churchyard, yonder."

"Upon my honor—upon the sacred honor of a De Courcy——"

"Well, well, never mind it now; ye see ye're just keeping your friends cooling themselves there in the corner—introduce me at once."

"Mr. Lorrequer, I'm sure——"

"My name is Curzon," said the adjutant, bowing.

"A mighty pretty name, though a little profane. Well, Mr. Curseon," for so he pronounced it, "ye're as welcome as the flowers in May; and it's mighty proud I am to see ye here."

"Mr. Lorrequer, allow me to shake your hand—I've heard of ye before."

There seemed nothing very strange in that; for go where I would through this country, I seemed as generally known as ever was Brummell in Bond-street.

"Fin tells me," continued Father Malachi, "that ye'd rather not be known down here, in regard of a reason;" and here he winked. "Make yourselves quite easy; the king's writ was never but once in these parts; and the 'original and true copy' went back to Limerick in the stomach of the server; they made him eat it, Mr. Lorrequer! but it's as well to be cautious, for there are a good number here. A little dinner, a little quarterly dinner we have among us, Mr. Curseon, to be social together, and raise a 'thrifle' for the Irish college at Rome, where we have a probationer or two, ourselves."

"As good as a station, and more drink," whispered Fin into my ear.

"And now," continued the priest, "ye must just permit me to re-christen ye both, and the contribution will not be the less for what I'm going to do; and I'm certain you'll not be the worse for the change, Mr. Curseon—though 'tis only for a few hours, ye'll have a decent name."

As I could see no possible objection to this proposal, nor did Curzon, either, our only desire being to maintain the secrecy necessary for our antagonist's safety, we at once assented; when Father Malachi took me by the hand, but with such a total change in his whole air and deportment, that I was completely puzzled by it. He led me forward to the company with a good deal of that ceremonious reverence I have often admired in Sir Charles Vernon, when conducting some full-blown dowager through the mazes of a castle minuet. The desire to laugh outright was almost irresistible, as the Rev. Father stood at arm's length from me, still holding my hand, and bowing to the company pretty much in the style of a manager introducing a blushing *débutante* to an audience. A moment more, and I must have inevitably given way to a burst of laughter, when what was my horror to hear the priest present me to the company as their "excellent, worthy, generous, and patriotic young landlord, Lord Kilkee. Cheer every mother's son of ye; cheer, I say;" and certainly precept was never more strenuously backed by example, for he huzzaed till I thought he would burst a blood-vessel; may I add, I almost wished it, such was the insufferable annoyance, the chagrin, this announcement gave me; and I waited with eager impatience for the din and clamor to subside, to disclaim every syllable of the priest's announcement, and take the consequences of my baptismal epithet, cost what it might. To this I was impelled by many and important reasons. Situated as I was with respect to the Callonby family, my assumption of their name at such a moment might get abroad, and the consequences to

me be inevitable ruin; and independent of my natural repugnance to such sailing under false colors, I saw Curzon laughing almost to suffocation at my wretched predicament, and (so strong within me was the dread of ridicule) I thought, "what a pretty narrative he is concocting for the mess this minute." I rose to reply; and whether Father Malachi, with his intuitive quickness, guessed my purpose or not, I cannot say, but he certainly resolved to out-manœuvre me, and he succeeded: while with one hand he motioned to the party to keep silence, with the other he took hold of Curzon, but with no peculiar or very measured respect, and introduced him as Mr. M'Neesh, the new Scotch steward and improver—a character at that time whose popularity might compete with a tithe proctor or an exciseman. So completely did this tactic turn the tables upon the poor adjutant, who the moment before was exulting over me, that I utterly forgot my own woes, and sat down convulsed with mirth at his situation—an emotion certainly not lessened as I saw Curzon passed from one to the other at table, "like a pauper to his parish," till he found an asylum at the very foot, in juxta with the engaging Mr. Donovan, a propinquity, if I might judge from their countenances, uncoveted by either party.

While this was performing, Doctor Finucane was making his recognitions with several of the company, to whom he had been long known during his visits to the neighborhood. I now resumed my place on the right of "the father," abandoning for the present all intention of disclaiming my rank, and the campaign was opened. The priest now exerted himself to the utmost to recall conversation into the original channels, and if possible to draw off attention from me, which he still feared might, perhaps, elicit some unlucky announcement on my part. Failing in his endeavors to bring matters to their former footing, he turned the whole brunt of his attentions to the worthy doctor, who sat on his left.

"How goes on the law," said he, "Fin? —any new proofs, as they call them, forthcoming?"

What Fin replied I could not hear, but the allusion to the "suit" was explained by Father Malachi informing us that the only impediment between his cousin and the title of Kinsale lay in the unfortunate fact that his grandmother, "rest her sowl," was not a man.

Dr. Finucane winced a little under the manner in which this was spoken, but returned the fire by asking if the bishop was down lately in that quarter? The evasive way in which "the father" replied having stimulated my curiosity as to the reason, little entreaty was necessary to persuade the doctor to relate the following anecdote, which was not relished the less by his superior, that it told somewhat heavily on Mr. Donovan.

"It is about four years ago," said the doctor, "since the bishop, Dr. Plunkett, took it into his head that he'd make a general inspection, 'a reconnaissance,' as we'd call it, Mr. Lor—that is, my lord! through the whole diocese, and leave no part, far or near, without poking his nose in it and seeing how matters were doing. He heard very queer stories about his reverence here, and so down he came one morning in the month of July, riding upon an old grey hack, looking just for all the world like any other elderly gentleman in very rusty black. When he got near the village he picked up a little boy to show him the short cut across the fields to the house here; and as his lordship was a 'sharp man and a shrewd,' he kept his eye on everything as he went along, remarking this, and noting down that.

"'Are ye regular in your duties, my son?' said he to the child.

"'I never miss a Sunday,' said the gossoon; 'for it's always walking his reverence's horse I am the whole time av prayers.'

"His lordship said no more for a little while, when he muttered between his teeth, 'Ah, it's just slander—nothing but slander and lying tongues.' This soliloquy was caused by his remarking that on every gate he passed, or from every cabin, two or three urchins would come out half naked, but all with the finest heads of red hair he ever saw in his life.

"'How is it, my son,' said he, at length; 'they tell very strange stories about Father Malachi, and I see so many of these children with red hair. Eh—now Father Malachi's a dark man.'

"'True for ye,' said the boy; 'true for ye, Father Malachi's dark; but the coadjutor!—the coadjutor's as red as a fox.'"

When the laugh this story caused had a little subsided, Father Malachi called out, "Mickey Oulahan! Mickey, I say, hand his lordship over 'the groceries'"—thus he designated a square decanter containing about two quarts of whisky, and a bowl heaped high with sugar—"a dacent boy is Mickey, my lord, and I'm happy to be the means of making him known to you." I bowed with condescension, while Mr.

Oulahan's eyes sparkled like diamonds at the recognition.

"He has only two years of the lease to run, and a 'long charge'" (*anglicè*, a large family), continued the priest.

"I'll not forget him, you may depend upon it," said I.

"Do you hear that," said Father Malachi, casting a glance of triumph round the table, while a general buzz of commendation on priest and patron went round, with many such phrases as "Och, thin," "it's his riv'rance *can* do it," "na bocklish," "and why not," etc., etc. As for me, I have already "confessed" to my crying sin—a fatal irresistible inclination to follow the humor of the moment wherever it led me; and now I found myself as active a partisan in quizzing Mickey Oulahan, as though I was not myself a party included in the jest. I was thus fairly launched into my inveterate habit, and nothing could arrest my progress.

One by one the different individuals round the table were presented to me and made known their various wants, with an implicit confidence in my power of relieving them, which I with equal readiness ministered to. I lowered the rent of every man at table. I made a general gaol delivery, an act of grace (I blush to say) which seemed to be peculiarly interesting to the present company. I abolished all arrears—made a new line of road through an impassable bog and over an inaccessible mountain—and conducted water to a mill which (I learned in the morning) was always worked by wind. The decanter had scarcely completed its third circuit of the board, when I bid fair to be the most popular specimen of the peerage that ever visited the "far west." In the midst of my career of universal benevolence, I was interrupted by Father Malachi, whom I found on his legs, pronouncing a glowing eulogium on his cousin's late regiment, the famous North Cork.

"That was the corps!" said he. "Bid them do a thing, and they'd never leave off; and so, when they got orders to retire from Wexford, it's little they cared for the comforts of baggage, like many another regiment, for they threw away everything but their canteens, and never stopped till they ran to Ross, fifteen miles farther than the enemy followed them. And when they were all in bed the same night, fatigued and tired with their exertions, as ye may suppose, a drummer-boy called out in his sleep—'Here they are—they're coming!' they all jumped up and set off in their shirts, and got two miles out of town before they discovered it was a false alarm."

Peal after peal of laughter followed the priest's encomium on the doctor's regiment; and, indeed, he himself joined most heartily in the mirth, as he might well afford to do, seeing that a braver or better corps than the North Cork, Ireland did not possess.

"Well," said Fin, "it's easy to see ye never can forget what they did at Maynooth."

Father Malachi disclaimed all personal feeling on the subject; and I was at last gratified by the following narrative, which I regret deeply I am not enabled to give in the doctor's own words; but writing as I do from memory—in most instances—I can only convey the substance:

It was towards the latter end of the year '98—the year of the troubles—that the North Cork was ordered, "for their sins," I believe, to march from their snug quarters in Fermoy and take up a position in the town of Maynooth—a very considerable reverse of fortune to a set of gentlemen extremely addicted to dining out, and living at large upon a very pleasant neighborhood. Fermoy abounded in gentry; Maynooth, at that time, had few, if any, excepting his Grace of Leinster, and he lived very privately, and saw no company. Maynooth was stupid and dull—there were neither belles nor balls; Fermoy (to use the doctor's well remembered words) had "great feeding," and "very genteel young ladies, that carried their handkerchiefs in bags, and danced with the officers."

They had not been many weeks in their new quarters when they began to pine over their altered fortunes, and it was with a sense of delight, which a few months before would have been incomprehensible to them, they discovered that one of their officers had a brother, a young priest in the college: he introduced him to some of his confrères, and the natural result followed. A visiting acquaintance began between the regiment and such of the members of the college as had liberty to leave the precincts: who, as time ripened the acquaintance into intimacy, very naturally preferred the mess of the North Cork to the meagre fare of "the refectory." At last, seldom a day went by without one or two of their reverences finding themselves guests at the mess. The North Corkians were of a most hospitable turn, and the fathers were determined the virtue should not rust for want of being exercised; they would just drop in to say a word to "Captain O'Flaherty about leave to shoot in the

demense," as Carton was styled; or, they had a "frank from the Duke for the Colonel," or some other equally pressing reason; and they would contrive to be caught in the middle of a very droll story just as the "roast beef" was playing. Very little entreaty then sufficed—a short apology for the "derangements" of dress, and a few minutes more found them seated at table without further ceremony on either side.

Among the favorite guests from the college, two were peculiarly in estimation—"the Professor of the Humanities," Father Luke Mooney; and the Abbé d'Array, "the Lecturer on Moral Philosophy and Belles Lettres;" and certain it is, pleasanter fellows, or more gifted with the "convivial bump," there never existed. He of the Humanities was a droll dog—a member of the Curran Club, the "monks of the Screw," told an excellent story, and sang the "Cruiskeen Lawn" better than did any before or since him;—the moral philosopher, though of a different *genre*, was also a most agreeable companion, an Irishman transplanted in his youth to St. Omer, and who had grafted upon his native humor a considerable share of French smartness and repartee—such were the two, who ruled supreme in all the festive arrangements of this jovial regiment, and were at last as regular at table as the adjutant and the paymaster, and so might they have continued, had not prosperity, that, in its blighting influence upon the heart, spares neither priests nor laymen, and is equally severe upon mice (see Æsop's fable) and moral philosophers, actually deprived them, for the "nonce," of reason, and tempted them to their ruin. You naturally ask, what did they do? Did they venture upon allusions to the retreat upon Ross? Nothing of the kind. Did they, in that vanity which wine inspires, refer by word, act, or inuendo, to the well-known order of their Colonel when reviewing his regiment in "the Phœnix," to "advance two steps backwards and dress by the gutter?" Far be it from them; though indeed either of these had been esteemed light in the balance with their real crime. "Then, what was their failing—come, tell it, and burn ye?" They actually, I dread to say it, quizzed the Major *coram* the whole mess!—Now, Major John Jones had only lately exchanged into the North Cork from the "Darry Ragement," as he called it. He was a red-hot Orangeman, a deputy-grand something, and vice-chairman of the "'Prentice Boys" besides. He broke his leg when a schoolboy, by a fall incurred in tying an orange handkerchief around King William's august neck in College-green on one 12th of July, and three several times had closed the gates of Derry with his own loyal hands, on the famed anniversary; in a word, he was one that, if his Church had enjoined penance as an expiation for sin, would have looked upon a trip to Jerusalem on his bare knees as a very light punishment for the crime on his conscience, that he sat at table with two buck priests from Maynooth, and carved for them, like the rest of the company!

Poor Major Jones, however, had no such solace, and the cankerworm ate daily deeper and deeper into his pining heart. During the three or four weeks of their intimacy with his regiment, his martyrdom was awful. His figure wasted, and his color became a deeper tinge of orange, and all around averred that there would soon be a "move up" in the corps, for the major had evidently "got his notice to quit" this world and its pomps and vanities. He felt "that he was dying," to use Haynes Bayley's beautiful and apposite words, and meditated an exchange; but that, from circumstances, was out of the question. At last, subdued by grief, and probably his spirit having chafed itself smooth by such constant attrition, he became, to all seeming, calmer; but it was only the calm of a broken and weary heart. Such was Major Jones at the time when, "suadente diabolo," it seemed meet to Fathers Mooney and D'Array to make him the butt of their raillery. At first, he could not believe it; the thing was incredible—impossible; but when he looked around the table, when he heard the roars of laughter, long, loud, and vociferous; when he heard his name bandied from one to the other across the table, with some vile jest tacked to it "like a tin kettle to a dog's tail," he awoke to the full measure of his misery—the cup was full. Fate had done her worst, and he might have exclaimed with Lear, "Spit, fire—spout, rain," there was nothing in store for him of further misfortune.

A drum-head court-martial—a hint "to sell out"—ay, a sentence of "dismissed the service," had been mortal calamities, and, like a man, he would have borne them; but that he, Major John Jones, D. G. S. C. P. B., etc. etc., who had drunk the "pious, glorious, and immortal," sitting astride of "the great gun of Athlone," should come to this! Alas, and alas! He retired that night to his chamber a "sadder if not a wiser man;" he dreamed that the "statue" had given

place to the unshapely figure of Leo X., and that "Lundy now stood where Walker stood before." He jumped from his bed in a moment of enthusiasm, he vowed his revenge, and he kept his vow.

That day the major was "acting field officer." The various patrols, sentries, pickets, and outposts, were all under his especial control; and it was remarked that he took peculiar pains in selecting the men for night duty, which, in the prevailing quietness and peace of that time, seemed scarcely warrantable.

Evening drew near, and Major Jones, summoned by the "oft-heard beat," wended his way to the mess. The officers were dropping in, and true as "the needle to the pole," came Father Mooney and the Abbé. They were welcomed with the usual warmth, and, strange to say, by none more than the major himself, whose hilarity knew no bounds.

How the evening passed, I shall not stop to relate: suffice it to say, that a more brilliant feast of wit and jollification not even the North Cork ever enjoyed. Father Luke's drollest stories, his very quaintest humor, shone forth, and the Abbé sang a new "*chanson à boire*," that Béranger might have envied.

"What are you about, my dear Father D'Array?" said the Colonel: "you are surely not rising yet; here's a fresh cooper of port just come in; sit down, I entreat."

"I say it with grief, my dear Colonel, we must away; the half-hour has just chimed, and we must be within the 'gates' before twelve. The truth is, the superior has been making himself very troublesome about our 'carnal amusements,' as he calls our innocent mirth, and we must therefore be upon our guard."

"Well, if it must be so, we shall not risk losing your society altogether for an hour or so now; so, one bumper to our next meeting—to-morrow, mind, and now, Monsieur l'Abbé, au revoir."

The worthy fathers finished their glasses, and taking a most affectionate leave of their kind entertainers, sallied forth under the guidance of Major Jones, who insisted upon accompanying them part of the way, as, "from information he had received, the sentries were doubled in some places, and the usual precautions against surprise all taken." Much as this polite attention surprised the objects of it, his brother officers wondered still more, and no sooner did they perceive the major and his companions issue forth, than they set out in a body to watch where this most novel and unexpected complaisance would terminate.

When the priests reached the door of the barrack-yard, they again turned to utter their thanks to the major, and entreat him once more "not to come a step farther. There now, major, we know the path well, so just give us the pass, and don't stay out in the night air."

"Ah oui, Monsieur Jones," said the Abbé, "retournez, je vous prie. We are, I may say, chez nous. Ces braves gens, les North Cork, know us by this time."

The major smiled, while he still pressed his services to see them past the pickets, but they were resolved, and would not be denied.

"With the word for the night we want nothing more," said Father Luke.

"Well, then," said the major, in the gravest tone—and he was naturally grave—"you shall have your way; but remember to call out loud, for the first sentry is a little deaf, and a very passionate, ill-tempered fellow to boot."

"Never fear," said Father Mooney, laughing, "I'll go bail he'll hear me."

"Well—the word for the night is—'Bloody end to the Pope,'—don't forget, now, 'Bloody end to the Pope.'" And with these words he banged the door between him and the unfortunate priests; and, as bolt was fastened after bolt, they heard him laughing to himself like a fiend over his vengeance.

"And big bad luck to ye, Major Jones, for the same, every day ye see a paving-stone," was the faint sub-audible ejaculation of Father Luke, when he was recovered enough to speak.

"Sacristi! que nous sommes attrapée," said the Abbé, scarcely able to avoid laughing at the situation in which they were placed.

"Well, there's the quarter chiming now; we've no time to lose.—Major Jones! Major darling! don't now, ah, don't! sure ye know we'll be ruined entirely—there now, just change it, like a dacent fellow—the devil's luck to him, he's gone. Well, we can't stay here in the rain all night, and be expelled in the morning afterwards—so come along."

They jogged along for a few minutes in silence, till they came to that part of the "Duke's" demesne wall, where the first sentry was stationed. By this time the officers, headed by the major, had quietly slipped out of the gate, and were following their steps at a convenient distance.

The fathers had stopped to consult together what they should do in this trying

emergency—when their whisper being overheard, the sentinel called out gruffly, in the genuine dialect of his country, "Who goes *that?*"

"Father Luke Mooney, and the Abbé D'Array," said the former, in his most bland and insinuating tone of voice, a quality he most eminently possessed.

"Stand and give the countersign."

"We are coming from the mess, and going home to the college," said Father Mooney, evading the question, and gradually advancing as he spoke.

"Stand, or I'll *shot* ye," said the North Corkian.

Father Luke halted, while a muttered "Blessed Virgin!" announced his state of fear and trepidation.

"D'Array, I say, what are we to do?"

"The countersign," said the sentry, whose figure they could perceive in the dim distance of about thirty yards.

"Sure ye'll let us pass, my good lad, and ye'll have a friend in Father Luke the longest day ye live, and ye might have a worse in time of need; ye understand."

Whether he did understand or not, he certainly did not heed, for his only reply was the short click of a gun-lock, that bespeaks a preparation to fire.

"There's no help now," said Father Luke; "I see he's a haythen; and bad luck to the major, I say again." And this, in the fulness of his heart, he uttered aloud.

"That's not the countersign," said the inexorable sentry, striking the butt-end of his musket on the ground with a crash that smote terror into the hearts of the priests.

Mumble—mumble——"to the Pope," said Father Luke, pronouncing the last words distinctly, after the approved practice of a Dublin watchman, on being awoke from his dreams of row and riot by the last toll of the Post-office, and not knowing whether it has struck "twelve" or "three," sings out the word "o'clock," in a long, sonorous drawl, that wakes every sleeping citizen, and yet tells nothing how "Time speeds on his flight."

"Louder," said the sentry, in a voice of impatience.

"——to the Pope."

"I don't hear the first part."

"Oh, then," said the priest, with a sigh that might have melted the heart of anything but a sentry, "Bloody end to the Pope; and may the saints in heaven forgive me for saying it."

"Again," called out the soldier; "and no muttering."

"Bloody end to the Pope," cried Father Luke, in bitter desperation.

"Bloody end to the Pope," echoed the Abbé.

"Pass, Bloody end to the Pope, and good night," said the sentry, resuming his rounds, while a loud and uproarious peal of laughter behind told the unlucky priests they were overheard by others, and that the story would be over the whole town in the morning.

Whether it was that the penance for their heresy took long in accomplishing, or that they never could summon courage sufficient to face their persecutor, certain it is the North Cork saw them no more, nor were they ever observed to pass the precincts of the college while that regiment occupied Maynooth.

Major Jones himself, and his confederates, could not have more heartily relished this story, than did the party to whom the doctor related it. Much, if not all the amusement it afforded, however, resulted from his inimitable mode of telling, and the power of mimicry with which he conveyed the dialogue with the sentry: and this, alas, must be lost to my readers—at least to that portion of them not fortunate enough to possess Dr. Finucane's acquaintance.

"Fin! Fin! your long story has nearly famished me," said the padre, as the laugh subsided; "and there you sit now with the jug at your elbow this half-hour; I never thought you would forget our old friend Martin Hanegan's aunt."

"Here's to her health," said Fin; "and your reverence will give us the chant."

"Agreed," said Father Malachi, finishing a bumper; and after giving a few preparatory hems, he sang the following "singularly wild and beautiful poem," as some one calls Christabel:

'Here's a health to Martin Hanegan's aunt,
And I'll tell ye the reason why!
She eats bekase she is hungry
And drinks bekase she is dry.

And if ever a man,
Stopped the course of a can,
Martin Hanegan's aunt would cry—
'Arrah, fill up your glass,
And let the jug pass;
How d'ye know but your neighbor's dhry?'

"Come, my lord and gentlemen, *da capo*, if ye please—'Fill up your glass,'" etc.; and the *chanson* was chorused with a strength and vigor that would have astonished the Philharmonic.

The mirth and fun now grew "fast and furious;" and Father Malachi, rising with

the occasion, flung his reckless drollery and fun on every side, sparing none, from his cousin to the coadjutor. It was now that peculiar period in the evening's enjoyment, when an expert and practical chairman gives up all interference or management, and leaves everything to take its course; this, then, was the happy moment selected by Father Malachi to propose the little "conthribution." He brought a plate from a side-table, and placing it before him, addressed the company in a very brief but sensible speech, detailing the object of the institution he was advocating, and concluding with the following words: —"And now ye'll just give whatever ye like, according to your means in life, and what ye can spare."

The admonition, like the "morale" of an income tax, having the immediate effect of putting each man against his neighbour, and suggesting to their already excited spirits all the ardor of gambling, without, however, the prospect of gain. The plate was first handed to me in honor of my "rank," and having deposited upon it a handful of small silver, the priest ran his fingers through the coin, and called out:

"Five pounds! at least; not a farthing less, as I am a sinner. Look, then—see, now; they tell ye, the gentlemen don't care for the like of ye! but see for yourselves. May I trouble y'r lordship to pass the plate to Mr. Mahony—he's impatient, I see."

Mr. Mahony, about whom I perceived very little of the impatience alluded to, was a grim-looking old Christian, in a rabbit-skin waistcoat, with long flaps, who fumbled in the recesses of his breeches-pocket for five minutes, and then drew forth three shillings, which he laid upon the plate, with what I fancied very much resembled a sigh.

"Six and sixpence, is it? or five shillings?—all the same, Mr. Mahony, and I'll not forget the thrifle you were speaking about this morning, any way." And here he leaned over as interceding with me for him, but in reality to whisper into my ear, "The greatest miser from this to Castlebar."

"Who's that put down the half guinea in goold?"—(and this time he spoke truth)—"who's that, I say?"

"Tim Kennedy, your reverence," said Tim, stroking his hair down with one hand, and looking proud and modest at the same moment.

"Tim, ye're a credit to us any day, and I always said so. It's a ganger he'd like to be, my lord," said he, turning to me in a kind of stage whisper. I nodded and muttered something, when he thanked me most profoundly as if his suit had prospered.

"Mickey Oulahan—the lord's looking at ye, Mickey." This was said pianissimo across the table, and had the effect of increasing Mr. Oulahan's donation from five shillings to seven—the last two being pitched in very much in the style of a gambler making his final coup, and crying, "*Va banque!*" "The Oulahans were always dacent people—dacent people, my lord."

"Be gorra, the Oulahans was niver dacenter nor the Molowneys, any how," said a tall athletic young fellow, as he threw down three crown pieces, with an energy that made every coin leap from the plate.

"They'll do now," said Father Brennan; "I'll leave them to themselves." And truly the eagerness to get the plate and put down the subscription fully equalled the rapacious anxiety I have witnessed in an old maid at loo to get possession of a thirty-shilling pool, be the same more or less, which lingered on its way to her, in the hands of many a fair competitor.

"Mr. M'Neesh"—Curzon had hitherto escaped all notice—"Mr. M'Neesh, to your good health," cried Father Brennan. "It's many a secret they'll be getting out o' ye down there about the Scotch husbandry."

Whatever poor Curzon knew of "drills," certainly did not extend to them when occupied by turnips. This allusion of the priest's being caught up by the party at the foot of the table, they commenced a series of inquiries into different Scotch plans of tillage—his brief and unsatisfactory answers to which, they felt sure, were given in order to evade imparting information. By degrees, as they continued to press him with questions, his replies grew more short, and a general feeling of dislike on both sides was not very long in following.

The father saw this, and determining, with his usual tact, to repress it, called on the adjutant for a song. Now, whether he had but one in the world, or whether he took this mode of retaliating for the annoyances he had suffered, I know not; but true it is, he finished his tumbler at a draught, and with a voice of no very peculiar sweetness, though abundantly loud began, "The Boyne Water."

He had just reached the word "battle," in the second line, upon which he was bestowing what he meant to be a shake,

when, as if the word suggested it, it seemed the signal for a general engagement. Decanters, glasses, jugs, candlesticks,—ay, and the money-dish,—flew right and left, all originally intended, it is true, for the head of the luckless adjutant, but as they now and then missed their aim, and came in contact with the "wrong man," invariably provoked retaliation, and in a very few minutes the battle became general.

What may have been the doctor's political sentiments on this occasion, I cannot even guess; but he seemed bent upon performing part of a "convivial Lord Stanley," and maintaining a dignified neutrality. With this apparent object, he mounted upon the table, to raise himself, I suppose, above the din and commotion of party clamor, and brandishing a jug of scalding water, bestowed it with perfect impartiality on the combatants on either side. This Whig plan of conciliation, however well-intended, seemed not to prosper with either party; and many were the missiles directed at the ill-starred doctor. Meanwhile Father Malachi, whether following the pacific instinct of his order, in seeking an asylum in troublesome times, or equally moved by old habit to gather coin in low places (much of the money having fallen), was industriously endeavoring to insert himself beneath the table. In this, with one vigorous push, he at last succeeded, but in so doing lifted it from its legs, and thus destroying poor "Fin's" gravity, precipitated him, jug and all, into the thickest of the fray, where he met with that kind of reception such a benefactor ever receives at the hands af a grateful public. I meanwhile hurried to rescue poor Curzon, who, having fallen to the ground, was getting a cast of his features taken in pewter, for such seemed the operation a stout farmer was performing on the adjutant's face with a quart. With considerable difficulty, notwithstanding my supposed "lordship" I succeeded in freeing him from his present position; and he concluding, probably, that enough had been done for one "sitting," most willingly permitted me to lead him from the room. I was soon joined by the doctor, who assisted me in getting my poor friend to bed; which being done, he most eagerly entreated me to join the company. This, however, I firmly but mildly declined, very much to his surprise; for as he remarked "They'll all be like lambs now, for they don't believe there's a whole bone in his body."

Expressing my deep sense of the Christian-like forbearance of the party, I pleaded fatigue and bidding him good-night, adjourned to my bedroom; and here, although the arrangements fell somewhat short of the luxurious ones appertaining to my late apartment at Callonby, they were most grateful at the moment; and having "addressed myself to slumber," fell fast asleep, and only awoke late on the following morning to wonder where I was: from any doubts as to which I was speedily relieved by the entrance of the priest's barefooted "colleen," to deposit on my table a bottle of soda water, and announce breakfast with his reverence's compliments.

Having made a hasty toilet, I proceeded to the parlor, which, however late events might have impressed upon my memory, I could scarcely recognize. Instead of the long oak table and the wassail bowl, there stood near the fire a small round table, covered with a snow-white cloth, upon which shone in unrivalled brightness a very handsome tea-equipage—the hissing kettle on one hob was balanced by a grid-iron with three newly taken trout, frying under the reverential care of Father Malachi himself—a heap of eggs, ranged like shot in an ordnance yard, stood in the middle of the table, while a formidable pile of buttered toast browned before the grate—the morning papers were airing upon the hearth: everything bespoke that attention to comfort and enjoyment one likes to discover in the house where chance may have domesticated him for a day or two.

"Good morning, Mr. Lorrequer. I trust you have rested well," said Father Malachi, as I entered.

"Never better; but where are our friends?"

"I have been visiting and comforting them in their affliction, and I may with truth assert it is not often my fortune to have three as sickly-looking guests. That was a most unlucky affair last night, and I must apologize——"

"Don't say a word, I entreat; I saw how it all occurred, and am quite sure if it had not been for poor Curzon's ill-timed melody——"

"You are quite right," said the father, interrupting me. "Your friend's taste for music—bad luck to it!—was the '*teterrima causa belli.*'"

"And the subscription," said I; "how did it succeed?"

"Oh, the money went in the commotion; and although I have got some seven pounds odd shillings of it, the war was a most expensive one to me. I caught old

Mahony very busy under the table during the fray; but let us say no more about it now—draw over your chair. Tea or coffee? there's the rum if you like it, in French fashion."

I immediately obeyed the injunction, and commenced a vigorous assault upon the trout, caught, as he informed me, "within twenty perches of the house."

"Your poor friend's nose is scarcely regimental," said he, "this morning; and as for Fin, he was never remarkable for beauty, so, though they might cut and hack, they could scarcely disfigure him. As Juvenal says—isn't it Juvenal?—

'Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator;'

or, in the vernacular:

'The empty traveler may whistle
Before the robber and his pistil' (pistol).

There's the Chili vinegar—another morsel of the trout?"

"I thank you; what excellent coffee, Father Malachi!"

"A secret I learned at St. Omer's some thirty years since. Any letters, Bridget?"—to a damsel that entered with a packet in her hand.

"A gossoon from Kilrush, y'r reverence, with a bit of a note for the gentleman there."

"For me!—ah, true enough. 'Harry Lorrequer, Esq., Kilrush.—Try Carrigaholt.'" So ran the superscription—the first part being in a lady's handwriting; the latter very like the "rustic paling" of the worthy Mrs. Healy's style. The seal was a large one, bearing a coronet at top, and the motto, in old Norman-French, told me it came from Callonby.

With what a trembling hand and beating heart I broke it open, and yet feared to read it—so much of my destiny might be in that simple page. For once in my life my sanguine spirit failed me; my mind could take in but one casualty, that Lady Jane had divulged to her family the nature of my attentions, and that in the letter before me lay a cold mandate of dismissal from her presence forever.

At last I summoned courage to read it; but having scrupled to present to my readers the Reverend Father Brennan at the end of a chapter, let me not be less punctilious in the introduction of her ladyship's billet.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LADY'S LETTER—PETER AND HIS ACQUAINTANCES—TOO LATE.

HER ladyship's letter ran thus:

"Callonby, Tuesday morning.

"MY DEAR MR. LORREQUER,—My lord has deputed me to convey to you our adieux, and at the same time express our very great regret that we should not have seen you before our departure from Ireland. A sudden call of the House, and some unexpected ministerial changes, require Lord Callonby's immediate presence in town; and probably before this reaches you we shall be on the road. Lord Kilkee, who left us yesterday, was much distressed at not having seen you—he desired me to say you shall hear from him from Leamington. Although writing amid all the haste and bustle of departure, I must not forget the principal part of my commission, nor, ladylike, defer it to a postscript: my lord entreats that you will, if possible, pass a month or two with us in London this season; and if any difficulty should occur in obtaining leave of abscence, to make any use of his name you think fit at the Horse Guards, where he has some influence. Knowing as I do with what kindness you ever accede to the wishes of your friends, I need not say how much gratification this will afford us all; but *sans response*, we expect you. Believe me to remain, yours very sincerely,

"CHARLOTTE CALLONBY.

"P. S.—We are quite well, except Lady Jane, who has a slight cold, and has been feverish for the last day or two."

Words cannot convey any idea of the torrent of contending emotions under which I perused this letter. The suddenness of the departure, without an opportunity of even a moment's leave-taking, completely unmanned me. What would I not have given to be able to see her once more, even for an instant—to say "a good-bye"—to watch the feeling with which she parted from me, and augur from it either favorably to my heart's dearest hope, or darkest despair. As I continued to read on, the kindly tone of the remainder reassured me; and when I came to the invitation to London, which plainly argued a wish on their part to perpetuate the intimacy, I was obliged to read it again and again before I could convince

myself of its reality. There it was, however, most distinctly and legibly impressed in her ladyship's fairest caligraphy; and certainly, great as was its consequence to me at the time, it by no means formed the principal part of the communication. The two lines of postscript contained more, far more food for hopes and fears, than did all the rest of the epistle.

Lady Jane was ill then; slightly, however—a mere cold; true, but she was feverish. I could not help asking myself what share had I in causing that flushed cheek and anxious eye, and pictured to myself, perhaps with more vividness than reality, a thousand little traits of manner, all proofs strong as holy writ to my sanguine mind, that my affection was returned, and that I loved not in vain. Again and again I read over the entire letter; never truly did a nisi prius lawyer con over a new act of parliament with more searching ingenuity, to detect its hidden meaning, than I did to unravel through its plain phraseology the secret intention of the writer towards me.

There is an old and not less true adage, that what we wish we readily believe; and so with me. I found myself an easy convert to my own hopes and desires, and actually ended by persuading myself — no very hard task—that my Lord Callonby had not only witnessed but approved of my attachment to his beautiful daughter, and for reasons probably known to him, but concealed from me, opined that I was a suitable "*parti*," and gave all due encouragement to my suit. The hint about using his lordship's influence at the Horse Guards I resolved to benefit by; not, however, in obtaining leave of absence, which I hoped to accomplish more easily, but with his good sanction in pushing my promotion, when I should claim him as my right honorable father-in-law—a point on the propriety of which I had now fully satisfied myself. What visions of rising greatness burst upon my mind, as I thought on the prospect that opened before me! but here let me do myself the justice to record, that amid all my pleasure and exultation, my proudest thought was in the anticipation of possessing one in every way so much my superior—the very consciousness of which imparted a thrill of fear to my heart, that such good fortune was too much even to hope for.

How long I might have luxuriated in such Chateaux en Espagne, Heaven knows; thick and thronging fancies came abundantly to my mind, and it was with something of the feeling of the porter in the "Arabian Nights," as he surveyed the fragments of his broken ware, hurled down in a moment of glorious dreaminess, that I turned to look at the squat and unaristocratic figure of Father Malachi, as he sat reading his newspaper before the fire. How came I in such company?—methinks the Dean of Windsor, or the Bishop of Durham, had been a much more seemly associate for one destined as I was for the flood-tide of the world's favor.

My eye at this instant rested upon the date of the letter, which was that of the preceding morning, and immediately a thought struck me that, as the day was a louring and gloomy one, perhaps they might have deferred their journey, and I at once determined to hasten to Callonby, and, if possible, see them before their departure.

"Father Brennan," said I at length, "I have just received a letter which compels me to reach Kilrush as soon as possible. Is there any public conveyance in the village?"

"You don't talk of leaving us, surely," said the priest, "and a haunch of mutton for dinner, and Fin says he'll be down, and your friend too, and we'll have poor Beamish in on a sofa."

"I am sorry to say my business will not admit of delay, but, if possible, I shall return to thank you for all your kindness, in a day or two—perhaps to-morrow."

"Oh, then," said Father Brennan, "if it must be so, why you can have 'Pether,' my own pad, and a better you never laid leg over; only give him his own time, and let him keep the 'canter,' and he'll never draw up from morning till night. And now I'll just go and have him in readiness for you."

After professing my warm acknowledgments to the good father for his kindness, I hastened to take a hurried farewell of Curzon before going. I found him sitting up in bed taking his breakfast; a large strip of black plaster, extending from the corner of one eye across the nose, and terminating near the mouth, denoting the locale of a goodly wound; while the blue, purple, and yellow patches into which his face was partitioned out, left you in doubt whether he more resembled the knave of clubs or a new map of the Ordnance survey; one hand was wrapped up in a bandage, and altogether a more rueful and woebegone looking figure I have rarely looked upon; and most certainly I am of opinion that the "glorious, pious, and immortal memory" would have brought pleasanter recollections to Daniel O'Connell himself

than it did on that morning to the adjutant of his Majesty's 4—th.

"Ah, Harry," said he, as I entered, "what Pandemonium is this we've got into? Did you ever witness such a business as last night's?"

"Why, truly," said I, "I know of no one to blame but yourself; surely you must have known what a row your infernal song would bring on."

"I don't know now whether I knew it or not; but certainly at the moment I should have preferred anything to the confounded cross-examination I was under, and was glad to end it by any *coup d'état*. One wretch was persecuting me about green crops, and another about the feeding of bullocks;—about either of which I knew as much as a bear does of a ballet."

"Well, truly, you caused a diversion at some expense to your countenance, for I never beheld anything——"

"Stop there," said he; "you surely have not seen the doctor—he beats me hollow—they have scarcely left so much hair on his head as would do for an Indian's scalp-lock; and, of a verity, his aspect is awful this morning. He has just been here, and, by the by, has told me all about your affair with Beamish. It appears that somehow you met him at dinner, and gave a very flourishing account of a relative of his, who, you informed him, was not only selected for some very dashing service, but actually the personal friend of Picton; and, after the family having blazed the matter all over Cork, and given a great entertainment in honor of their kinsman, it turns out that, on the glorious 18th, he ran away to Brussels faster than even the French to Charleroi; for which act, however, there was no aspersion ever cast upon his courage, that quality being defended at the expense of his honesty; in a word, he was the paymaster of his company, and had what Theodore Hook calls an 'affection of his chest,' that required change of air. Looking only to the running away part of the matter, I unluckily expressed some regret that he did not belong to the North Cork, and I remarked the doctor did not seem to relish the illusion, and *as I* only now remember, it was *his* regiment, I suppose I'm in for more mischief."

I had no time to enjoy Curzon's dilemma, and had barely informed him of my intended departure, when a voice from without the room proclaimed that "Peter" was ready, and, having commissioned the adjutant to say the "proper" to Mr. Beamish and the doctor, hurried away, and after a hearty shake of the hand from Father Brennan, and a faithful promise to return soon, I mounted and set off.

Peter's pace was of all others the one least likely to disturb the lucubrations of a castle-builder like myself; without any admonition from whip or spur he maintained a steady and constant canter, which, I am free to confess, was more agreeable to sit than it was graceful to behold; for his head being much lower than his tail, he every moment appeared in the attitude of a diver about to plunge into the water, and more than once I had misgivings that I would consult my safety better if I sat with my face to the tail; however, what will not habit accomplish? before I had gone a mile or two, I was so lost in my own reveries and reflections, that I knew nothing of my mode of progression, and had only thoughts and feelings for the destiny that awaited me. Sometimes I would fancy myself seated in the House of Commons (on the ministerial benches, of course), while some leading oppositionist was pronouncing a glowing panegyric upon the eloquent and statesmanlike speech of the gallant colonel—myself; then I thought I was making arrangements for setting out for my new appointment, and Sancho Panza never coveted the government of an island more than I did, though only a West Indian one; and, lastly, I saw myself the chosen diplomate on a difficult mission, and was actually engaged in the easy and agreeable occupation of out-maneuvering Talleyrand and Pozzo di Borgo, when Peter suddenly drew up at the door of a small cabin, and convinced me that I was still a mortal man, and a lieutenant in his Majesty's 4—th. Before I had time afforded me even to guess at the reason of this sudden halt, an old man emerged from the cabin, which I saw now was a roadside ale-house, and presented Peter with a bucket of meal and water, a species of "refresher" that he evidently was accustomed to at this place, whether bestrode by a priest or an ambassador. Before me lay a long straggling street of cabins, irregularly thrown, as if riddled over the ground; this I was informed was Kilkee. While my good steed, therefore, was enjoying his potation, I dismounted, to stretch my legs and look about me; and scarcely had I done so, when I found half the population of the village assembled round Peter, whose claims to notoriety, I now learned, depended neither upon his owner's fame, nor even my temporary possession of him. Peter, in fact, had been a racer, once—when, the Wandering Jew might perhaps have told, had he ever visited Clare

—for not the oldest inhabitant knew the date of his triumphs on the turf; though they were undisputed traditions, and never did any man appear bold enough to call them in question. Whether it was from his patriarchal character, or that he was the only race-horse ever known in his county, I cannot say, but, of a truth, the Grand Lama could scarcely be a greater object of reverence in Thibet than was Peter in Kilkee.

"Musha, Peter, but it's well y'r looking," cried one.

"Ah, thin, maybe ye an't fat on the ribs," cried another.

"An' cockin' his tail like a coult," said a third.

I am very certain, if I might venture to judge from the faces about, that, had the favorite for the St. Ledger passed through Kilkee at that moment, comparisons very little to his favor had been drawn from the assemblage around me. With some difficulty I was permitted to reach my much-admired steed, and with a cheer, which was sustained and caught up by every denizen of the village as I passed through, I rode on my way, not a little amused at my equivocal popularity.

Being desirous to lose no time, I diverged from the straight road which leads to Kilrush, and took a cross bridle-path to Callonby: this, I afterwards discovered, was a *détour* of a mile or two, and it was already sunset when I reached the entrance to the park. I entered the avenue, and now my impatience became extreme, for although Peter continued to move at the same uniform pace, I could not persuade myself that he was not foundering at every step, and was quite sure we were scarcely advancing; at last I reached the wooden bridge, and ascended the steep slope, the spot where I had first met her, on whom my every thought now rested. I turned the angle of the clump of beech trees from whence the first view of the house is caught. I perceived, to my inexpressible delight, that gleams of light shot from many of the windows, and could trace their passing from one to the other. I now drew rein, and with a heart relieved from a load of anxiety, pulled up my good steed, and began to think of the position in which a few brief seconds would place me. I reached the small flower-garden, sacred by a thousand endearing recollections. Oh! of how very little account are the many words of passing kindness, and moments of light-hearted pleasure, when spoken or felt, compared to the memory of them when hallowed by time or distance!

"The place, the hour, the sunshine and the shade," all reminded me of the happy past, and all brought vividly before me every portion of that dream of happiness in which I was so utterly, so completely steeped—every thought of the hopelessness of my passion was lost in the intensity of it, and I did not, in the ardor of my loving, stop to think of its possible success.

It was strange enough that the extreme impatience, the hurried anxiety, I had felt and suffered from, while riding up the avenue, had now fled entirely, and in its place I felt nothing but a diffident distrust of myself, and a vague sense of awkwardness about intruding thus unexpectedly upon the family, while engaged in all the cares and preparations for a speedy departure. The hall-door lay as usual wide open, the hall itself was strewn and littered with trunks, imperials, and packing-cases, and the hundred et ceteras of traveling baggage. I hesitated a moment whether I should not ring, but at last resolved to enter unannounced, and, presuming upon my intimacy, see what effect my sudden appearance would have on Lady Jane, whose feelings towards me would be thus most unequivocally tested. I passed along the wide corridor, entered the music-room—it was still. I walked then to the door of the drawing-room—I paused—I drew a full breath—my hand trembled slightly as I turned the lock—I entered—the room was empty, but the blazing fire upon the hearth, the large armchairs drawn round, the scattered books upon the small tables, all told that it had been inhabited a very short time before. "Ah!" thought I, looking at my watch, "they are at dinner;" and I began at once to devise a hundred different plans to account for my late absence and present visit. I knew that a few minutes would probably bring them into the drawing-room, and I felt flurried and heated as the time drew near. At last I heard voices without. I started from the examination of a pencil drawing, partly finished, but the artist of which I could not be deceived in. I listened—the sounds drew near—I could not distinguish who were the speakers—the door-lock turned, and I rose to make my well-conned, but half-forgotten speech; and oh, confounded disappointment! Mrs. Herbert, the housekeeper, entered. She started, not expecting to see me, and immediately said,—

"Oh! Mr. Lorrequer! then you've missed them?"

"Missed them!" said I; "how—when—where?"

"Did you not get a note from my lord?"

"No; when was it written?"

"Oh dear me, that is so very unfortunate. Why, sir, my lord sent off a servant this morning to Kilrush, in Lord Kilkee's tilbury, to request you would meet them all in Ennis this evening, where they had intended to stop for to-night; and they waited here till near four o'clock to-day, but when the servant came back with the intelligence that you were from home, and not expected to return soon, they were obliged to set out, and are not going to make any delay now, till they reach London. The last direction, however, my lord gave, was to forward her ladyship's letter to you as soon as possible."

What I thought, said, or felt, might be a good subject of confession to Father Malachi, for I fear it may be recorded among my sins, as I doubt not the agony I suffered vented itself in no measured form of speech or conduct; but I have nothing to confess here on the subject, being so totally overwhelmed as not to know what I did or said. My first gleam of reason elicited itself by asking,

"Is there, then, no chance of their stopping in Ennis to-night?" As I put the question, my mind reverted to Peter and his eternal canter.

"Oh dear no, sir; the horses are ordered to take them, since Tuesday; and they only thought of staying in Ennis, if you came time enough to meet them—and they will be so sorry."

"Do you think so, Mrs. Herbert? do you indeed think so?" said I, in a most insinuating tone.

"I am perfectly sure of it, sir."

"Oh, Mrs. Herbert, you are too kind to think so; but perhaps—that is—may be, Mrs. Herbert, she said something——"

"Who, sir?"

"Lady Callonby, I mean; did her ladyship leave any message for me about her plants? or did she remember——"

Mrs. Herbert kept looking at me all the time, with her great wide grey eyes, while I kept stammering and blushing like a schoolboy.

"No, sir; her ladyship said nothing, sir; but Lady Jane——"

"Yes; well, what of Lady Jane, my dear Mrs. Herbert?"

"Oh, sir! but you look pale; would you not like to have a little wine and water—or perhaps——"

"No, thank you, nothing whatever; I am just a little fatigued—but you were mentioning——"

"Yes, sir; I was saying that Lady Jane was mighty particular about a small plant; she ordered it to be left in her dressing-room. Though Collins told her to have some of the handsome ones of the greenhouse, she would have nothing but this; and if you were only to hear half the directions she gave about keeping it watered, and taking off dead leaves, you'd think her heart was set on it."

Mrs. Herbert would have had no cause to prescribe for my paleness had she only looked at me this time; fortunately, however, she was engaged housekeeper-like, in bustling among books, papers, etc., which she had come in for the purpose of arranging and packing up. She being left behind to bring up the rear and the heavy baggage.

Very few moments' consideration were sufficient to show me that pursuit was hopeless. Whatever might have been Peter's performance in the reign of "Queen Anne," he had now become, like the goose so pathetically described by my friend Lover, rather "stiff in his limbs," and the odds were fearfully against his overtaking four horses, starting fresh every ten miles, not to mention their being some hours in advance already. Having declined all Mrs. Herbert's many kind offers anent food and rest, I took a last lingering look at the beautiful picture, which still held its place in the room lately mine, and hurried from a place so full of recollections; and, notwithstanding the many reasons I had for self-gratulation, every object around and about filled me with sorrow and regret for hours that had passed—never, never to return.

It was very late when I reached my old quarters at Kilrush. Mrs. Healy, fortunately, I say, for had she selected that occasion to vent her indignation for my long absence, I greatly fear that, in my then temper, I should have exhibited but little of that Job-like endurance for which I was once esteemed. I entered my little mean-looking parlor, with its three chairs and lame table, and, as I flung myself up on thewretched substitute for a sofa, and thought upon the varied events which a few weeks had brought about, it required the aid of her ladyship's letter, which I had opened before me, to assure me I was not dreaming.

The entire of that night I could not sleep; my destiny seemed upon its balance; and, whether the scale inclined to this side or that, good or evil fortune seemed to betide me. How many were my plans and resolutions, and how often abandoned; again to be pondered over, and once more

given up! The grey dawn of the morning was already breaking, and found me still doubting and uncertain. At last the die was thrown; I determined at once to apply for leave to my commanding officer (which he could, if he pleased, give me, without any application to the Horse Guards), set out for Elton, tell Sir Guy my whole adventure, and endeavor, by a more moving love-story than ever graced even the Minerva Press, to induce him to make some settlement on me, and use his influence with Lord Callonby in my behalf; this done, set out for London, and then—and then—what then?—then for the *Morning Post*—"orange flowers"—"happy couple"—"Lord Callonby's seat in Hampshire," etc., etc.

"You wished to be called at fiive, sir," said Stubbes.

"Yes; is it five o'clock?"

"No, sir; but I heard you call out something about 'four horses,' and I thought you might be hurried, so I came in a little earlier."

"Quite right, Stubbes. Let me have my breakfast as soon as possible, and see that chestnut horse I brought here last night, fed."

"And now for it," said I. After writing a hurried note to Curzon, requesting him to take command of my party at Kilrush till he heard from me, and sending my kind remembrance to my three friends, I despatched the epistle by my servant on Peter, while I hastened to secure a place in the mail for Ennis, on the box-seat of which let my kind reader suppose me seated, as, wrapping my box-coat around me, I lit my cigar and turned my eyes towards Limerick.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONGRATULATIONS—SICK LEAVE—HOW TO PASS THE BOARD.

I HAD scarcely seated myself to breakfast at Swinburn's Hotel in Limerick, when the waiter presented me with a letter. As my first glance at the address showed it to be in Colonel Carden's handwriting, I felt not a little alarmed for the consequences of the rash step I had taken in leaving my detachment; and, while quickly-thronging fancies of arrest and court-martial flitted before me, I summoned resolution at last to break the seal, and read as follows:—

"MY DEAR LORREQUER,"—"'Dear Lorrequer!' dear me," thought I, "cool, certainly, from one I have ever regarded as an open enemy"—"My dear Lorrequer, I have just accidentally heard of your arrival here, and hasten to inform you that, as it may not be impossible your reasons for so abruptly leaving your detachment are known to me, I shall not visit your breach of discipline very heavily. My old and worthy friend, Lord Callonby, who passed through here yesterday, has so warmly interested himself in your behalf, that I feel disposed to do all in my power to serve you; independent of my desire to do so on your own account. Come over here, then, as soon as possible, and let us talk over your plans together.

"Believe me, most truly yours,

"HENRY CARDEN.

"Barracks, 10 o'clock."

However mysterious and difficult to unravel have been some of the circumstances narrated in these "Confessions," I do not scruple to avow that the preceding letter was to *me* by far the most inexplicable piece of fortune I had hitherto met with. That Lord Callonby should have converted one whom I believed an implacable foe into a most obliging friend, was intelligible enough, seeing that his lordship had through life been the patron of the colonel; but why he had so done, and what communications he could possibly have made with regard to me, that Colonel Carden should speak of "my plans" and proffer assistance in them, was a perfect riddle; and the only solution, one so ridiculously flattering that I dared not think of it. I read and re-read the note; misplaced the stops; canvassed every expression; did all to detect a meaning different from the obvious one, fearful of a self-deception where so much was at stake. Yet there it stood forth, a plain, straighforward proffer of services, for some object evidently known to the writer; and my only conclusion, from all, was this, that "my Lord Callonby was the gem of his order, and had a most remarkable talent for selecting a son-in-law."

I fell into a deep reverie upon my past life and the prospects which I now felt were opening before me. Nothing seemed extravagant to hopes so well founded—to expectations so brilliant—and, in my mind's eye, I beheld myself one moment leading my young and beautiful bride through the crowded salons of Devonshire House; and, at the next, I was contemplating the excellence and perfection of my stud arrangements at Melton, for I resolved not to give up hunting. While in

this pleasurable exercise of my fancy, I was removing from before me some of the breakfast equipage, or as I then believed it, breaking the trees into better groups upon my lawn, I was once more brought to the world and its dull reality by the following passage, which my eye fell upon in the newspaper before me: "We understand that the 4—th are daily expecting the route for Cork, from whence they are to sail, early in the ensuing month, for Halifax, to relieve the 88th." While it did not take a moment's consideration to show me that though the regiment there mentioned was the one I belonged to, I could have no possible interest in the announcement—it never coming into my calculation that *I* should submit to such expatriation—yet it gave me a salutary warning that there was no time to be lost in making my application for leave, which, once obtained, I should have ample time to manage an exchange into another corps. The wonderful revolution a few days had effected in all my tastes and desires did not escape me at this moment. But a week or two before, and I should have regarded an order for foreign service as anything rather than unpleasant; now, the thought was insupportable. Then, there would have been some charm to me in the very novelty of the locale, and the indulgence of that vagrant spirit I have ever possessed—for, like Justice Woodcock, "I certainly should have been a vagabond if Providence had not made me a justice of the peace"—now, I could not even contemplate the thing as possible; and would actually have refused the command of a regiment, if the condition of its acceptance were to sail for the colonies.

Besides, I tried—and how ingenious is self-deception—I tried to find arguments in support of my determination totally different from the reasons which governed me. I affected to fear climate, and to dread the effect of the tropics upon my health. "It may do very well," thought I, "for men totally destitute of better prospects, with neither talent, influence, nor powerful connection, to roast their cheeks at Sierra Leone, or suck a sugar-cane at St. Lucia. But that you, Harry Lorrequer, should waste your sweetness upon planters' daughters—that have only to be known to have the world at your feet! The thing is absurd, and not to be thought of! Yes," said I, half aloud, "we read in the army list that Major A. is appointed to the 50th, and Captain B. to the 12th; but how much more near the truth would it be to say, 'That his Majesty, in consideration of the distinguished services of the one, has been graciously pleased to appoint him to——a case of blue and collapsed cholera, in India; and also for the bravery and gallant conduct of the other, in his late affair with the "How-dow-dallah Indians," has promoted him to the——yellow fever now devastating and desolating Jamaica?" How far my zeal for the service might have carried me on this point I know not, for I was speedily aroused from my musings by the loud tramp of feet upon the stairs, and the sound of many well-known voices of my brother officers, who were coming to visit me.

"So, Harry, my boy," said the fat major, as he entered, "is it true we are not to have the pleasure of your company to Jamaica this time?"

"He prefers a pale face, it seems, to a black one; and certainly, with thirty thousand in the same scale, the taste is excusable."

"But, Lorrequer," said a third, "we heard that you had canvassed the county on the Callonby interest. Why, man, where do you mean to pull up?"

"As for me," lisped a large-eyed, white-haired ensign of three months' standing, "I think it devilish hard old Carden didn't send *me* down there, too, for I hear there are two girls in the family. Eh, Lorrequer?"

Having, with all that peculiar bashfulness such occasions are sure to elicit, disclaimed the happiness my friends so clearly ascribed to me, I yet pretty plainly let it be understood that the more brilliant they supposed my present prospects to be, the more near were they to estimate them justly. One thing certainly gratified me throughout. All seemed rejoiced at my good fortune, and even the old Scotch paymaster made no more caustic remark than that he "wad na wonder if the chiel's black whiskers wad get him made governor of Stirling Castle before he'd dee."

Should any of my most patient listeners to these my humble "Confessions" wonder, either here or elsewhere, upon what very slight foundations I built these my "Châteaux en Espagne," I have only one answer—"that from my boyhood I have had a taste for florid architecture, and would rather have put up with any inconvenience of ground, than not build at all."

As it was growing late, I hurriedly bade adieu to my friends, and hastened to Colonel Carden's quarters, where I found him waiting for me, in company with my old

friend, Fitzgerald, our regimental surgeon. Our first greetings over, the colonel drew me aside into a window, and said that, from certain expressions Lord Callonby had made use of—certain hints he had dropped—he was perfectly aware of the delicate position in which I stood with respect to his lordship's family. "In fact, my dear Lorrequer," he continued, "without wishing in the least to obtrude myself upon your confidence, I must yet be permitted to say, you are the luckiest fellow in Europe, and I most sincerely congratulate you on the prospect before you."

"But, my dear colonel, I assure you——"

"Well, well, there—not a word more; don't blush now. I know there is always a kind of secrecy thought necessary on these occasions, for the sake of other parties; so let us pass to your plans. From what I have collected, you have not proposed formally. But, of course, you desire a leave. You'll not quit the army, I trust; no necessity for that; such influence as yours can always appoint you to an unattached commission."

"Once more let me protest, sir, that though for certain reasons most desirous to obtain a leave of absence, I have not the most remote——"

"That's right, quite right; I am sincerely gratified to hear you say so, and so will be Lord Callonby; for he likes the service."

And thus was my last effort at a disclaimer cut short by the loquacious little colonel, who regarded my unfinished sentence as a concurrence with his own opinion.

"*Allah il Allah*," thought I, "it is my Lord Callonby's own plot; and his friend Colonel Carden aids and abets him."

"Now, Lorrequer," resumed the colonel, "let us proceed. You have, of course, heard that we are ordered abroad; mere newspaper report for the present, nevertheless, it is extremely difficult—almost impossible—without a sick certificate, to obtain a leave sufficiently long for your purpose."

And here he smirked, and I blushed, *selon les règles*.

"A sick certificate," said I, in some surprise.

"The only thing for you," said Fitzgerald, taking a long pinch of snuff; "and I grieve to say you have a most villanous look of good health about you."

"I must acknowledge I have seldom felt better."

"So much the worse—so much the worse," said Fitzgerald, despondingly. "Is there no family complaint; no respectable heirloom of infirmity you can lay claim to from your kindred?"

"None that I know of, unless a very active performance on the several occasions of breakfast, dinner, and supper, with a tendency towards port, and an inclination to sleep ten in every twenty-four hours, be a sign of sickness. These symptoms I have known many of the family suffer for years without the slighest alleviation, though, strange as it may appear, they occasionally had medical advice."

Fitz took no notice of my sneer at the faculty, but proceeded to strike my chest several times with his finger tips. "Try a short cough, now," said he. "Ah, that will never do! Do you ever flush—before dinner, I mean?"

"Occasionally, when I meet with a luncheon."

"I'm fairly puzzled," said poor Fitz, throwing himself into a chair. "Gout is a very good thing; but then you see you are only a sub., and it is clearly against the articles of war to have it before being a field officer at least. Apoplexy is the best I can do for you; and, to say the truth, any one who witnesses your performance at mess may put faith in the likelihood of it. Do you think you could get up a fit for the medical board?" said Fitz, gravely.

"Why, if absolutely indispensable," said I, "and with good instruction—something this way. Eh, is it not?"

"Nothing of the kind—you are quite wrong."

"Is there not always a little laughing and crying?" said I.

"Oh no, no; take the cue from the paymaster any evening after mess, and you'll make no mistake—very florid about the cheeks; rather a lazy look in one eye, the other closed up entirely; snore a little from time to time, and don't be too much disposed to talk."

"And you think I may pass muster in this way?"

"Indeed you may, if old Camie, the inspector, happen to be (what he is not often) in a good humor. But I confess I'd rather you were really ill, for we've passed a great number of counterfeits latterly, and we may be all pulled up ere long."

"Not the less grateful for your kindness," said I; "but still I'd rather matters stood as they do."

Having at length obtained a very formidable statement of my "case" from the doctor, and a strong letter from the colonel,

deploring the temporary loss of so promising a young officer, I committed myself and my portmanteau to the inside of his Majesty's mail, and started for Dublin with as light a heart and high spirits as were consistent with so much delicacy of health and the directions of my doctor.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ROAD—TRAVELING ACQUAINTANCES—A PACKET ADVENTURE.

I SHALL not stop now to narrate the particulars of my visit to the worthies of the medical board; the rather, as some of my "Confessions to come" have reference to Dublin, and many of those that dwell therein. I shall, therefore, content myself here with stating, that without any difficulty I obtained a six months' leave, and having received much advice and more sympathy from many members of that body, took a respectful leave of them, and adjourned to Bilton's, where I had ordered dinner, and (as I was advised to live low) a bottle of Sneyd's claret. My hours in Dublin were numbered; at eight o'clock on the evening of my arrival I hastened to the Pigeon House pier, to take my berth in the packet for Liverpool; and here, gentle reader, let me implore you, if you have bowels of compassion, to commiserate the condition of a sorry mortal like myself. In the days of which I now speak, steam-packets were not—men knew not then of the pleasure of going to a comfortable bed in Kingstown harbor, and waking on the morning after in the Clarence dock at Liverpool, with only the addition of a little sharper appetite for breakfast, before they set out on an excursion of forty miles per hour through the air

In the time I have now to commemorate, the intercourse between the two countries was maintained by *two* sailing vessels of small tonnage and still scantier accommodation. Of the one now in question I well recollect the name—she was called the "ALERT," and certainly a more unfortunate misnomer could scarcely be conceived. Well, there was no choice; so I took my place upon the crowded deck of the little craft, and, in a drizzling shower of chilly rain, and amid more noise, confusion, and bustle than would prelude the launch of a line-of-battle ship, we "sidled," goose-fashion, from the shore, and began our voyage towards England.

It is not my intention, in the present stage of "my Confessions," to delay on the road towards an event which influenced so powerfully, and so permanently, my after-life; yet I cannot refrain from chronicling a slight incident which occurred on board the packet, and which, I have no doubt, may be remembered by some of those who throw their eyes on these pages.

One of my fellow-passengers was a gentleman holding a high official appointment in the viceregal court, either comptroller of the household, master of the horse, or something else equally magnificent; however, whatever the nature of the situation, one thing is certain—one possessed of more courtly manners and more polished address cannot be conceived, to which he added all the attractions of a very handsome person and a most prepossessing countenance. The only thing the most scrupulous critic could possibly detect as faulty in his whole air and bearing, was a certain ultra refinement and fastidiousness, which in a man of acknowledged family and connections was somewhat unaccountable, and certainly unnecessary. The fastidiousness I speak of extended to everything round and about him; he never ate of the wrong dish nor spoke to the wrong man in his life, and that very consciousness gave him a kind of horror of chance acquaintances, which made him shrink within himself from persons in every respect his equals. Those who knew Sir Stewart Moore, will know I do not exaggerate in either my praise or censure, and to those who have not had that pleasure, I have only to say, theirs was the loss, and they must take my word for the facts.

The very antithesis to the person just mentioned was another passenger then on board. She—for even in sex they were different—she was a short, squat, red-faced, vulgar-looking woman, of about fifty, possessed of a most garrulous tendency, and talking indiscriminately with every one about her, careless what reception her addresses met with, and quite indifferent to the many rebuffs she momentarily encountered. To me, by what impulse driven Heaven knows, this amorphous piece of womanhood seemed determined to attach herself. Whether in the smoky and almost impenetrable recesses of the cabin, or braving the cold and penetrating rain upon deck, it mattered not, she was ever at my side, and not only martyring me by the insufferable annoyance of her vulgar loquacity, but actually, from the appearance of acquaintanceship such constant association gave rise to, frightening any one else from conversing

with me, and rendering me, ere many hours, a perfect Pariah among the passengers. By no one were we—for, alas! we had become Siamese—so thoroughly dreaded as by the refined baronet I have mentioned; he appeared to shrink from our very approach, and avoided us as though we had the plagues of Egypt about us. I saw this—I felt it deeply, and as deeply and resolutely I vowed to be revenged, and the time was not long distant in affording me the opportunity.

The interesting Mrs. Mulrooney, for such was my fair companion called, was on the present occasion making her *début* on what she was pleased to call the "says:" she was proceeding to the Liverpool market as proprietor and supercargo over some legion of swine that occupied the hold of the vessel, and whose mellifluous tones were occasionally heard in all parts of the ship. Having informed me on these, together with some circumstances of her birth and parentage, she proceeded to narrate some of the cautions given by her friends as to her safety when making such a long voyage, and also to detail some of the anti-septics to that dread scourge, sea-sickness, in the fear and terror of which she had come on board, and seemed every hour to be increasing in alarm about.

"Do you think then, sir, that pork is no good agin the sickness? Mickey, that's my husband, sir—says it's the only thing in life for it, av it's toasted."

"Not the least use, I assure you."

"Nor sperits and wather?"

"Worse and worse, ma'am."

"Oh, thin, maybe oaten mail tay would do? It's a beautiful thing for the stomick, any how."

"Rank poison on the present occasion, believe me."

"Oh, then, blessed Mary, what *am* I to do—what is to become of me?"

"Go down at once to your berth, ma'am; lie still and without speaking till we come in sight of land; or,"—and here a bright thought seized me—"if you really feel very ill, call for that man there, with the fur collar on his coat; he can give you the only thing I ever knew of any efficacy; he's the steward, ma'am, Stewart Moore; but you must be on your guard, too, as you are a stranger, for he's a conceited fellow, and has saved a trifle, and sets up for a *half* gentleman; so don't be surprised at his manner; though, after all, you may find him very different; some people, I've heard, think him extremely civil."

"And he has a cure, ye say?"

"The only one I ever heard of; it is a little cordial, of which you take, I don't know how much, every ten or fifteen minutes."

"And the naygur doesn't let the saycret out, bad manners to him?"

"No, ma'am; he has refused every offer on the subject."

"May I be so bowld as to ax his name again?"

"Stewart Moore, ma'am. Moore is the name, but people always call him Stewart Moore; just say that in a loud, clear voice, and you'll soon have him."

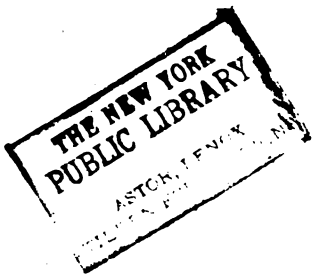
With the most profuse protestations of gratitude and promises of pork *à discrétion*, if ever I sojourned at Ballinasloe, my fair friend proceeded to follow my advice, and descended to the cabin.

Some hours after, I also betook myself to my rest, from which, however, towards midnight, I was awoke by the heavy working and pitching of the little vessel, as she labored in a rough sea. As I looked forth from my narrow crib, a more woebegone picture can scarcely be imagined than that before me. Here and there through the gloomy cabin lay the victims of the fell malady, in every stage of suffering, and in every attitude of misery. Their cries and lamentings mingled with the creaking of the bulkheads and the jarring twang of the dirty lamp, whose irregular swing told plainly how oscillatory was our present motion. I turned myself from the unpleasant sight, and was about again to address myself to slumber with what success I might, when I started at the sound of a voice in the very berth next to me, whose tones, once heard, there was no forgetting. The words ran, as nearly as I can recollect, thus:—

"Oh, then, bad luck to ye for pigs, that ever brought me into the like of this. Oh, Lord, there it is again." And here a slight interruption to eloquence took place, during which I was enabled to reflect upon the author of the complaint, who, I need not say, was Mrs. Mulrooney.

"I think a little tay would settle my stomick, if I only could get it; but what's the use of talking in this horrid place? They never mind me no more than if I was a pig. Steward, steward!—oh, then, its wishing you well I am for a steward. Steward, I say!" and this she really did say, with an energy of voice and manner that startled more than one sleeper. "Oh, you're coming at last, steward."

"Ma'am," said a little dapper and dirty personage in a blue jacket, with a greasy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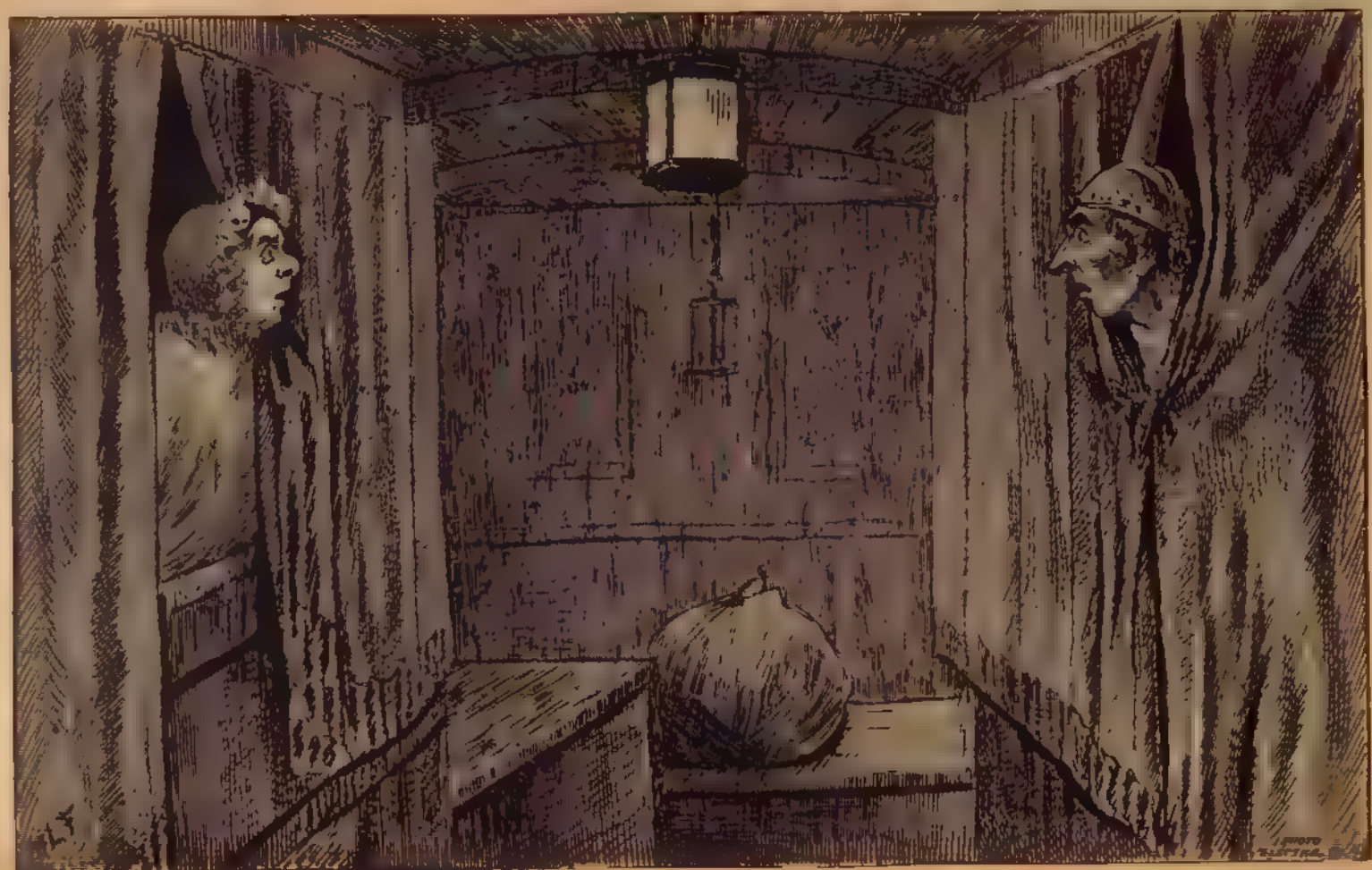

"AND IS IT THERE YE'RE LYING ON THE BROAD OF YER BACK, AND ME AS SICK AS A DOG TORMENT YE?" (P. 47.)

napkin negligently thrown over one arm *ex officio*, "ma'am, did you call?"

"Call!—is it call? No; but I'm roaring for you this half-hour. Come here. Have you any of the cordial dhrops agin the sickness?—you know what I mean."

"Is it brandy, ma'am?"

"No, it isn't brandy."

"We have got gin, ma'am, and bottled porter—cider, ma'am, if you like."

"Agh, no! sure I want the dhrops agin the sickness."

"Don't know, indeed, ma'am."

"Ah, you stupid creature! Maybe you're not the real steward. What's your name?"

"Smith, ma'am."

"Ah, I thought so. Go away, man, go away."

This injunction, given in a diminuendo cadence, was quickly obeyed, and all was silence for a moment or two. Once more was I dropping asleep, when the same voice as before burst out with—

"Am I to die here like a haythen, and nobody to come near me? Steward! steward! steward Moore, I say."

"Who calls *me?*" said a deep sonorous voice from the opposite side of the cabin, while at the same instant a tall green silk nightcap, surmounting a very aristocratic-looking forehead, appeared between the curtains of the opposite berth.

"Steward Moore!" said the lady again, with her eyes straining in the direction of the door by which she expected him to enter.

"This is most strange," muttered the baronet, half aloud. "Why, madam, you are calling *me!*"

"And if I am," said Mrs. Mulrooney, "and if ye heerd me, have ye no manners to answer your name, eh? Are ye Steward Moore?"

"Upon my life, ma'am, I thought so last night when I came on board! but you really have contrived to make me doubt my own identity."

"And is it there ye're lying on the broad of yer back, and me as sick as a dog fornent ye?"

"I concede, ma'am, the fact; the position is a most irksome one on every account."

"Then why don't ye come over to me?" And this Mrs. Mulrooney said with a voice of something like tenderness—wishing at all hazards to conciliate so important a functionary.

"Why, really, you *are* the most incomprehensible person I ever met."

"I'm what?" said Mrs Mulrooney, her blood rushing to her face and temples as she spoke—for the same reason as her fair townswoman is reported to have borne with stoical fortitude every harsh epithet of the language, until it occurred to her opponent to tell her that "the divil a bit better she was nor a pronoun;" so Mrs. Mulrooney, taking "omne ignotum pro *horribile*," became perfectly beside herself at the unlucky phrase. "I'm what? Repate it av ye dare, and I'll tear yer eyes out! Ye dirty bla—guard, to be lying there at yer ease under the blankets, grinning at me. What's your thrade—answer me that—av it isn't to wait on the ladies, eh?"

"Oh, the woman must be mad," said Sir Steward.

"The devil a taste mad, my dear—I'm only sick. Now just come over to me like a decent creature, and give me the dhrop of comfort ye have. Come, avick."

"Go over to you?"

"Ay, and why not? Or, if it's so lazy ye are, why then I'll thry and cross over to *your* side."

These words being accompanied by a certain indication of change of residence on the part of Mrs. Mulrooney, Sir Stewart perceived there was no time to lose, and springing from his berth, he rushed half-dressed through the cabin and up the companion-ladder, just as Mrs. Mulrooney had protruded a pair of enormous legs from her couch, and hung for a moment pendulous before she dropped upon the floor and followed him to the deck. A tremendous shout of laughter from the sailors and deck passengers prevented my hearing the dialogue which ensued; nor do I yet know how Mrs. Mulrooney learned her mistake. Certain it is, she no more appeared amongst the passengers in the cabin, and Sir Steward's manner the following morning at breakfast amply satisfied me that I had my revenge.

CHAPTER X.

UPSET—MIND—AND BODY.

No sooner in Liverpool, than I hastened to take my place in the earliest conveyance for London. At that time the Umpire coach was the perfection of fast traveling; and, seated behind the box, enveloped in a sufficiency of broadcloth, I turned my face towards town with as much anxiety and as ardent expectations as most of those about me. All went on in the regular monotonous routine of such matters until

we reached Northampton, passing down the steep street of which town, the near wheel-horse stumbled and fell; the coach, after a tremendous roll to one side, toppled over on the other, and with a tremendous crash, and sudden shock, sent all the outsides, myself among the number, flying through the air like sea-gulls. As for me, after describing a very respectable parabola, my angle of incidence landed me in a bonnet-maker's shop, having passed through a large plate-glass window, and destroyed more leghorns and dunstables than a year's pay would recompense. I have but slight recollection of the details of that occasion, until I found myself lying in a very spacious bed at the George Inn, having been bled in both arms, and discovering by the multitude of bandages in which I was enveloped, that at least some of my bones were broken by the fall. That such fate had befallen my collar-bone and three of my ribs, I soon learned; and was horror-struck at hearing from the surgeon who attended me that four or five weeks would be the very earliest period I could bear removal with safety. Here then at once there was a large deduction from my six months' leave, not to think of the misery that awaited me for such a time, confined to my bed in an inn, without books, friends, or acquaintances. However, even this could be remedied by patience, and summoning up all I could command, I "bided my time," but not before I had completed a term of two months' imprisonment, and had become, from actual starvation, something very like a living transparency.

No sooner however, did I feel myself once more on the road, than my spirits rose, and I felt myself as full of high hope and buoyant expectancy as ever. It was late at night when I arrived in London. I drove to a quiet hotel in the West-end; and the following morning proceeded to Portman-square, bursting with impatience to see my friends the Callonbys, and recount all my adventures—for as I was too ill to write from Northampton, and did not wish to entrust to a stranger the office of communicating with them, I judged that they must be exceedingly uneasy on my account, and pictured to myself the thousand emotions my appearance so indicative of illness would give rise to, and could scarcely avoid running in my impatience to be once more among them. How Lady Jane would meet me, I thought of over again and again; whether the same cautious reserve awaited me, or whether her family's approval would have wrought a change in her reception of me, I burned to ascertain. As my thoughts ran on in this way, I found myself at the door; but was much alarmed to perceive that the closed window-shutters and dismantled look of the house proclaimed them from home. I rang the bell, and soon learned from a servant, whose face I had not seen before, that the family had gone to Paris about a month before, with the intention of spending the winter there. I need not say how grievously this piece of intelligence disappointed me, and for a minute or two I could not collect my thoughts. At last the servant said,—

"If you have anything very particular, sir, that my lord's lawyer can do, I can give you his address."

"No, thank you—nothing;" at the same time I muttered to myself, "I'll have some occupation for him though, ere long. The family were all quite well, didn't you say?"

"Yes, sir, perfectly well. My lord had only a slight cold."

"Ah—yes—and their address is 'Meurice;' very well."

So saying, I turned from the door, and with slower steps than I had come, returned to my hotel.

My immediate resolve was to set out for Paris; my second was to visit my uncle, Sir Guy Lorrequer, first, and, having explained to him the nature of my position and the advantageous prospects before me, endeavor to induce him to make some settlement on Lady Jane, in the event of my obtaining her family's consent to our marriage. This, from his liking great people much, and laying great stress upon the advantages of connection, I looked upon as a matter of no great difficulty; so that, although my hopes of happiness were delayed in their fulfilment, I believed they were only to be the more securely realized. The same day I set out for Elton, and by ten o'clock at night reached my uncle's house. I found the old gentleman just as I had left him three years before, complaining a little of gout in the left foot—praising his old specific, port wine—abusing his servants for robbing him—and drinking the Duke of Wellington's health every night after supper; which meal I had much pleasure in surprising him at on my arrival—not having eaten since my departure from London.

"Well Harry," said my uncle, when the servants had left the room, and we drew over the spider table to the fire to discuss our wine with comfort, "what good wind has blown you down to me, my boy? for it's odd enough, five minutes before I

heard the wheels on the gravel I was just wishing some good fellow would join me at the grouse—and you see I have had my wish! The old story, I suppose, 'out of cash.' Would not come down here for nothing—eh? Come, lad, tell truth; is it not so?"

"Why, not exactly, sir; but I really had rather at present talk about you than about my own matters, which we can chat over to-morrow. How do you get on, sir, with the Scotch stewart?"

"He's a rogue, sir—a cheat—a scoundrel; but it is the same with them all; and your cousin, Harry—your cousin, that I have reared from his infancy to be my heir (pleasant topic for me!)—he cares no more for me than the rest of them, and would never come near me, if it were not that, like yourself, he was hard run for money, and wanted to wheedle me out of a hundred or two."

"But you forget, sir; I told you I have not come with such an object."

"We'll see that, we'll see that in the morning," replied he, with an incredulous shake of the head.

"But Guy, sir—what has Guy done?"

"What has he not done? No sooner did he join that popinjay set of fellows, the —th hussars, than he turned out what he calls a four-in-hand drag, which dragged nine hundred pounds out of my pocket. Then he has got a yacht at Cowes—a grouse mountain in Scotland—and has actually given Tattersall an unlimited order to purchase the Wreckington pack of harriers, which he intends to keep for the use of the corps. In a word, there is not an amusement of that villanous regiment, not a flask of champagne drunk at their mess, I don't bear my share in the cost of; all through the kind offices of your worthy cousin, Guy Lorrequer."

This was an exceedingly pleasant *exposé* for me, to hear of my cousin indulged in every excess of foolish extravagance by his rich uncle, while I, the son of an elder brother, who unfortunately called me by his own name, Harry, remained the sub. in a marching regiment, with not three hundred pounds a year above my pay, and whom any extravagance, if such had been proved against me, would have deprived of even that small allowance. My uncle, however, did not notice the chagrin with which I heard his narrative, but continued to detail various instances of wild and reckless expense the future possessor of his ample property had already launched into.

Anxious to say something, without well knowing what, I hinted that probably my good cousin would reform some of these days, and marry.

"Marry!" said my uncle; "yes, that I believe is the best thing we can do with him; and I hope now the matter is in good train—so the latest accounts say, at least."

"Ah, indeed!" said I, endeavoring to take an interest where I really felt none, for my cousin and I had never been very intimate friends, and the difference in our fortunes had not, at least to my thinking, been compensated by any advances which he, under the circumstances, might have made to me.

"Why, Harry, did you not hear of it?" said my uncle.

"No; not a word, sir."

"Very strange, indeed—a great match, Harry—a very great match, indeed."

"Some rich banker's daughter," thought I. "What will he say when he hears of *my* fortune?"

"A very fine young woman, too, I understand—quite the *belle* of London—and a splendid property left by an aunt."

I was bursting to tell him of *my* affair, and that he had another nephew, to whom, if common justice were rendered, his fortune was as certainly made for life.

"Guy's business happened this way," continued my uncle, who was quite engrossed by the thought of his favorite's success. "The father of the young lady met him in Ireland, or Scotland, or some such place, where he was with his regiment—was greatly struck with his manner and address—found him out to be my nephew—asked him to his house—and, in fact, almost threw this lovely girl at his head before they were two months acquainted."

"As nearly as possible my own adventure," thought I, laughing to myself.

"But you have not told me who they are, sir," said I, dying to have *his* story finished, and to begin *mine*.

"I'm coming to that—I'm coming to that. Guy came down here, but did not tell me one word of his having ever met the family, but begged of me to give him an introduction to them, as they were in Paris, where he was going on a short leave; and the first thing I heard of the matter was by a letter from the papa, demanding from me if Guy was to be my heir, and asking 'how far his attentions in *his* family met with my approval.'"

"Then how did you know, sir, that they were previously known to each other?"

"The family lawyer told me, who heard it all talked over."

"And why, then, did Guy get the letter

of introduction from you, when he was already acquainted with them?"

"I am sure I cannot tell, except that you know he always does everything unlike every one else, and to be sure the letter seems to have excited some amusement. I must show you his answer to my first note to know how all was going on—for I felt very anxious about matters—when I heard from some person who had met them, that Guy was everlastingly in the house, and that Lord Callonby could not live without him."

"Lord, who, sir?" said I, in a voice that made the old man upset his glass, and spring from his chair in horror.

"What the devil is the matter with the boy? What makes you so pale?"

"Whose name did you say at that moment, sir?" said I, with a slowness of speech that cost me agony.

"Lord Callonby, my old schoolfellow and fag at Eton."

"And the lady's name, sir?" said I, in scarcely an audible whisper.

"I'm sure I forgot her name; but here's the letter from Guy, and I think he mentions her name in the postscript."

I snatched rudely the half-opened letter from the old man, as he was vainly endeavoring to detect the place he wanted, and read as follows:—

"My adored Jane is all your fondest wishes for my happiness could picture, and longs to see her dear uncle, as she already calls you on every occasion." I read no more—my eyes swam—the paper, the candles, everything before me was misty and confused; and although I heard my uncle's voice still going on, I knew nothing of what he said.

For some time my mind could not take in the full extent of the base treachery I had met with, and I sat speechless and stupefied. By degrees my faculties became clearer, and with one glance I read the whole business, from my first meeting with them at Kilrush to the present moment. I saw that in their attentions to me, they thought they were winning the heir of Elton, the future proprietor of fifteen thousand per annum. From this tangled web of heartless intrigue I turned my thoughts to Lady Jane herself. How had she betrayed me? for certainly she had not only received, but encouraged my addresses—and so soon too! To think that, at the very moment when my own precipitate haste to see her had involved me in a nearly fatal accident, she was actually receiving the attentions of another! Oh, it was too, too bad.

But enough—even now I can scarcely dwell upon the memory of that moment, when the hopes and dreams of many a long day and night were destined to be thus rudely blighted. I seized the first opportunity of bidding my uncle good night; and having promised him to reveal all my plans on the morrow, hurried to my room.

My plans! alas, I had none!—that one fatal paragraph had scattered them to the winds; and I threw myself upon my bed, wretched and almost heart-broken.

I have once before in these "Confessions" claimed to myself the privilege, not inconsistent with a full disclosure of the memorabilia of my life, to pass slightly over those passages the burden of which was unhappy, and whose memory is still painful. I must now, therefore, claim the "benefit of this act," and beg of the reader to let me pass from this sad portion of my history, and for the full expression of my mingled rage, contempt, disappointment, and sorrow, let me beg of him to receive instead, what a learned pope once gave as his apology for not reading a rather polysyllabic word in a Latin letter—"As for this," said he, looking at the phrase in question, "suppose it said." So say I. And now, *en route*.

CHAPTER XI.

CHELTENHAM—MATRIMONIAL ADVENTURE—SHOWING HOW TO MAKE LOVE FOR A FRIEND.

It was a cold raw evening in February, as I sat in the coffee-room of the Old Plough, in Cheltenham, *Lucullus* c. *Lucullo*—no companion save my half-finished decanter of port. I had drawn my chair to the corner of the ample fireplace, and in a half-dreamy state was reviewing the incidents of my early life, and like most men who, however young, have still to lament talents misapplied, opportunities neglected, profitless labor, and disastrous idleness. The dreary aspect of the large and ill-lighted room—the close-curtained boxes—the unsocial look of every thing and body about, suited the habit of my soul, and I was on the verge of becoming excessively sentimental; the unbroken silence, where several people were present, had also its effect upon me, and I felt oppressed and dejected. So I sat for an hour; the clock over the mantle ticked sharply on—the old man in the brown surtout had turned in his chair, and now snored louder—the gentleman

who read the *Times* had got the *Chronicle*, and I thought I saw him nodding over the advertisements. The father who, with a raw son of about nineteen, had dined at six, sat still and motionless opposite his offspring, and only breaking the silence around by the grating of the decanter as he posted it across the table. The only thing denoting active existence was a little, shrivelled man, who, with spectacles on his forehead and hotel slippers on his feet, rapidly walked up and down, occasionally stopping at his table to sip a little weak-looking negus, which was his moderate potation for two hours. I have been particular in chronicling these few and apparently trivial circumstances, for by what mere trifles are our greatest and most important movements induced! Had the near wheeler of the Umpire been only safe on his forelegs and——but let me continue. The gloom and melancholy which beset me momentarily increased. But three months before, and my prospects presented everything that was fairest and brightest—now all the future was dark and dismal. Then, my best friends could scarcely avoid envy at my fortune—now, my reverses might almost excite compassion even in an enemy. It was singular enough—and I should not like to acknowledge it, were not these "Confessions" in their very nature intended to disclose the very penetralia of my heart—but singular it certainly was—and so I have always felt it since, when reflecting on it—that although much and warmly attached to Lady Jane Callonby, and feeling most accutely what I must call her abandonment of me, yet, the most constantly recurring idea of my mind on the subject was, what will the mess say?—what will they think at headquarters?—the raillery, the jesting, the half-concealed allusion, the tone of assumed compassion, which all awaited me, as each of my comrades took up his line of behaving towards me, was, after all, the most difficult thing to be borne, and I absolutely dreaded to join my regiment more thoroughly than did ever schoolboy to return to his labor on the expiration of his holidays. I had framed to myself all manner of ways of avoiding this dread event; sometimes I meditated an exchange into an African corps—sometimes to leave the army altogether. However I turned the affair over in my mind, innumerable difficulties presented themselves; and I was at last reduced to that stand-still point, in which, after continual vacillation, one only waits for the slightest impulse of persuasion from another, to adopt any, no matter what, suggestion. In this enviable frame of mind I sat sipping my wine, and watching the clock for that hour at which, with a safe conscience, I might retire to my bed, when the waiter roused me by demanding if my name was Mr. Lorrequer, for that a gentleman having seen my card in the bar, had been making inquiry for the owner of it all through the hotel.

"Yes," said I, "such is my name; but I am not acquainted with any one here, that I can remember."

"The gentleman has only arrived an hour since by the London mail, sir; and here he is."

At this moment, a tall, dashing-looking, half-swaggering fellow, in a very sufficient envelope of box-coats, entered the coffee-room, and unwinding a shawl from his throat, showed me the honest and manly countenance of my friend Jack Waller, of the —th dragoons, with whom I had served in the Peninsula.

Five minutes sufficed for Jack to tell that he was come down on a bold speculation at this unseasonable time for Cheltenham; that he was quite sure his fortune was about to be made in a few weeks at furthest; and what seemed nearly as engrossing a topic—that he was perfectly famished, and desired a hot supper, *de suite*.

Jack having despatched this agreeable meal with a traveler's appetite, proceeded to unfold his plans to me as follows:

There resided *somewhere* near Cheltenham, in what direction he did not absolutely know, an old East India colonel, who had returned from a long career of successful staff duties and government contracts, with the moderate fortune of two hundred thousand. He possessed, in addition, a son and a daughter; the former, being a rake and a gambler, he had long since consigned to his own devices, and to the latter he had avowed his intention of leaving all his wealth. That she was beautiful as an angel—highly accomplished—gifted—agreeable—and all that, Jack, who had never seen her, was firmly convinced; that she was also bent resolutely on marrying him, or any other gentleman whose claims were principally the want of money, he was quite ready to swear to; and, in fact, so assured did he feel that "the whole affair was feasible" (I use his own expression), that he had managed a two months' leave, and was come down express, to see, make love to, and carry her off at once.

"But," said I, with difficulty interrupt-

ing him, "how long have you known her father?"

"Known him? I never saw him."

"Well, that certainly is cool. And how do you propose making his acquaintance? Do you intend to make him a *particeps criminis* in the elopement of his own daughter, for a consideration to be hereafter paid out of his own money?"

"Now, Harry, you've touched upon the point in which, you must confess, my genius always stood unrivalled. Acknowledge, if you are not dead to gratitude—acknowledge how often should you have gone supperless to bed in our bivouacs in the Peninsula, had it not been for the ingenuity of your humble servant—avow, that if mutton was to be had, and beef to be purloined within a circuit of twenty miles round, our mess certainly kept no fast days. I need not remind you of the cold morning on the retreat from Burgos, when the inexorable Lake brought five men to the halberds for stealing turkeys, that at the same moment I was engaged in devising an ox-tail soup from a heifer brought to our tent in jack-boots, the evening before, to escape detection by her foot tracks."

"True, Jack, I never questioned your Spartan talent; but this affair, time considered, does appear rather difficult."

"And if it were not, should I have ever engaged in it? No, no, Harry. I put all proper value upon the pretty girl, with her two hundred thousand pounds pin-money. But I honestly own to you, the intrigue, the scheme, has as great charm for me as any part of the transaction."

"Well, Jack, now for the plan, then!"

"The plan! oh, the plan! Why, I have several; but since I have seen you, and talked the matter over with you, I have begun to think of a new mode of opening the trenches."

"Why, I don't see how I can possibly have admitted a single new ray of light upon the affair."

"There you are quite wrong. Just hear me out without interruption, and I'll explain. I'll first discover the *locale* of this worthy colonel—'Hydrabad Cottage' he calls it; good, eh?—then I shall proceed to make a tour of the immediate vicinity, and either be taken dangerously ill in his grounds, within ten yards of the hall-door, or be thrown from my gig at the gate of his avenue and fracture my skull; I don't much care which. Well, then, as I learn the old gentlemen is the most kind, hospitable fellow in the world, he'll admit me at once; his daughter will tend my sick couch—nurse—read to me; glorious fun, Harry! I'll make fierce love to her. And now, the only point to be decided is whether, having partaken of the colonel's hospitality so freely, I ought to carry her off, or marry her with papa's consent. You see there is much to be said for either line of proceeding."

"I certainly agree with you there; but since you seem to see your way so clearly up to that point, why, I should advise you leaving that an 'open question,' as the ministers say when they are hard pressed for an opinion."

"Well, Harry, I consent; it shall remain so. Now for *your* part, for I have now come to that."

"*Mine!*" said I, in amazement; "why, how can I possibly have any character assigned me in the drama?"

"I'll tell you, Harry; you shall come with me in the gig in the capacity of my valet."

"Your what?" said I, horror-struck at his impudence.

"Come, no nonsense, Harry; you'll have a glorious time of it—shall choose as becoming a livery as you like—and you'll have the whole female world below stairs dying for you; and all I ask for such an opportunity vouchsafed to you is to puff *me*, your master, in every possible shape and form, and represent me as the finest and most liberal fellow in the world, rolling in wealth, and only striving to get rid of it."

The unparalleled effrontery of Master Jack, in assigning to me such an office, absolutely left me unable to reply to him; while he continued to expatiate upon the great field for exertion thus open to us both. At last it occurred to me to benefit by an anecdote of a something similar arrangement, of capturing, not a young lady but a fortified town, by retorting Jack's proposition.

"Come," said I, "I agree, with one only difference—I'll be the master and you the man on this occasion."

To my utter confusion, and without a second's consideration, Waller grasped my hand, and cried, "Done!" Of course I laughed heartily at the utter absurdity of the whole scheme, and rallied my friend on his prospects of Botany Bay for such an exploit, never contemplating in the most remote degree the commission of such extravagance.

Upon this, Jack, to use the expressive French phrase *prit la parole*, touching, with a master-like delicacy, on my late defeat among the Callonbys (which up to

this instant I believed him in ignorance of), he expatiated upon the prospect of my repairing that misfortune, and obtaining a fortune considerably larger; he cautiously abstained from mentioning the personal charms of the young lady, supposing from my lachrymose look, that my heart had not yet recovered the shock of Lady Jane's perfidy, and rather preferred to dwell upon the escape such a marriage would open to me from the mockery of the mess-table, the jesting of my brother officers, and the life-long raillery of the service, wherever the story reached.

The fatal facility of my disposition, so often and so frankly chronicled in these "Confessions"—the openness to be led whither any one might take the trouble to conduct me—the easy indifference to assume any character which might be pressed upon me, by chance, accident, or design, assisted by my share of three flasks of champagne, induced me first to listen—then to attend to—soon after to suggest—and finally, absolutely to concur in and agree to a proposal which, at any other moment, I must have regarded as downright insanity. As the clock struck two, I had just affixed my name to an agreement; for Jack Waller had so much of method in his madness, that, fearful of my retracting in the morning, he had committed the whole to writing, which, as a specimen of Jack's legal talents, I copy from the original document, now in my possession.

"The Plough, Cheltenham, Tuesday night or morning, two o'clock—be the same more or less. I, Harry Lorrequer, sub. in his Majesty's —th Regiment of Foot, on the one part, and I, John Waller, commonly called Jack Waller, of the —th Light Dragoons, on the other, hereby promise and agree, each for himself, and not one for the other, to the following conditions, which are hereafter subjoined, to wit, the aforesaid Jack Waller is to serve, obey, and humbly follow the aforementioned Harry Lorrequer, for the space of one month of four weeks; conducting himself in all respects, modes, ways, manners, as his, the aforesaid Lorrequer's own man, skip, valet, or flunkey—duly praising, puffing, and lauding the aforesaid Lorrequer, and in every way facilitating his success to the hand and fortune of——"

"Shall we put in her name, Harry, here?" said Jack.

"I think not; we'll fill it up in pencil; that looks very knowing."

"——at the end of which period, if successful in his suit, the aforesaid Harry Lorrequer is to render to the aforesaid Waller the sum of ten thousand pounds three and a half per cent. with a faithful discharge in writing for his services, as may be. If, on the other hand, and which Heaven forbid! the aforesaid Lorrequer fail in obtaining the hand of ——, that he will evacuate the territory within twelve hours, and repairing to a convenient spot selected by the aforesaid Waller, then and there duly invest himself with a livery chosen by the aforesaid Waller——"

"You know, each man uses his choice in this particular," said Jack.

"——and, for the space of four calendar weeks, be unto the aforesaid Waller as his skip, or valet, receiving, in the event of success, the like compensation as aforesaid, each promising strictly to maintain the terms of this agreement, and binding, by a solemn pledge, to divest himself of every right appertaining to his former condition, for the space of time there mentioned."

We signed and sealed it formally, and finished another flask to its perfect ratification. This done, and after a hearty shake hands, we parted and retired for the night.

The first thing I saw on waking the following morning was Jack Waller standing beside my bed, evidently in excellent spirits with himself and all the world.

"Harry, my boy, I have done it gloriously," said he. "I only remembered on parting with you last night, that one of the most marked features in our old colonel's character is a certain vague idea he has somewhere picked up that he has been at some very remote period of his history a most distinguised officer. This notion, it appears, haunts his mind, and he absolutely believes he has been in every engagement from the Seven Years' War down to the battle of Waterloo. You cannot mention a siege he did not lay down the first parallel for, nor a storming party where he did not lead the forlorn hope; and there is not a regiment in the service, from those that formed the fighting brigade of Picton down to the London train-bands, with which, to use his own phrase, he has not fought and bled. This mania of heroism is droll enough, when one considers that the sphere of his action was necessarily so limited; but yet *we* have every reason to be thankful for the peculiarity, as you'll say, when I inform you that this morning I despatched a hasty messenger to his villa, with a most polite note, setting forth that 'as Mr. Lorrequer'—ay, Harry, all aboveboard—there

is nothing like it—'as Mr. Lorrequer, of the—th, was collecting for publication such materials as might serve to commemorate the distinguished achievements of British officers, who have, at any time, been in command, he most respectfully requests an interview with Colonel Kamworth, whose distinguished services, on many gallant occasions, have called forth the unqualified approval of his Majesty's government. Mr. Lorrequer's stay is necessarily limited to a few days, as he proceeds from this to visit Lord Anglesey, and, therefore, would humbly suggest as early a meeting as may suit Colonel K.'s convenience.' What think you now? Is this a master-stroke, or not?"

"Why, certainly, we are in for it now," said I, drawing a deep sigh. "But, Jack, what is all this? Why, you're in livery already!"

I now, for the first time, perceived that Waller was arrayed in a very decorous suit of dark grey, with cord shorts and boots, and looked a very knowing style of servant for the side of a tilbury.

"You like it, do you? Well, I should have preferred something a little more showy myself; but as you chose this last night, I of course gave way; and, after all, I believe you're right—it certainly is neat."

"Did I choose it last night? I have not the slightest recollection of it."

"Yes, you were most particular about the length of the waistcoat and the height of the cockade, and you see I have followed your orders tolerably close; and now, adieu to sweet equality for the season, and I am your most obedient servant for four weeks—see that you make the most of it."

While we were talking, the waiter entered with a note addressed to me, which I rightly conjectured could only come from Colonel Kamworth. It ran thus:—

"Colonel Kamworth feels highly flattered by the polite attention of Mr. Lorrequer, and will esteem it a particular favor if Mr. L. can afford him the few days his stay in this part of the country will permit, by spending them at Hydrabad Cottage. Any information as to Colonel Kamworth's services in the four quarters of the globe, he need not say, is entirely at Mr. L.'s disposal.

"Colonel K. dines at six precisely.

When Waller had read the note through, he tossed his hat up in the air, and, with something little short of an Indian whoop, shouted out,—

"The game is won already! Harry, my man, give me the cheque for the ten thousand: she is your own this minute."

Without participating entirely in Waller's exceeding delight, I could not help feeling a growing interest in the part I was advertised to perform, and began my rehearsal with more spirit than I thought I should have been able to command.

The same evening, at the same hour as that in which on the preceding night I sat lone and comfortless by the coffee-room fire, I was seated opposite a very pompous, respectable-looking old man, with a large, stiff queue of white hair, who pressed me repeatedly to fill my glass and pass the decanter. The room was a small library, with handsomely-fitted shelves; there were but four chairs, but each would have made at least three of any modern one; the curtains, of deep crimson cloth, effectually secured the room from draught, and the cheerful wood fire blazing on the hearth, which was the only light in the apartment, gave a most inviting look of comfort and snugness to everything. "This," thought I, "is all excellent, and however the adventure ends, this is certainly pleasant, and I never tasted better Madeira."

"And so, Mr. Lorrequer, you heard of my affair at Cantantrabad, when I took the Rajah prisoner?"

"Yes," said I; "the Governor-General mentioned the gallant business the very last time I dined at Government House."

"Ah, did he? kind of him, though. Well, sir, I received two lacs of rupees on the morning after, and a promise of ten more if I would permit him to escape; but no—I refused flatly."

"Is it possible! And what did you do with the two lacs?—sent them back, of course——"

"No, that I didn't; the wretches know nothing of the use of money. No, no; I have them this moment in good Government security. I believe I never mentioned to you the storming of Java. Fill yourself another glass, and I'll describe it all to you, for it will be of infinite consequence that a true narrative of this meets the public eye—they really are quite ignorant of it. Here, now, is Fort Cornelius, and there is the moat; the sugar-basin is the citadel, and the tongs is the first trench; the decanter will represent the tall tower towards the south-west angle, and here, the wine-glass—this is me. Well, it was a little after ten at night that I got the order from the general in command to march upon this plate of figs, which was an open space before Fort Cornelius, and to take

up my position in front of the fort, and with four pieces of field artillery—these walnuts here—to be ready to open my fire at a moment's warning upon the sou'-west tower; but, my dear sir, you have moved the tower; I thought you were drinking Madeira. As I said before, to open my fire upon the sou'-west tower, or, if necessary, to protect the sugar-tongs, which I explained to you was the trench. Just at the same time, the besieged were making preparations for a sortie to occupy this dish of almonds and raisins—the high ground to the left of my position—put another log on the fire, if you please, sir, for I cannot see myself—I thought I was up near the figs, and I find myself down near the half-moon——"

"It is past nine," said a servant, entering the room; "shall I take the carriage for Miss Kamworth, sir?"

This being the first time the name of the young lady was mentioned since my arrival, I felt somewhat anxious to hear more of her, in which laudable desire I was not, however, to be gratified, for the colonel, feeling considerably annoyed by the interruption, dismissed the servant by saying—

"What do you mean, sirrah, by coming in at this moment? Don't you see I am preparing for the attack on the half-moon? Mr. Lorrequer, I beg your pardon for one moment; this fellow has completely put me out; and besides, I perceive you have eaten the flying artillery, and, in fact, my dear sir, I shall be obliged to lay down the position again."

With this praisworthy interest the colonel proceeded to arrange the *matériel* of our dessert in battle array, when the door was suddenly thrown open, and a very handsome girl, in a most becoming *demi-toilet*, sprang into the room, and either not noticing, or not caring, that a stranger was present, threw herself into the old gentleman's arms, with a degree of *empressement* exceedingly vexatious for any third and unoccupied party to witness.

"Mary, my dear," said the colonel, completely forgetting Java and Fort Cornelius at once, "you don't perceive I have a gentleman to introduce to you—Mr. Lorrequer, my daughter, Miss Kamworth." Here the young lady curtseyed somewhat stiffly, and I bowed reverently; and we all resumed places. I now found out that Miss Kamworth had been spending the preceding four or five days at a friend's in the neighborhood, and had preferred coming home somewhat unexpectedly to waiting for her own carriage.

My "Confessions," if recorded *verbatim* from the notes of that four weeks' sojourn, would only increase the already too prolix and uninteresting details of this chapter of my life; I need only say, that without falling in love with Mary Kamworth, I felt prodigiously disposed thereto. She was extremely pretty, had a foot and ankle to swear by, the most silvery-toned voice I almost ever heard, and a certain witchery and archness of manner that by its very tantalizing uncertainty continually provoked attention, and by suggesting a difficulty in the road to success, imparted a more than common zest in the pursuit. She was a little, a very little blue—rather a dabbler in the "ologies" than a real disciple. Yet she made collections of minerals, and brown beetles, and cryptogamias, and various other homœopathic doses of the creation, infinitesimally small in their subdivision; in none of which I felt any interest, save in the excuse they gave for accompanying her in her pony-phaeton. This was, however, a rare pleasure, since every morning for at least three or four hours, I was obliged to sit opposite the colonel, engaged in the compilation of that narrative of his deeds, which was to eclipse the career of Napoleon, and leave Wellington's laurels but a very faded lustre in comparison. In this agreeable occupation did I pass the greater part of my day, listening to the insufferable prolixity of the most prolix of colonels, and at times, notwithstanding the propinquity of relationship which awaited us, almost regretting that he was not blown up in any of the numerous explosions his memoir abounded with. I may here mention, that while my literary labor was thus progressing, the young lady continued her avocations as before—not, indeed with me for her companion, but Waller—for Colonel Kamworth, "having remarked the steadiness and propriety of *my* man, felt no scruple in sending him out to drive Miss Kamworth," particularly as I gave him a most excellent character for every virtue under heaven.

I must hasten on. The last evening of my four weeks was drawing to a close. Colonel Kamworth had pressed me to prolong my visit, and I only waited for Waller's return from Cheltenham, whither I had sent him for my letters, to make arrangements with him to absolve me from my ridiculous bond, and accept the invitation. We were sitting round the library fire, the colonel, as usual, narrating his early deeds and hair-breadth 'scapes; Mary, embroidering an indescribable some-

thing, which every evening made its appearance, but seemed never to advance, was rather in better spirits than usual, at the same time her manner was nervous and uncertain; and I could perceive, by her frequent absence of mind, that her thoughts were not as much occupied by the siege of Java as her worthy father believed them. Without laying any stress upon the circumstance, I must yet avow that Waller's not having returned from Cheltenham gave me some uneasiness, and I more than once had recourse to the bell to demand if "my servant had come back yet?" At each of these times I well remember the peculiar expression of Mary's look, the half embarrassment, half drollery, with which she listened to the question, and heard the answer in the negative. Supper at length made its appearance; and I asked the servant who waited "if my man had brought me any letters," varying my inquiry to conceal my anxiety; and again I heard he had not returned. Resolving now to propose in all form for Miss Kamworth the next morning, and by referring the Colonel to my uncle Sir Guy, smooth, as far as I could, all difficulties, I wished them good night, and retired; not, however, before the colonel had warned me that they were to have an excursion to some place in the neighborhood the next day, and begging that I might be in the breakfast-room at nine, as they were to assemble there from all parts, and start early on the expedition. I was in a sound sleep the following morning, when a gentle tap at the door awoke me; at the same time I recognized the voice of the colonel's servant, saying "Mr. Lorrequer, breakfast is waiting, sir."

I sprang up at once, and replying, "Very well, I shall come down," proceeded to dress in all haste, but to my horror I could not discern a vestige of my clothes; nothing remained of the habiliments I possessed only the day before—even my portmanteau had disappeared. After a most diligent search, I discovered on a chair in a corner of the room a small bundle tied up in a handkerchief, on opening which I perceived a new suit of livery of the most gaudy and showy description; the vest and breeches of yellow plush, with light blue binding and lace, of which color was also the coat, which had a standing collar and huge cuffs, deeply ornamented with worked button-holes and large buttons. As I turned the things over, without even a guess of what they could mean, for I was scarcely well awake, I perceived a small slip of paper fastened to the coat-sleeve, upon which, in Waller's handwriting, the following few words were written:—

"The livery I hope will fit you, as I am rather particular about how you'll look. Get quietly down to the stable-yard, and drive the tilbury into Cheltenham, where wait for further orders from your kind master,

"JOHN WALLER."

The horrible villany of this wild scamp actually paralyzed me. That I should put on such ridiculous trumpery was out of the question: yet what was to be done? I rang the bell violently. "Where are my clothes, Thomas?"

"Don't know, sir; I was out all the morning, sir, and never seed them."

"There, Thomas, be smart now, and send them up, will you?" Thomas disappeared, and speedily returned to say, "that my clothes could not be found anywhere; no one knew anything of them, and begged me to come down, as Miss Kamworth desired him to say that they were still waiting, and she begged Mr. Lorrequer would not make an elaborate toilet, as they were going on a country excursion." An elaborate toilet. I wish to Heaven she saw my costume; no, I'll never do it. "Thomas, you must tell the ladies, and the colonel, too, that I feel very ill; I am not able to leave my bed; I am subject to attacks—very violent attacks in my head, and must always be left quiet and alone—perfectly alone—mind me, Thomas—for a day at least." Thomas departed; and as I lay distracted in my bed, I heard from the breakfast-room, the loud laughter of many persons, evidently enjoying some excellent joke. Could it be me they were laughing at? The thought was horrible!

"Colonel Kamworth wishes to know if you'd like the doctor, sir," said Thomas, evidently suppressing a most inveterate fit of laughing, as he again appeared at the door.

"No, certainly not," said I, in a voice of thunder. "What the devil are you grinning at?"

"You may as well come, my man; you're found out; they all know it now," said the fellow with an odious grin.

I jumped out of the bed, and hurled the boot-jack at him with all my strength; but had only the satisfaction to hear him go downstairs chuckling at his escape; and as he reached the parlor, the increase of mirth and the loudness of the laughter told me that he was not the only one who was merry at my expense. Anything was

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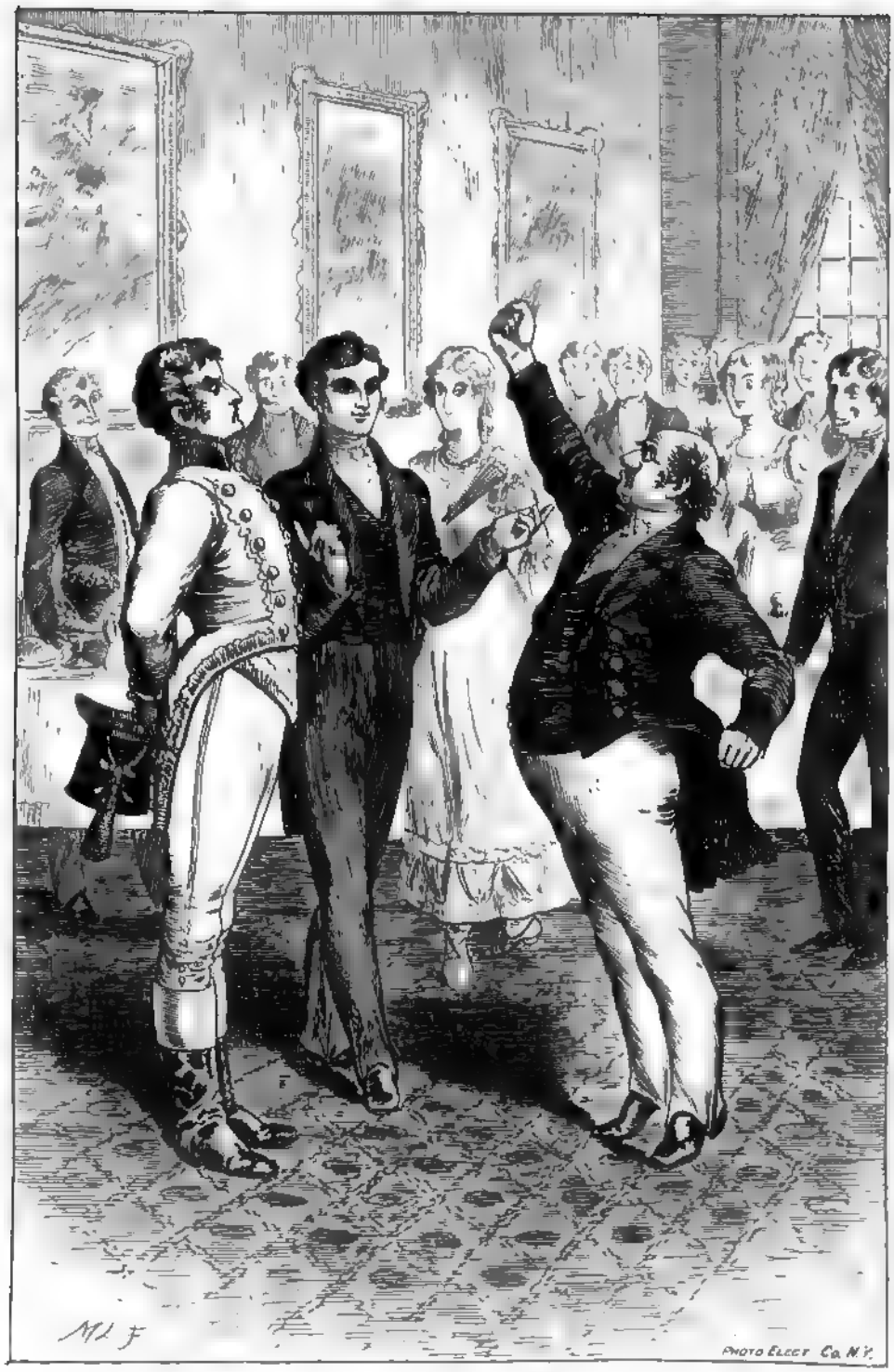


"COLONEL KAMWORTH," SAID I, DRAWING MYSELF PROUDLY UP, "FOR THE EXPRESSIONS YOU HAVE JUST APPLIED TO ME, A HEAVY RECKONING AWAITS YOU." (P 57.)

preferable to this. Downstairs I resolved to go at once—but how?—a blanket, I thought, would not be a bad thing, and particularly as I had said I was ill; I could at least get as far as Colonel Kamworth's dressing-room, and explain to him the whole affair; but then, if I was detected *en route!* which I was almost sure to be, with so many people parading about the house. No, that would never do; there was but one alternative, and dreadful, shocking as it was, I could not avoid it, and with a heavy heart, and as much indignation at Waller, for what I could not but consider a most scurvy trick, I donned the yellow inexpressibles; next came the vest, and last the coat, with its broad flaps and lace excrescences, fifty times more absurd and merry-andrew than any stage servant who makes off with his table and two chairs amid the hisses and gibes of an upper gallery.

If my costume leaned towards the ridiculous, I resolved that my air and bearing should be more than usually austere and haughty; and with something of the stride of John Kemble in *Coriolanus*, I was leaving my bedroom, when I accidentally caught a view of myself in the glass; and so mortified, so shocked was I, that I sank into a chair, and almost abandoned my resolution to go on; the very gesture I had assumed for my vindication only increased the ridicule of my appearance: and the strange quaintness of the costume totally obliterated every trace of any characteristic of the wearer, so infernally cunning was its contrivance. I don't think that the most saturnine martyr of gout and dyspepsia could survey me without laughing. With a bold effort I flung open my door, hurried down the stairs, and reached the hall. The first person I met was a kind of pantry-boy, a beast only lately emancipated from the plough, and destined, after a dozen years training as a servant, again to be turned back to his old employ for incapacity; he grinned horribly for a minute as I passed, and then, in a half-whisper, said,—

"Maester, I advise ye run for it; they're a-waiting for ye with the constables in the justice's room." I gave him a look of contemptuous superiority, at which he grinned the more, and passed on.

Without stopping to consider where I was going, I opened the door of the breakfast-parlor, and found myself at one plunge in a room full of people. My first impulse was to retreat again; but so shocked was I at the very first thing that met my sight, that I was perfectly powerless to do anything. Among a considerable number of people who stood in small groups round the breakfast-table, I discerned Jack Waller habited in a very accurate black frock and dark trousers, supporting upon his arm—shall I confess—no less a person than Mary Kamworth, who leaned on him with the familiarity of an old acquaintance, and chatted gaily with him. The buzz of conversation which filled the apartment when I entered ceased for a second of deep silence; and then followed a peal of laughter so long and so vociferous, that in my momentary anger I prayed some one might burst a blood-vessel, and frighten the rest. I put on a look of indescribable indignation, and cast a glance of what I intended should be most withering scorn on the assembly; but, alas! my infernal harlequin costume ruined the effect; and confound me, if they did not laugh the louder. I turned from one to the other with the air of a man who marks out victims for his future wrath; but with no better success; at last, amid the continued mirth of the party, I made my way towards where Waller stood absolutely suffocated with laughter, and scarcely able to stand without support.

"Waller," said I, in a voice half tremulous with rage and shame together—"Waller, if this rascally trick be yours, rest assured no former term of intimacy between us shall——"

Before I could conclude the sentence, a bustle at the door of the room called every attention in that direction; I turned and beheld Colonel Kamworth, followed by a strong *posse comitatus* of constables, tipstaffs, etc., armed to the teeth, and evidently prepared for vigorous battle. Before I was able to point out my woes to my kind host, he burst out,—

"So you scoundrel, you impostor, you infernal young villain, pretending to be a gentleman, you get admission into a man's house and dine at his table, when your proper place had been behind his chair! How far he might have gone, Heaven can tell, if that excellent young gentleman, his master, had not traced him here this morning; but you'll pay dearly for it, you young rascal, that you shall."

"Colonel Kamworth," said I, drawing myself proudly up (and, I confess, exciting new bursts of laughter)—"Colonel Kamworth, for the expressions you have just applied to me, a heavy reckoning awaits you; not, however, before another individual now present shall atone for the insult he has dared to pass upon me." Colonel Kamworth's passion at this declaration

knew no bounds; he cursed and swore absolutely like a madman, and vowed that transportation for life would be a mild sentence for such an iniquity.

Waller at length, wiping the tears of laughter from his eyes, interposed between the colonel and his victim, and begged that I might be forgiven; "For indeed, my dear sir," said he, "the poor fellow is of rather respectable parentage, and such is his taste for good society, that he'd run any risk to be among his betters, although, as in the present case, the exposure brings a rather heavy retribution;—however, let me deal with him. Come, Henry," said he, with an air of insufferable superiority, "take my tilbury into town, and wait for me at the George; I shall endeavor to make your peace with my excellent friend, Colonel Kamworth, and the best mode you can contribute to that object, is to let us have no more of your society."

I cannot attempt to picture my rage at these words; however, escape from this diabolical predicament was my only present object, and I rushed from the room, and springing into the tilbury at the door, drove down the avenue at the rate of fifteen miles per hour, amid the united cheers, groans, and yells of the whole servants'-hall, who seemed to enjoy my "detection," more even than their betters. Meditating vengeance, sharp, short, and decisive, on Waller, the colonel, and every one else in the infernal conspiracy against me—for I utterly forgot every vestige of our agreement in the surprise by which I was taken—I reached Cheltenham. Unfortunately, I had no friend there to whose management I could commit the bearing of a message, and was obliged, as soon as I could procure suitable costume, to hasten up to Coventry, where the —th dragoons were then quartered. I lost no time in selecting an adviser, and taking the necessary steps to bring Master Waller to a reckoning; and on the third morning we again reached Cheltenham, I thirsting for vengeance, and bursting still with anger; not so, my friend, however, who never could discuss the affair with common gravity, and even ventured every now and then on a sly allusion to my yellow shorts. As we passed the last toll-bar, a traveling carriage came whirling by with four horses at a tremendous pace; and as the morning was frosty, and the sun scarcely risen, the whole team were smoking and steaming, so as to be half invisible. We both remarked on the precipitancy of the party; for as our own pace was considerable, the two vehicles passed like lightning. We had scarcely dressed, and ordered breakfast, when a more than usual bustle in the yard called us to the window; the waiter, who came in at the same instant, told us that four horses were ordered out to pursue a young lady who had eloped that morning with an officer.

"Ah, our friend in the green traveling-chariot, I'll be bound," said my companion; but as neither of us knew that part of the country, and I was too engrossed by my own thoughts, I never inquired further. As the chaise in chase drove round to the door, I looked to see what the pursuer was like; and as he issued from the inn, recognized my *ci-devant* host, Colonel Kamworth. I need not say my vengeance was sated at once; *he* had lost his daughter, and *Waller* was on the road to be married. Apologies and explanations came in due time for all my injuries and sufferings; and I confess the part which pleased me most was, that I saw no more of Jack for a considerable period after; he started for the Continent, where he has lived ever since on a small allowance granted by his father-in-law, and never paying me the stipulated sum, as I had clearly broken the compact.

So much for my second attempt at matrimony. One would suppose that such experience should be deemed sufficient to show that my talent did not lie in that way. And here I must rest for the present, with the additional confession, that so strong was the memory of that vile adventure, that I refused a lucrative appointment under Lord Anglesey's government, when I discovered that his livery included "yellow plush breeches;" to have such *souvenirs* flitting around and about me, at dinner and elsewhere, would have left me without a pleasure in existence.

CHAPTER XII.

DUBLIN—TOM O'FLAHERTY—A REMINISCENCE OF THE PENINSULA.

DEAR, dirty Dublin!—*Io te saluto*—how many excellent things might be said of thee, if, unfortunately, it did not happen that the theme is an old one, and has been much better *sung* than it can ever now be *said*. With thus much of apology for no more lengthened panegyric, let me beg of my reader, if he be conversant with that most moving melody—the Groves of Blarney—to hum the following lines, which I heard shortly after my landing, and which

well express my own feelings for the "loved spot."

"Oh! Dublin, sure, there is no doubtin',
Beats every city upon the *say;*
'Tis there you'll see O'Connell spouting,
And Lady Morgan making "*tay.*"
For 'tis the capital of the greatest nation,
With finest peasantry on a fruitful sod,
Fighting like devils for conciliation,
And hating each other for the love of God."

Once more, then, I found myself in the "most car-drivingest city," *en route* to join on the expiration of my leave. Since my departure, my regiment had been ordered to Kilkenny, that sweet city, so famed in song for its "fire without smoke;" but which, were its character in any way to be derived from its past or present representative, might certainly, with more propriety, reverse the epithet, and read "smoke without fire." My last communication from headquarters was full of nothing but gay doings. Balls, dinners, *déjeûners*, and more than all, private theatricals, seemed to occupy the entire attention of every man of the gallant —th. I was earnestly entreated to come, without waiting for the end of my leave; that several of my old "parts were kept open for me;" and that, in fact, the "boys of Kilkenny" were on tiptoe in expectation of my arrival, as though his Majesty's mail were to convey a Kean or a Kemble. I shuddered a little as I read this, and recollected "my last appearance on any stage," little anticipating, at the moment, that my next was to be nearly as productive of the ludicrous, as time and my "Confessions" will show. One circumstance, however, gave me considerable pleasure. It was this: I took it for granted that, in the varied and agreeable occupations which so pleasurable a career opened, my adventures in love would escape notice, and that I should avoid the merciless raillery my two failures, in six months, might reasonably be supposed to call forth. I therefore wrote a hurried note to Curzon, setting forth the great interest all their proceedings had for me, and assuring him that my stay in town should be as short as possible, for that I longed once more to "strut the monarch of the boards," and concluded with a sly paragraph, artfully intended to act as a *paralonnierre* to the gibes and jests which I dreaded, by endeavoring to make light of my matrimonial speculations. The postscript ran somewhat thus—"Glorious fun have I had since we met; but were it not that my good angel stood by me, I should write these hurried lines with a wife at my elbow; but luck, that never yet deserted, is still faithful to your old friend, H. LORREQUER."

My reader may suppose—for he is sufficiently behind the scenes with me—with what feelings I penned these words; yet anything was better than the attack I looked forward to: and I should rather have changed into the Cape Rifle Corps, or any other army of martyrs, than meet my mess with all the ridicule my late proceedings exposed me to. Having disburdened my conscience of this dread, I finished my breakfast, and set out on a stroll through the town.

I believe it is Coleridge who somewhere says, that to transmit the first bright and early impressions of our youth, fresh and uninjured, to a remote period of life, constitutes one of the loftiest prerogatives of genius. If this be true—and I am not disposed to dispute it—what a gifted people must be the worthy inhabitants of Dublin; for I scruple not to affirm, that of all cities of which we have any record in history, sacred or profane, there is not one so little likely to disturb the tranquil current of such reminiscences. "As it was of old, so it is now," enjoying a delightful permanency in all its habits and customs which no changes elsewhere disturb or affect; and in this repect I defy O'Connell and all the tail to refuse it the epithet of "Conservative."

Had the excellent Rip Van Winkle, instead of seeking his repose upon the cold and barren acclivities of the Kaatskills—as we are veritably informed by Irving—but betaken himself to a comfortable bed at Morrison's or the Bilton, not only would he have enjoyed a more agreeable siesta, but, what the event showed of more consequence, the pleasing satisfaction of not being disconcerted by novelty on his awakening. It is possible that the waiter who brought him the water to shave—for Rip's beard, we are told, had grown uncommonly long—might exhibit a little of that wear and tear to which humanity is liable from time; but had he questioned him as to the ruling topics—the popular amusements of the day—he would have heard, as he might have done twenty years before, that there was a meeting to convert Jews at the Rotunda: another to rob parsons at the Corn Exchange; that the Viceroy was dining with the Corporation, and congratulating them on the prosperity of Ireland, while the inhabitants were regaled with a procession of the "broad ribbon weavers," who had not weaved, Heaven knows when! This, with an occa-

sional letter from Mr. O'Connell, and now and then a duel in the "Phaynix," constituted the current pastimes of the city. Such, at least, were they in *my* day; and, though far from the dear locale, an odd flitting glance at the newspapers induces me to believe that matters are not much changed since.

I rambled through the streets for some hours, revolving such thoughts as pressed upon me involuntarily by all I saw. The same little grey homunculus that filled my "Prince's mixture" years before, stood behind the counter at Lundy Foot's, weighing out rappee and high toast, just as I last saw him. The fat college porter, that I used to mistake in my schoolboy days for the Provost, God forgive me! was there as fat and ruddy as heretofore, and wore his Roman costume of helmet and plush breeches, with an air as classic. The State trumpeter at the castle, another object of my youthful veneration, poor "old God save the King" as we used to call him, walked the streets as of old; his cheeks, indeed, a little more lanky and tendinous; but then there had been many viceregal changes, and the "one sole melody his heart delighted in" had been more frequently called into requisition, as he marched in solemn state with the other antique gentlemen in tabards. As I walked along, each moment some familiar and early association being suggested by the objects around, I felt my arm suddenly seized. I turned hastily round, and beheld a very old companion in many a hard-fought field and merry bivouac, Tom O'Flaherty of the 8th. Poor Tom was sadly changed since we last met, which was at a ball in Madrid. He was then one of the best-looking fellows of his stamp I ever met, tall and athletic, with the easy bearing of a man of the world, and a certain jauntiness that I have never seen but in Irishmen who have mixed much in society.

There was also a certain peculiar devil-may-care recklessness about the self-satisfied swagger of his gait, and the free-and-easy glance of his sharp black eye, united with a temper that nothing could ruffle, and a courage nothing could daunt. With such qualities as these, he had been the prime favorite of his mess, to which he never came without some droll story to relate, or some choice expedient for future amusement. Such had Tom once been: now he was much altered, and though the quiet twinkle of his dark eye showed that the spirit of fun within was not "dead, but only sleeping," to myself who knew something of his history, it seemed almost cruel to awaken him to anything which might bring him back to the memory of bygone days. A momentary glance showed me that he was no longer what he had been, and that the unfortunate change in his condition, the loss of all his earliest and oldest associates, and his blighted prospects, had nearly broken a heart that never deserted a friend nor quailed before an enemy. Poor O'Flaherty was no longer the delight of the circle he once adorned; the wit that "set the table in a roar" was all but departed. He had been dismissed the service!! The story is a brief one:

In a retreat from Burgos, the —th Light Dragoons, after a fatiguing day's march, halted at the wretched village of Cabenas. It had been deserted by the inhabitants the day before, who, on leaving, had set it on fire, and the blackened walls and fallen roof-trees were nearly all that now remained to show where the little hamlet had once stood.

Amid a downpour of rain, that had fallen for several hours, drenched to the skin, cold, weary, and nearly starving, the gallant 8th reached this melancholy spot at nightfall, with little better prospect of protection from the storm than the barren heath through which their road led might afford them. Among the many who muttered curses, not loud but deep, on the wretched termination to their day's suffering, there was one who kept up his usual good spirits, and not only seemed himself nearly regardless of the privations and miseries about him, but actually succeeded in making the others who rode alongside as perfectly forgetful of their annoyances and troubles as was possible under such circumstances. Good stories, joking allusions to the more discontented ones of the party, ridiculous plans for the night's encampments, followed each other so rapidly, that the weariness of the way was forgotten; and while some were cursing their hard fate that ever betrayed them into such misfortunes, the little group round O'Flaherty were almost convulsed with laughter at the wit and drollery of one over whom, if the circumstances had any influence, they seemed only to heighten his passion for amusement. In the early part of the morning he had captured a turkey, which hung gracefully from his holster on one side, while a small goat-skin of Valencia wine balanced it on the other. These good things were destined to form a feast that evening to which he had invited four others —that being, according to his most liberal calculation, the greatest number to whom he could afford a reasonable supply of wine.

When the halt was made, it took some time to arrange the dispositions for the night, and it was nearly midnight before all the regiment had got their billets and were housed, even with such scanty accommodation as the place afforded. Tom's guests had not yet arrived, and he himself was busily engaged in roasting the turkey before a large fire, on which stood a capacious vessel of spiced wine, when the party appeared. A very cursory "reconnaissance" through the house—one of the only ones untouched in the village—showed that from the late rain it would be impossible to think of sleeping in the lower story, which already showed signs of being flooded; they therefore proceeded in a body upstairs, and what was their delight to find a most comfortable room, neatly furnished with chairs and a table; but, above all, a large old-fashioned bed, an object of such luxury as only an old campaigner can duly appreciate. The curtains were closely tucked in all round, and, in their fleeting and hurried glance, they felt no inclination to disturb them, and rather proceeded to draw up the table before the hearth, to which they speedly removed the fire from below, and, ere many minutes, with that activity which a bivouac life invariably teaches, their supper smoked before them, and five happier fellows did not sit down that night within a large circuit around. Tom was unusually great; stores of drollery, unlocked before, poured from him unceasingly, and, what with his high spirits to excite them, and the reaction inevitable after a hard day's severe march, the party soon lost the little reason that usually sufficed to guide them, and became as pleasantly tipsy as can well be conceived. However, all good things must have an end, and so had the wine-skin. Tom had placed it affectionately under his arm like a bagpipe, and failed, with even a most energetic squeeze, to extract a drop. There was now nothing for it but to go to rest, and, indeed, it seemed a most prudent thing for the party.

The bed became accordingly a subject of grave deliberation: for as it could only hold two, and the party were five, there seemed some difficulty in submitting their chances to lot, which all agreed was the fairest way. While this was under discussion, one of the party had approached the contested prize, and, drawing aside the curtains, proceeded to jump in, when, what was his astonishment to discover that it was already occupied! The exclamation of surprise he gave forth soon brought the others to his side, and to their horror, drunk as they were, they found that the body before them was that of a dead man, arrayed in all the ghastly pomp of a corpse. A little nearer inspection showed that he had been a priest, probably the padre of the village; on his head he had a small velvet skull-cap, embroidered with a cross, and his body was swathed in a vestment, such as priests usually wear at the mass; in his hand he held a large wax taper, which appeared to have burnt only half down, and probably been extinguished by the current of air on opening the door. After the first brief shock which this sudden apparition had caused, the party recovered as much of their senses as the wine had left them, and proceeded to discuss what was to be done under the circumstances; for not one of them ever contemplated giving up a bed to a dead priest, while five living men slept on the ground. After much altercation, O'Flaherty who had hitherto listened without speaking, interrupted the contending parties, saying, "Stop, lads, I have it."

"Come," said one of them, "let us hear Tom's proposal."

"Oh," said he, with difficulty steadying himself while he spoke, "we'll put him to bed with old Ridgeway, the quartermaster!"

The roar of loud laughter that followed Tom's device was renewed again and again, till not a man could speak from absolute fatigue. There was not a dissentient voice. Old Ridgeway was hated in the corps, and a better way of disposing of the priest, and paying off the quartermaster, could not be thought of.

Very little time sufficed for their preparations; and if they had been brought up under a certain well-known duke, they could not have exhibited a greater taste for a "black job." The door of the room was quickly taken from its hinges, and the priest placed upon it at full length; a moment more sufficed to lift the door upon their shoulders, and, preceded by Tom, who lit a candle in honor of being, as he said, "chief mourner," they took their way through the camp towards Ridgeway's quarters. When they reached the hut where their victim lay, Tom ordered a halt, and proceeded stealthily into the house to "reconnaitre." The old quartermaster he found stretched on his sheepskin before a large fire, the remnants of an ample supper strewed about him, and two empty bottles standing on the hearth: his deep snoring showed that all was safe, and that no fears of his awaking need disturb them. His shako and sword lay near

him, but his sabretasche was under his head. Tom carefully withdrew the two former, and, hastening to his friends without, proceeded to decorate the priest with them, expressing, at the same time, considerable regret that he feared it might wake Ridgeway if he were to put the velvet skull-cap on him for a night-cap.

Noiselessly and stealthily they now entered, and proceeded to put down their burden, which, after a moment's discussion, they agreed to place between the quartermaster and the fire, of which hitherto he had reaped ample benefit. This done, they quietly retreated, and hurried back to their quarters, unable to speak with laughter at the success of their plot, and their anticipation of Ridgeway's rage on awakening in the morning.

It was in the dim twilight of a hazy morning, that the bugler of the 8th aroused the sleeping soldiers from their miserable couches, which, wretched as they were, they nevertheless rose from reluctantly, so wearied and fatigued had they been by the preceding day's march. Not one among the number felt so indisposed to stir as the worthy quartermaster; his peculiar avocations had demanded a more than usual exertion on his part, and in the posture he had lain down at night he rested till morning, without stirring a limb. Twice the reveille had rung through the little encampment, and twice the quartermaster had essayed to open his eyes, but in vain; at last he made a tremendous effort, and sat bolt upright on the floor, hoping that the sudden effort might sufficiently arouse him; slowly his eyes opened, and the first thing they beheld was the figure of the dead priest, with a light cavalry helmet on his head, seated before him. Ridgeway, who was a good Catholic, trembled in every joint—it might be a ghost, it might be a warning, he knew not what to think; he imagined the lips moved, and so overcome with terror was he at last, that he absolutely shouted like a maniac, and never ceased till the hut was filled with officers and men, who, hearing the uproar, ran to his aid. The surprise of the poor quartermaster at the apparition was scarcely greater than that of the beholders. No one was able to afford any explanation of the circumstance, though all were assured that it must have been done in jest. The door upon which the priest had been conveyed afforded the clue—they had forgotten to restore it to its place. Accordingly the different billets were examined, and at last O'Flaherty was discovered in a most commodious bed, in a large room without a door, still fast asleep, and alone: how and when he had parted from his companions he never could precisely explain, though he has since confessed it was part of his scheme to lead them astray in the village, and then retire to the bed, which he had determined to appropriate to his sole use.

Old Ridgeway's rage knew no bounds; he absolutely foamed with passion, and in proportion as he was laughed at his choler rose higher. Had this been the only result, it had been well for poor Tom, but unfortunately the affair got to be rumored through the country—the inhabitants of the village learned the indignity with which the padre had been treated; they addressed a memorial to Lord Wellington—inquiry was immediately instituted—O'Flaherty was tried by court-martial, and found guilty; nothing short of the heaviest punishment that could be inflicted under the circumstances would satisfy the Spaniards, and at that precise period it was part of our policy to conciliate their esteem by every means in our power. The commander-in-chief resolved to make what he called an "example," and poor O'Flaherty—the life and soul of his regiment—the darling of his mess—was broke, and pronounced incapable of ever serving his Majesty again. Such was the event upon which my poor friend's fortune in life seemed to hinge. He returned to Ireland, if not entirely broken-hearted, so altered that his best friends scarcely knew him—his "occupation was gone;" the mess had been his home; his brother officers were to him in place of relatives, and he had lost all. His after-life was spent in rambling from one watering-place to another, more with the air of one who seeks to consume than enjoy his time; and with such a change in appearance as the alteration in his fortune had effected, he now stood before me, but altogether so different a man, that but for the well-known tones of a voice that had often convulsed me with laughter, I should scarcely have recognized him.

"Lorrequer, my old friend, I never thought of seeing you here—this is indeed a piece of good luck."

"Why, Tom? You surely knew that the 4—th were in Ireland, didn't you?"

"To be sure. I dined with them only a few days ago, but they told me you were off to Paris, to marry something superlatively beautiful, and most enormously rich—the daughter of a duke, if I remember right; but certes, they said your fortune was made, and I need not tell you there

was not a man among them better pleased than I was to hear it."

"Oh! they said so, did they? Droll dogs—always quizzing—I wonder you did not perceive the hoax—eh—very good, was it not?" This I poured out in short broken sentences, blushing like scarlet, and fidgeting like a schoolgirl with downright nervousness.

"A hoax! Devilish well done, too," said Tom, "for old Carden believed the whole story, and told me that he had obtained a six months' leave for you to make your *cour*, and, moreover, said that he had got a letter from the nobleman, Lord—Confound his name!"

"Lord Grey, is it?" said I, with a sly look at Tom.

"No, my dear friend," said he drily, "it was not Lord Grey. But to continue: he had got a letter from him, dated from Paris, stating his surprise that you have never joined them there, according to promise, and that they knew your cousin Guy, and a great deal of other matter I can't remember—so what does all this mean? Did you hoax the noble lord as well as the Horse Guards, Harry?"

This was indeed a piece of news for me; I stammered out some ridiculous explanation, and promised a fuller detail. Could it be that I had done the Callonbys injustice, and that they never intended to break off my intentions to Lady Jane—that she was still faithful, and that of all concerned I alone had been to blame? Oh! how I hoped this might be the case; heavily as my conscience might accuse, I longed ardently to forgive and deal mercifully with myself. Tom continued to talk about indifferent matters, as these thoughts flitted through my mind; perceiving at last that I did not attend, he stopped suddenly, and said,—

"Harry, I see clearly that something has gone wrong, and perhaps I can guess at the mode, too: but, however, you can do nothing about it now; come and dine with me to-day, and we'll discuss the affair together after dinner; or, if you prefer a 'distraction,' as we used to say in Dunkerque, why then I'll arrange something fashionable for your evening's amusement. Come, what say you to hearing Father Keogh preach? or would you like a supper at the Carlingford? or perhaps you prefer a *soirée chez Miladi?*—for all of these Dublin affords—all three good in their way, and very intellectual."

"Well, Tom, I'm yours; but I should prefer your dining with *me;* I am at Bilton's; we'll have our cutlet quite alone, and——"

"And be heartily sick of each other, you were going to add. No, no, Harry, you must dine with *me;* I have some remarkably *nice* people to present you to—six is the hour—sharp six—number —, Molesworth Street, Mrs. Clanfrizzle's,—easily find it—large fanlight over the door—huge lamp in the hall, and a strong odor of mutton broth for thirty yards on each side of the premises—and, as good luck will have it, I see old Daly, the counselor, as they call him; he's the very man to get to meet you—you always liked a character, eh?"

Saying this, O'Flaherty disengaged himself from my arm, and hurried across the street towards a portly, middle-aged looking gentleman, with the reddest face I ever beheld. After a brief but very animated colloquy, Tom returned, and informed me that all was right; he had secured Daly.

"And who is Daly?" said I, inquiringly, for I was rather interested in hearing what peculiar qualification as a diner-out the counselor might lay claim to, many of Tom's *friends* being as remarkable for being the quizzed as the quizzers.

"Daly," said he, "is the brother of a most distinguished member of the Irish bar, of which he himself is also a follower, bearing, however, no other resemblance to the clever man than the name, for, as assuredly as the reputation of the one is inseparably linked with success, so unerringly is the other's coupled with failure; and, strange to say, the stupid man is fairly convinced that his brother owes all his advancement to him, and that to his disinterested kindness the other is indebted for his present exalted station. Thus it is through life; there seems ever to accompany dulness a sustaining power of vanity, that, like a life-buoy, keeps a mass afloat whose weight unassisted would sink into obscurity. Do you know that my friend Denis, there, imagines himself the first man that ever enlightened Sir Robert Peel as to Irish affairs; and, upon my word, his reputation on this head stands incontestably higher than on most others."

"You surely cannot mean that Sir Robert Peel ever consulted with, much less relied upon, the statements of such a person as you describe your friend Denis to be?"

"He did both—and if he was a little puzzled by the information, the only disgrace attaches to a government that sends men to rule over us unacquainted with our habits of thinking, and utterly ignorant of

the language—ay, I repeat it. But come, you shall judge for yourself; the story is a short one, and fortunately so, for I must hasten home to give timely notice of your coming to dine with me. When Sir Robert Peel, then Mr. Peel, came over here, as secretary to Ireland, a very distinguished political leader of the day invited a party to meet him at dinner, consisting of men of different political leanings, among whom were, as may be supposed, many members of the Irish bar. The elder Daly was too remarkable a person to be omitted, but as the two brothers resided together, there was a difficulty about getting him; however, he must be had, and the only alternative that presented itself was adopted—both were invited. When the party descended to the dining-room, by one of those unfortunate accidents which, as the proverb informs us, occasionally take place in the best regulated establishments, the wrong Mr. Daly got placed beside Mr. Peel, which post of honor had been destined by the host for the more agreeable and talented brother. There was now no help for it; and with a heart somewhat nervous for the consequences of the proximity, the worthy entertainer sat down to do the honors as best he might; he was consoled during dinner by observing that the devotion bestowed by honest Denis on the viands before him effectually absorbed his faculties, and thereby threw the entire of Mr. Peel's conversation towards the gentleman on his other flank. This happiness was, like most others, destined to be a brief one. As the dessert made its appearance, Mr. Peel began to listen with some attention to the conversation of the persons opposite, with one of whom he was struck most forcibly—so happy a power of illustration, so vivid a fancy, such logical precision in argument as he evinced, perfectly charmed and surprised him. Anxious to learn the name of so gifted an individual, he turned towards his hitherto silent neighbor, and demanded who he was.

"'Who is he, is it?' said Denis, hesitatingly, as if he half doubted such extent of ignorance as not to know the person alluded to.

"Mr. Peel bowed in acquiescence.

"'That's Bushe!' said Denis, giving at the same time the same sound to the vowel *u* as it obtains when occurring in the word 'rush.'

"'I beg pardon,' said Mr. Peel, 'I did not hear.'

"'Bushe!' replied Denis, with considerable energy of tone.

"'Oh, yes! I know,' said the secretary; 'Mr. Bushe, a very distinguished member of your bar, I have heard.'

"'Faith, you may say that!' said Denis, tossing off his wine at what he esteemed a very trite observation.

"'Pray,' said Mr. Peel, again returning to the charge, though certainly feeling not a little surprised at the singular laconicism of his informant, no less than the mellifluous tones of an accent then perfectly new to him—'pray, may I ask, what is the peculiar character of Mr. Bushe's eloquence—I mean, of course, in his professional capacity?'

"'Eh!' said Denis, 'I don't comprehend you exactly.'

"'I mean,' said Mr. Peel, 'in one word, what's his forte?'

"'His forte!'

"'I mean what his peculiar gift consists in——'

"'Oh, I perceave—I have ye now—the juries!'

"'Ah! addressing a jury.'

"'Ay, the juries.'

"'Can you oblige me by giving me an idea of the manner in which he obtains such signal success in this difficult branch of eloquence?'

"'I'll tell ye,' said Denis, leisurely finishing his glass and smacking his lips, with the air of a man girding up his loins for a mighty effort—'I'll tell ye. Well, ye see the way he has is this,'—here Mr. Peel's expectation rose to the highest degree of interest,—'the way he has is this—*he first butthers them up, and then slithers them down!*—that's all, devil a more of a secret there's in it.'"

How much reason Denis had to boast of imparting early information to the new secretary I leave my English readers to guess; my Irish ones I may trust to do him ample justice.

My friend now left me to my own devices to while away the hours till time to dress for dinner. Heaven help the gentleman so left in Dublin, say I. It is, perhaps, the only city of its size in the world where there is no lounge—no promenade. Very little experience of it will convince you that it abounds in pretty women, and has its fair share of agreeable men: but where are they in the morning? I wish Sir Dick Lauder, instead of speculating where salmon pass the Christmas holidays, would apply his most inquiring mind to such a question as this. True it is, however, they are not to be found. The squares are deserted—the streets are very nearly so—and all that is left to the luckless wanderer

in search of the beautiful, is to ogle the beauties of Dame Street, who are shopkeepers in Grafton Street, or the beauties of Grafton Street, who are shopkeepers in Dame Street. But, confound it, how cranky I am getting—I must be tremendously hungry. True, it's past six. So now for my suit of sable, and then to dinner.

CHAPTER XIII.

DUBLIN—THE BOARDING-HOUSE—SELECT SOCIETY.

PUNCTUAL to my appointment with O'Flaherty, I found myself, a very few minutes after six o'clock, at Mrs. Clanfrizzle's door. My very authoritative summons at the bell was answered by the appearance of a young, pale-faced invalid, in a suit of livery, the taste of which bore a very unpleasant resemblance to the one I so lately figured in. It was with considerable difficulty I persuaded this functionary to permit my carrying my hat with me to the drawing-room, a species of caution on my part, as he esteemed it, savoring much of distrust. This point, however, I carried, and followed him up a very ill-lighted stair to the drawing-room. Here I was announced by some faint resemblance to my real name, but sufficiently near to bring my friend Tom at once to meet me, who immediately congratulated me on my fortune in coming off so well, for that the person who preceded me, Mr. Jones Blennerhasset, had been just announced as Mr. Blatherhashit—a change the gentleman himself was not disposed to adopt. "But come along, Harry; while we are waiting for Daly, let me make you known to some of our party. This, you must know, is a boarding-house, and always has some capital fun—queerest people you ever met—I have only one hint—cut every man, woman, and child of them, if you meet them hereafter; I do it myself, though I have lived here these six months." Pleasant people, thought I, these must be, with whom such a line is advisable, much less practicable.

"Mrs. Clanfrizzle, my friend, Mr. Lorrequer; thinks he'll stay the summer in town. Mrs. Clan, should like him to be one of us." The latter was said *sotto voce*, and was a practice he continued to adopt in presenting me to his several friends through the room.

"Miss Riley,"—a horrid old fright, in a bird of paradise plume, and corked eyebrows, gibbeted in gilt chains and pearl ornaments, and looking, as the grisettes say, *superbe en chrysolite*,—"Miss Riley, Captain Lorrequer, a friend I have longed desired to present to you—fifteen thousand a year and a baronetcy,—if he has sixpence,"—*sotto* again. "Surgeon M'Culloch—he likes the title," said Tom, in a whisper—"Surgeon, Captain Lorrequer. By the by, lest I forget it, he wishes to speak to you in the morning about his health; he is stopping at Sandymount for the baths; you could go out there, eh?" The tall thing in green spectacles bowed, and acknowledged Tom's kindness by a knowing touch of the elbow. In this way he made the tour of the room for about ten minutes, during which brief space I was, according to the kind arrangements of O'Flaherty, booked as a resident in the boarding-house—a lover to at least five elderly, and three young ladies—a patient—a client—a second in a duel to a clerk in the Post-office—and had also volunteered (through him always) to convey, by all of his Majesty's mails, as many parcels, packets, band-boxes, and bird-cages, as would have comfortably filled one of Pickford's vans. All this he told me was requisite to my being well received, though no one thought much of any breach of compact subsequently, except Mrs. 'Clan herself. The ladies had, alas! been often treated vilely before; the doctor had never had a patient, and as for the belligerent knight of the dead office, he'd rather have died than fought any day.

The last person to whom my friend deemed it necessary to introduce me, was a Mr. Garret Cudmore, from the Reeks on Kerry, lately matriculated to all the honors of freshmanship in the Dublin University. This latter was a low-sized, dark-browed man, with round shoulders, and particularly long arms, the disposal of which seemed sadly to distress him. He possessed the most perfect brogue I ever listened to; but it was difficult to get him to speak, for, on coming up to town some weeks before, he had been placed by some intelligent friend at Mrs. Clanfrizzle's establishment, with the express direction to mark and thoroughly digest as much as he could of the habits and customs of the circle about him, which he was rightly informed was the very focus of good breeding and *haut ton;* but on no account, unless driven thereto by the pressure of sickness, or the wants of nature, to trust himself with speech, which, in his then uninformed state, he was assured would inevitably ruin him among his fastidiously cultivated associates.

To the letter and the spirit of the despatch he had received, the worthy Garret

acted rigidly, and his voice was scarcely ever known to transgress the narrow limits prescribed by his friends. In more respects than one was this a good resolve; for so completely had he identified himself with college habits, things, and phrases, that whenever he conversed, he became little short of unintelligible to the vulgar —a difficulty not lessened by his peculiar pronunciation.

My round of presentation was just completed, when the pale figure in light blue livery announced Counsellor Daly and dinner, for both came fortunately together. Taking the post of honor, Miss Riley's arm, I followed Tom, who I soon perceived ruled the whole concern, as he led the way with another ancient vestal in black satin and bugles. The long procession wound its snake-like length down the narrow stair, and into the dining-room, where at last we all got seated. And here let me briefly vindicate the motives of my friend. Should any unkind person be found to impute to his selection of a residence any base and groveling passion for "gourmandise," that day's experience should be an eternal vindication of him. The soup—alas! that I should so far prostitute the word, for the black broth of Sparta was mock-turtle in comparison—retired to make way for a mass of beef, whose tenderness I did not question; for it sank beneath the knife of the carver like a feather bed—the skill of Saladin himself would have failed to divide it. The fish was a most rebellious pike, and nearly killed every loyal subject at table; and then down the sides were various dishes of chickens with azure bosoms, and hams with hides like a rhinoceros; covered "decoys" of decomposed vegetable matter called spinach and cabbage; potatoes arrayed in small masses, and browned, resembling those ingenious architectural structures of mud children raise in the highways and call dirt-pies. Such were the chief constituents of the "feed;" and such, I am bound to confess, waxed beautifully less under the vigorous onslaught of the party.

The conversation soon became both loud and general. That happy familiarity—which I had long believed to be the exclusive prerogative of a military mess, where constant daily association sustains the interest of the veriest trifles—I here found in a perfection I had not anticipated, with this striking difference, that there was no absurd deference to any existing code of etiquette in the conduct of the party generally, each person quizzing his neighbor in the most free-and-easy style imaginable, and all, evidently from long habit and conventional usage, seeming to enjoy the practice exceedingly. Thus, droll allusions, good stories, and smart repartees fell thick as hail, and twice as harmless, which, anywhere else that I had ever heard of, would assuredly have called for more explanations, and perhaps gunpowder, in the morning, than usually are deemed agreeable. Here, however, they knew better; and though the lawyer quizzed the doctor for never having another patient than the house-dog, all of whose arteries he had tied in the course of the winter for practice, and the doctor retorted as heavily by showing that the lawyer's practice had been other than beneficial to those for whom he was concerned, his *one* client being found guilty, mainly through his ingenious defence of him, yet they never showed any, the slightest irritation; on the contrary, such little playful badinage ever led to some friendly passages of taking wine together, or in arrangements for a party to the "Dargle," or "Dunleary;" and thus went on the entire party, the young ladies darting an occasional slight at their elders, who certainly returned the fire often with advantage; all uniting now and then, however, in one common cause, an attack of the whole line upon Mrs. Clanfrizzle herself, for the beef, or the mutton, or the fish, or the poultry—each of which was sure to find some sturdy defamer, ready and willing to give evidence in dispraise. Yet even these—and I thought them rather dangerous sallies—led to no more violent results than dignified replies from the worthy hostess upon the goodness of her fare, and the evident satisfaction it afforded while being eaten, if the appetites of the party were a test. While this was at its height, Tom stooped behind my chair, and whispered gently,—

"This is good—isn't it, eh?—life in a boarding-house—quite new to you, but they are civilized now compared to what you will find them in the drawing-room. when short whist for fivepenny points sets in—then Greek meets Greek, and we'll have it."

During all this *mêlée* tournament, I perceived that the worthy jib, as he would be called in the parlance of Trinity, Mr. Cudmore, remained perfectly silent and apparently terrified. The noise, the din of voices, and the laughing, so completely addled him, that he was like one in a very horrid dream. The attention with which I had observed him having been remarked

by my friend O'Flaherty, he informed me that the scholar, as he was called there, was then under a kind of cloud—an adventure which occurred only two nights before being too fresh in his memory to permit him enjoying himself even to the limited extent it had been his wont to do. As illustrative, not only of Mr. Cudmore, but the life I have been speaking of, I may as well relate it.

Soon after Mr. Cudmore's enlistment under the banners of the Clanfrizzle, he had sought and found an asylum in the drawing-room of the establishment, which promised, from its geographical relations, to expose him less to the molestations of conversation than most other parts of the room. This was a small recess beside the fireplace, not uncommon in old-fashioned houses, and which, from its incapacity to hold more than one, secured to the worthy recluse the privacy he longed for; and here, among superannuated hearth-brushes, an old hand-screen, an asthmatic bellows, and a kettle-holder, sat the timid youth, "alone, but in a crowd." Not all the seductions of loo, limited to threepence, nor even that most appropriately designated game, beggar-my-neighbor, could withdraw him from his blest retreat. Like his countryman, St. Kevin—my friend Petrie has ascertained that the saint was a native of Tralee—he fled from the temptations of the world, and the blandishments of the fair; but, alas! like the saint himself, the

> poor "jib" little knew
> All that wily sex can do;

for while he hugged himself in the security of his fortress, the web of his destiny was weaving. So true is it, as he himself used, no less pathetically than poetically to express it, "misfortune will find you out, if ye were hid in a tay-chest."

It happened that in Mrs. Clanfrizzle's establishment, the *enfant bleu* already mentioned was the only individual of his sex retained; and without for a moment disparaging the ability or attentions of this gifted person, yet it may reasonably be credited that, in waiting on a party of twenty-five or thirty persons at dinner, all of whom he had admitted as porter and announced as *maître d' hôtel*, with the subsequent detail of his duties in the drawing-room, Peter—Blue Peter, his boarding-house sobriquet—not enjoying the bird-like privilege of "being in two places at once," gave one rather the impression of a person of hasty and fidgety habits, for which nervous tendency the treatment he underwent was certainly injudicious, it being the invariable custom for each guest to put his services in requisition, perfectly irrespective of all other claims upon him, from whatsoever quarter coming; and then at the precise moment that the luckless valet was snuffing the candles, he was abused by one for not bringing coal; by another for having carried off his teacup, sent on an expedition for sugar; by a third for having left the door open, which he had never been near; and so on to the end of the chapter.

It chanced that a few evenings previous to my appearance at the house, this indefatigable Caleb was ministering as usual to the various and discrepant wants of the large party assembled in the drawing-room. With his wonted alacrity he had withdrawn from their obscure retreat against the wall, sundry little tables, destined for the players at whist, or "spoil five"—the popular game of the establishment. With a dexterity that savored much of a stage education, he had arranged the candles, the cards, the counters; he had poked the fire, settled the stool for Miss Riley's august feet, and was busily engaged in changing five shillings into small silver for a desperate victim of loo, when Mrs. Clanfrizzle's third, and, as it appeared, last time of asking for the kettle smote upon his ear. His loyalty would have induced him at once to desert everything on such an occasion; but the other party engaged held him fast, saying,

"Never mind *her*, Peter—you have sixpence more to give me."

Poor Peter rummaged one pocket, then another—discovering at last threepence in copper, and some farthings, with which he seemed endeavoring to make a composition with his creditor for twelve shillings in the pound; when Mrs. Clan's patience finally becoming exhausted, she turned towards Mr. Cudmore, the only unemployed person she could perceive, and with her blandest smile said,—

"Mr. Cudmore, may I take the liberty of requesting you would hand me the kettle beside you?"

Now, though the kettle aforesaid was, as the hostess very properly observed, beside him, yet the fact that in complying with the demand it was necessary for the bashful youth to leave the recess he occupied, and, with the kettle, proceed to walk half across the room, there to perform certain manual operations requiring skill and presence of mind before a large and crowded assembly, was horror to the mind of the

poor Jib, and he would nearly as soon have acceded to a desire to dance a hornpipe, if such had been suggested as the wish of the company. However, there was nothing for it, and summoning up all his nerve, knitting his brows, clenching his teeth, like one prepared to "do or die," he seized the hissing cauldron and strode through the room like the personified genius of steam, very much to the alarm of all the old ladies in the vicinity, whose tasteful drapery benefited but little from his progress. Yet he felt but little of all this: he had brought up his courage to the sticking place, and he was absolutely half unconscious of the whole scene before him; nor was it till some kind mediator had seized his arm, while another drew him back by the skirts of the coat, that he desisted from the deluge of hot water with which, having filled the teapot, he proceeded to swamp everything else upon the tray, in his unfortunate abstraction. Mrs. Clanfrizzle screamed—the old ladies accompanied her—the young ones tittered—the men laughed—and, in a word, poor Cudmore, perfectly unconscious of anything extraordinary, felt himself the admired of all admirers—very little, it is true, to his own satisfaction. After some few minutes' exposure to these signs of mirth, he succeeded in depositing the source of his griefs within the fender, and once more retired to his sanctuary, having registered a vow, which, should I speak it, would forfeit his every claim to gallantry for ever.

Whether, in the vow aforesaid, Mr. Cudmore had only been engaged in that species of tesselation which furnishes the pavement so celebrated in the lower regions, I know not; but true it is, that he retired that night to his chamber very much discomfited as his *début* in the great world, and half disposed to believe that nature had neither intended him for a Brummell nor a D'Orsay. While he was ruminating on such matters, he was joined by O'Flaherty, with whom he had been always more intimate than any other inmate of the house, Tom's tact having entirely concealed what the manners of the others too plainly evinced—a perfect appreciation of the student's oddity and singularity. After some few observations on general matters, O'Flaherty began with a tone of some seriousness to express towards Cudmore the warm interest he had ever taken in him, since his first coming among them; his great anxiety for his welfare, and his firm resolve that no chance or casual inattention to mere ceremonial observances on his part should ever be seized on by the other guests as a ground for detraction or an excuse for ridicule of him.

"Rely upon it, my dear boy," said he, "I have watched over you like a parent; and having partly foreseen that something like this affair of to-night would take place sooner or later——"

"What affair?" said Cudmore, his eyes staring half out of his head.

"The business of the kettle."

"Kett—el. The kettel! What of that?" said Cudmore.

"What of it? Why, if *you* don't feel it, I am sure it is not *my* duty to remind you; only——"

"Feel it—oh yes. I saw them laughing because I spilled the water over old Mrs. Jones, or something of that sort."

"No, no, my dear young friend, they were not laughing at *that*—their mirth had another object."

"What the devil was it at, then?"

"You don't know, don't you?"

"No; I really do not."

"Nor can't guess—eh?"

"Confound me if I can."

"Well. I see, Mr. Cudmore, you are really too innocent for these people. But come—it shall never be said that youth and inexperience ever suffered from the unworthy ridicule and cold sarcasm of the base world, while Tom O'Flaherty stood by a spectator. Sir," said Tom, striking his hand with energy on the table, and darting a look of fiery indignation from his eye—"sir, you were this night trepanned—yes, sir, vilely, shamefully trepanned—I repeat the expression—into the performance of a menial office—an office so degrading, so offensive, so unbecoming the rank, the station, and the habits of gentlemen, my very blood recoils when I only think of the indignity."

The expression of increasing wonder and surprise depicted in Mr. Cudmore's face at these words, my friend Phiz might convey—I cannot venture to describe it; suffice it to say, that even O'Flaherty himself found it difficult to avoid a burst of laughter as he looked at him, and resumed:—

"Witnessing, as I did, the entire occurrence; feeling deeply for the inexperience which the heartless worldlings had dared to trample upon, I resolved to stand by you, and here I am come for that purpose."

"Well, but what in the devil's name have I done all this time?"

"What! are you still ignorant?—is it possible? Did you not hand the kettle from the fireplace, and fill the teapot?—answer me that."

"I did," said Cudmore, with a voice already becoming tremulous.

"Is that the duty of a gentleman?—answer me that."

A dead pause stood in place of a reply, while Tom proceeded,—

"Did you ever hear any one ask me, or Counselor Daly, or Mr. Fogarty, or any other person to do so?—answer me that."

"No, never," muttered Cudmore, with a sinking spirit.

"Well, then, why, may I ask, were *you* selected for that office, that, by your own confession, no one else would stoop to perform? I'll tell you, because from your youth and inexperience, your innocence was deemed a fit victim to the heartless sneers of a cold and unfeeling world." And here Tom broke forth into a very beautiful apostrophe, beginning "Oh, virtue!"—this I am unfortunately unable to present to my readers, and must only assure them that it was a very faithful imitation of the well-known one delivered by Burke in the case of Warren Hastings,—and concluding with an exhortation to Cudmore to wipe out the stain of his wounded honor, by repelling with indignation the slightest future attempt at such an insult.

This done, O'Flaherty retired, leaving Cudmore to dig among Greek roots, and chew over the cud of his misfortune. Punctual to the time and place, that same evening beheld the injured Cudmore resume his wonted corner, pretty much with the feeling with which a forlorn hope stands, match in hand, to ignite the train destined to explode with ruin to thousands—himself, perhaps, among the number. There he sat, with a brain as burning and a heart as excited as though, instead of sipping his bohea beside a sea-coal fire, he was that instant trembling beneath the frown of Dr. Elrington for the blunders in his Latin theme,—and what terror to the mind of a "Jib" can equal that one?

As luck would have it, this was a company night in the boarding-house. Various young ladies in long blue sashes, and very broad ribbon sandals, paraded the rooms, chatting gaily with very distinguished-looking young gentlemen, with gold brooches and party-colored inside waistcoats; sundry elderly ladies sat at card-tables, discussing the "lost honor by an odd trick they played," with heads as large as those of Jack or Jill in the pantomime; spruce clerks in public offices (whose vocation the expansive tendency of the right ear, from long pen-carrying, betokened) discussed fashion "and the musical glasses" to some very over-dressed married ladies, who preferred flirting to five-and-ten. The tea-table, over which the amiable hostess presided, had also its standing votaries: mostly grave parliamentary-looking gentlemen, with powdered heads and very long-waisted black coats, among whom the Sir Oracle was a functionary of his Majesty's High Court of Chancery, though, I have reason to believe, not Lord Manners: meanwhile, in all parts of the room might be seen Blue Peter, distributing tea, coffee, and buiscuit, and occasionally interchanging a joke with the dwellers in the house. While all these pleasing occupations proceeded, the hour of Cudmore's trial was approaching. The teapot, which had stood the attack of fourteen cups without flinching, at last began to fail, and discovered to the prying eyes of Mrs. Clanfrizzle nothing but an olive-colored deposit of soft matter, closely analogous in appearance and chemical property to the residuary precipitate in a drained fish-pond; she put down the lid with a gentle sigh, and turning towards the fire, bestowed one of her very blandest and most captivating looks on Mr. Cudmore, saying—as plainly as looks could say—"Cudmore, you're wanting." Whether the youth did, or did not understand, I am unable to record; I can only say, the appeal was made without acknowledgment. Mrs. Clanfrizzle again essayed, and by a little masonic movement of her hand to the teapot, and a sly glance at the hob, intimated her wish—still hopelessly; at last, there was nothing for it but speaking, and she donned her very softest voice and most persuasive tone, saying, "Mr. Cudmore, I am really very troublesome; will you permit me to ask you——"

"Is it for the kettle, ma'am?" said Cudmore, with a voice that startled the whole room, disconcerting three whist parties, and so absorbing the attention of the people at loo, that the pool disappeared without any one being able to account for the circumstance—"is it for the kettle, ma'am?"

"If you will be so *very* kind," lisped the hostess.

"Well, then, upon my conscience, you *are* impudent," said Cudmore, with his face crimsoned to the ears, and his eyes flashing fire.

"Why, Mr. Cudmore," began the lady—"why, really, this is so strange! Why, sir, what *can* you mean?"

"Just *that*," said the imperturbable Jib, who, now his courage was up, dared everything.

"But, sir, you must surely have misunderstood me. I only asked for the kettle, Mr. Cudmore."

"The devil a more," said Cud, with a sneer.

"Well, then, of course——"

"Well, then, I'll tell you, of coorse," said he, repeating her words; "the sorrow taste of the kettle I'll give you. Call your own skip—Blue Pether there—damn me if I'll be your skip any longer!"

For the uninitiated, I have only to add, that "*skip*" is the Trinity College appellation for servant, which was therefore employed by Mr. Cudmore on this occasion as expressing more contemptuously his sense of the degradation of the office attempted to be put upon him. Having already informed my reader on some particulars of the company, I leave him to suppose how Mr. Cudmore's speech was received. Whist itself was at an end for that evening, and nothing but laughter, long, loud, and reiterated, burst from every corner of the room for hours after.

As I have so far traveled out of the record of my own peculiar "Confessions" as to give a leaf from what might one day form the matter of Mr. Cudmore's, I must now make the only *amende* in my power, by honestly narrating, that short as my visit was to the classic precincts of this agreeable establishment, I did not escape without exciting my share of ridicule, though I certainly had not the worst of the joke, and may, therefore with better grace tell the story, which, happily for my readers is a short one. A custom prevailed in Mrs. Clanfrizzle's household, which, from my unhappy ignorance of boarding-houses, I am unable to predicate if it belong to the genera at large or this one specimen in particular; however, it is a sufficiently curious fact, even though thereby hang no tale for my stating it here. The decanters on the dinner-table were never labelled with their more appropriate designation of contents, whether claret, sherry, or port, but with the names of their respective owners, it being a matter of much less consequence that any individual at table should mix his wine by pouring "port upon madeira," than commit the truly legal offence of appropriating to his own use and benefit, even by mistake, his neighbor's bottle. However well the system may work among the regular members of the "domestic circle"—and I am assured that it does succeed extremely—to the newly-arrived guest, or uninitiated visitor, the affair is perplexing, and leads occasionally to awkward results.

It so chanced, from my friend O'Flaherty's habitual position at the foot of the table, and my post of honor near the head, that on the first day of my appearing there, the distance between us not only precluded close intercourse, but any of those gentle hints as to habits and customs a new arrival looks for at the hands of his better informed friend. The only mode of recognition, to prove that we belonged to each other, being by that excellent and truly English custom of drinking wine together, Tom seized the first idle moment from his avocation as carver to say,—

"Lorrequer, a glass of wine with you."

Having, of course, acceded, he again asked.—

"What wine do you drink?" intending thereby, as I afterwards learned, to send me from his end of the table what wine I selected. Not conceiving the object of the inquiry, and having hitherto, without hesitation, helped myself from the decanter which bore some faint resemblance to sherry, I immediately turned for correct information to the bottle itself, upon whose slender neck was ticketed the usual slip of paper. My endeavors to decipher the writing occupied time sufficient again to make O'Flaherty ask,—

"Well, Harry, I'm waiting for you. Will you have claret?"

"No, I thank you," I replied, having by this revealed the inscription,—"no, I thank you; I'll just stick to my old friend here, Bob M'Grotty;" for thus I rendered familiarly the name of Rt. M'Grotty on the decanter, and which I, in my ignorance, believed to be the boarding-house sobriquet for bad sherry. That M'Grotty himself little relished my familiarity with either his name or property I had a very decisive proof, for, turning round upon his chair, and surveying my person from head to foot, with a look of fiery wrath, he thundered out in very broad Scotch,—

"And by my saul, my freend, ye may just as weel finish it noo, for deil a glass o' his ain wine did Bob M'Grotty, as ye ca' him, swallow this day."

The convulsion of laughter into which my blunder and the Scotchman's passion threw the whole board, lasted till the cloth was withdrawn, and the ladies had retired to the drawing-room, the only individual at table not relishing the mistake being the injured proprietor of the bottle, who was too proud to accept reparation from my friend's decanter, and would scarcely condescend to open his lips during the evening; notwithstanding which display of

honest indignation, we contrived to become exceedingly merry and jocose, most of the party communicating little episodes of their life, in which, it is true, they frequently figured in situations that nothing but their native and natural candor would venture to avow. One story I was considerably amused at; it was told by the counsellor, Mr. Daly, in illustration of the difficulty of rising at the bar, and which, as showing his own mode of obviating the delay that young professional men submit to from hard necessity, as well as in evidence of his strictly legal turn, I shall certainly recount one of these days for the edification of the junior bar.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHASE.

On the morning after my visit to the boarding-house, I received a few hurried lines from Curzon, informing me that no time was to be lost in joining the regiment; that a grand fancy ball was about to be given by the officers of the *Dwarf* frigate, then stationed off Dunmore; who, when inviting the 4—th, especially put in a demand for my well-known services, to make it go off, and concluding with an extract from the *Kilkenny Moderator*, which ran thus: "An intimation has just reached us, from a quarter on which we can place the fullest reliance, that the celebrated amateur performer, Mr. Lorrequer, may shortly be expected among us. From the many accounts we have received of this highly-gifted gentleman's powers, we anticipate a great treat to the lovers of the drama," etc., etc. "So you see, my dear Hal," continued Curzon, "thy vocation calls thee; therefore come, and come quickly; provide thyself with a black satin costume, slashed with light blue, point-lace collar and ruffles, a Spanish hat looped in front, and, if possible, a long rapier with a flat hilt. Carden is not here; so you may show your face under any color with perfect impunity. Yours from the side scenes,

"C. Curzon."

This clever epistle sufficed to show that the gallant 4—th had gone clean theatrical mad; and although from my "last appearance on any stage," it might be supposed I should feel no peculiar desire to repeat the experiment, yet the opportunity of joining during Colonel Carden's absence was too tempting to resist, and I at once made up my mind to set out, and without a moment's delay, hurried across the street to the coach-office to book myself an inside in the mail of that night. Fortunately, no difficulty existed in my procuring the seat, for the way-bill was a perfect blank, and I found myself the only person who had as yet announced himself a passenger. On returning to my hotel I found O'Flaherty waiting for me. He was greatly distressed on hearing my determination to leave town—explained how he had been catering for my amusement for the week to come—that a pic-nic to the Dargle was arranged in a committee of the whole house, and a boating party, with a dinner at the Pigeon House, was then under consideration. Resisting, however, such extreme temptations, I mentioned the necessity of my at once proceeding to head-quarters, and all other reasons for my precipitancy failing, concluded with that really knock-down argument, "I have taken my place." This, I need scarcely add, finished the matter; at least *I* have never known it fail in such cases. Tell your friends that your wife is hourly expecting to be confined; your favorite child is in the measles; your best friend waiting your aid in an awkward scrape; your one vote only wanting to turn the scale in an election;—tell them, I say, each or all of these, or a hundred more like them, and to any one you so speak, the answer is, "Pooh, pooh, my dear fellow, never fear—don't fuss yourself—take it easy—to-morrow will do just as well." If on the other hand, however, you reject such flimsy excuses, and simply say, "I'm booked in the mail," the opposition at once falls to the ground, and your quondam antagonist, who was ready to quarrel with you, is at once prepared to assist in packing your portmanteau.

Having soon satisfied my friend Tom that resistance was in vain, I promised to eat an early dinner with him at Morrison's, and spent the better part of the morning in putting down a few notes of my "Confessions" as well as the particulars of Mr. Daly's story, which, I believe, I half or wholly promised my readers at the conclusion of my last chapter; but which I must defer to a more suitable opportunity, when mentioning the next occasion of my meeting him on the southern circuit.

My dispositions were speedily made. I was fortunate in securing the exact dress my friend's letter alluded to among the stray costumes of Fishamble-street; and, rich in the possession of the only "properties" it had been my lot to acquire, I despatched my treasure to the coach-office,

and hastened to Morrison's, it being by this time nearly five o'clock. There, true to time, I found O'Flaherty deep in the perusal of the bill, along which figured the *novel* expedients for dining I had been in the habit of reading in every Dublin hotel since my boyhood. "Mock-turtle, mutton, gravy, roast beef and potatoes—shoulder of mutton and potatoes!—ducks and peas, potatoes!!—ham and chicken, cutlet, steak, and potatoes!!!—apple tart and cheese:" with a slight cadenza of a sigh over the distant glories of Very, or still better the "Frères," we sat down to a very patriarchal repast, and what may be always had *par excellence* in Dublin, a bottle of Sneyd's claret.

Poor Tom's spirits were rather below their usual pitch; and although he made many efforts to rally and appear gay, he could not accomplish it. However, we chatted away over old times and old friends, and forgetting all else but the topics we talked of, the timepiece over the chimney first apprised me that two whole hours had gone by, and that it was now seven o'clock, the very hour the coach was to start. I started up at once, and, notwithstanding all Tom's representations of the impossibility of my being in time, had despatched waiters in different directions for a jarvey, more than ever determined upon going; so often is it that when real reasons for our conduct are wanting, any casual or chance opposition confirms us in an intention which before was but wavering. Seeing me so resolved, Tom at length gave way and advised my pursuing the mail, which must be now gone at least ten minutes, and which, with smart driving, I should probably overtake before getting free of the city, as they have usually many delays in so doing. I at once ordered out the "yellow post-chaise," and before many minutes had elapsed, what with imprecation and bribery, I started in pursuit of his Majesty's Cork and Kilkenny mail coach, then patiently waiting in the court-yard of the Post-office.

"Which way now, your honor?" said a shrill voice from the dark—for such the night had already become, and threatened with a few heavy drops of straight rain, the fall of a tremendous shower.

"The Naas road," said I; "and, harkye, my fine fellow, if you overtake the coach in half an hour, I'll double your fare."

"Be gorra, I'll do my endayvour," said the youth; at the same instant dashing in both spurs, we rattled down Nassau Street at a very respectable pace for harriers. Street after street we passed, and at last I perceived we had got clear of the city, and were leaving the long line of lamp-lights behind us. The night was now pitch dark. I could not see anything whatever. The quick clattering of the wheels, the sharp crack of the postilion's whip, or the still sharper tone of his "gee hup," showed me that we were going at a tremendous pace, had I not even had the experience afforded by the frequent visits my head paid to the roof of the chaise, so often as we bounded over a stone, or splashed through a hollow. Dark and gloomy as it was, I constantly let down the window, and with half my body protruded, endeavored to catch a glimpse of the "Chase;" but nothing could I see. The rain now fell in actual torrents; and a more miserable night it is impossible to conceive.

After about an hour so spent, we at last came to a check, so sudden and unexpected on my part, that I was nearly precipitated, harlequin fashion, through the front window. Perceiving that we no longer moved, and suspecting that some part of our tackle had given way, I let down the sash, and cried out, "Well now, my lad, anything wrong?" My question was, however, unheard; and although, amid the steam arising from the wet and smoking horses, I could perceive several figures indistinctly moving about, I could not distinguish what they were doing, nor what they said. A laugh I certainly did hear, and heartily cursed the unfeeling wretch, as I supposed him to be, who was enjoying himself at my disappointment. I again endeavored to find out what had happened, and called out still louder than before.

"We are at Ra'coole, your honor," said the boy, approaching the door of the chaise, "and she's only beat us by hafe a mile."

"Who the devil is she?" said I.

"The mail, your honor, is always a female in Ireland."

"Then why do you stop now? You're not going to feed, I suppose?"

"Of coorse not, your honor; it's little feeding troubles these bastes, anyhow, but they tell me the road is so heavy we'll never take the chaise over the next stage without leaders."

"Without leaders!" said I. "Pooh! my good fellow, no humbugging; four horses for a light post-chaise and no luggage; come, get up, and no nonsense." At this moment a man approached the window with a lantern in his hand, and so strongly represented the dreadful state of

the roads from the late rains—the length of the stage—the frequency of accidents latterly from under-horsing, etc., etc., that I yielded a reluctant assent, and ordered out the leaders, comforting myself the while, that, considering the inside fare of the coach I made such efforts to overtake us under a pound, and that time was no object to me, I was certainly paying somewhat dearly for my character for resolution.

At last we got under way once more, and set off cheered by a tremendous shout from at least a dozen persons, doubtless denizens of that interesting locality, amid which I once again heard the laugh that had so much annoyed me already. The rain was falling, if possible, more heavily than before, and had evidently set in for the entire night. Throwing myself back into a corner of the "leathern convenience," I gave myself up to the full enjoyment of the Rochefoucauld maxim that there is always a pleasure felt in the misfortunes of even our best friends, and certainly experienced no small comfort in my distress, by contrasting my present position with that of my two friends in the saddle, as they sweltered on through mud and mire, rain and storm. On we went, splashing, bumping, rocking, and jolting, till I began at last to have serious thoughts of abdicating the seat and betaking myself to the bottom of the chaise, for safety and protection. Mile after mile succeeded; and as after many a short and fitful slumber, which my dreams gave an apparent length to, I awoke only to find myself still in pursuit, the time seemed so enormously protracted, that I began to fancy my whole life was to be passed in the dark, in chase of the Kilkenny mail, as we read in the true history of the Flying Dutchman, who, for his sins of impatience—like mine—spent centuries vainly endeavoring to double the Cape, or the Indian mariner in Moore's beautiful ballad, of whom we are told, as—

> "Many a day to night gave way,
> And many a morn succeeded,
> Yet still his flight, by day and night,
> That restless mariner speeded."

This might have been all very well in the tropics, with a smart craft and doubtless plenty of sea store, but in a chaise, at night, and on the Naas road, I humbly suggest I had all the worst of the parallel.

At last the altered sound of the wheels gave notice of our approach to a town, and after about twenty minutes' rattling over the pavement, we entered what I supposed, correctly, to be Naas. Here I had long since determined my pursuit should cease. I had done enough, and more than enough, to vindicate my fame against any charge of irresolution as to leaving Dublin, and was bethinking me of the various modes of prosecuting my journey on the morrow, when we drew up suddenly at the door of the Swan. The arrival of a chaise and four at a small country town inn suggests to the various officials therein anything rather than the traveler in pursuit of the mail, and so the moment I arrived I was assailed with innumerable proffers of horses, supper, bed, and so on. My anxious query was thrice repeated in vain, "When did the coach pass?"

"The mail," replied the landlord at length. "Is it the down mail?"

Not understanding the technical, I answered, "Of course not the Down—the Kilkenny and Cork mail."

"From Dublin, sir?"

"Yes, from Dublin."

"Not arrived yet, sir, nor will it for three-quarters of an hour; they never leave Dublin till a quarter-past seven; that is, in fact, half-past, and their time here is twenty minutes to eleven."

"Why, you stupid son of a boot-top, we have been posting on all night like the devil, and all this time the coach has been ten miles behind us."

"Well, we've cotch them any how," said the urchin, as he disengaged himself from his wet saddle, and stood upon the ground; "and it is not my fault that the coach is not before us."

With a satisfactory anathema upon all innkeepers, waiters, ostlers, and post boys, with a codicil, including coach proprietors, I followed the smirking landlord into a well-lighted room, with a blazing fire, when, having ordered supper, I soon regained my equanimity.

My rasher and poached eggs, all Naas could afford me, were speedily despatched, and as my last glass from my one pint of sherry was poured out, the long expected coach drew up. A minute after, the coachman entered to take his dram, followed by the guard. A more lamentable spectacle of condensed moisture cannot be conceived; the rain fell from the entire circumference of his broad-brimmed hat, like the ever-flowing drop from the edge of an antique fountain; his drab coat had become of a deep orange hue, while his huge figure loomed still larger, as he stood amid a nebula of damp that would have made an atmosphere for the Georgium Sidus.

"Going on to-night, sir?" said he, addressing me; "severe weather, and no chance of its clearing; but of course you're inside."

"Why, there is very little doubt of that," said I. "Are you nearly full inside."

"Only one, sir; but he seems a real queer chap; made fifty inquiries at the office if he could not have the whole inside to himself, and when he heard that one place had been taken—yours, I believe, sir—he seemed like a scalded bear."

"You don't know his name, then?"

"No, sir, he never gave a name at the office, and his only luggage is two brown paper parcels, without any ticket, and he has them inside; indeed, he never lets them from him, even for a second."

Here the guard's horn, announcing all ready, interrupted our colloquy, and prevented my learning anything further of my fellow-traveler, whom, however, I at once set down in my own mind for some confounded old churl that made himself comfortable everywhere, without ever thinking of any one else's convenience.

As I passed from the inn door to the coach, I once more congratulated myself that I was about to be housed from the terrific storm of wind and rain that railed without.

"Here's the step, sir," said the guard; "get in, sir; two minutes late already."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said I, as I half fell over the legs of my unseen companion. "May I request leave to pass you?" While he made way for me for this purpose, I perceived that he stooped down towards the guard, and said something, who, from his answer, had evidently been questioned as to who I was. "And how did he get here, if he took his place in Dublin?" asked the unknown.

"Came half an hour since, sir, in a chaise and four," said the guard, as he banged the door behind him, and closed the interview.

Whatever might have been the reasons for my fellow-traveler's anxiety about my name and occupation, I knew not, yet could not help feeling gratified at thinking that, as I had not given my name at the coach-office, I was as great a puzzle to him as he to me.

"A severe night, sir," said I, endeavoring to break ground in conversation.

"Mighty severe," briefly and half-crustily replied the unknown, with a richness of brogue that might have stood for a certificate of baptism in Cork or its vicinity.

"And a bad road too, sir," said I, remembering my lately accomplished stage.

"That's the reason I always go armed," said the unknown, clinking at the same moment something like the barrel of a pistol.

Wondering somewhat at his readiness to mistake my meaning, I felt disposed to drop any further effort to draw him out, and was about to address myself to sleep, as comfortably as I could.

"I'll just trouble ye to lean off that little parcel there, sir," said he, as he displaced from its position beneath my elbow one of the paper packages the guard had already alluded to.

In complying with this rather gruff demand, one of my pocket-pistols, which I carried in my breast pocket, fell out upon his knee, upon which he immediately started, and asked hurriedly, "And are you armed too?"

"Why, yes," said I, laughingly; "men of my trade seldom go without something of this kind."

"Begorra I was just thinking that same," said the traveler, with a half sigh to himself.

Why he should or should not have thought so I never troubled myself to canvass, and was once more settling myself in my corner, when I was startled by a very melancholy groan, which seemed to come from the bottom of my companion's heart.

"Are you ill, sir, ?" said I, in a voice of some anxiety.

"You may say that," replied he, "if you knew who you were talking to, although maybe you've heard enough of me, though you never saw me till now."

"Without having that pleasure even yet," said I, "it would grieve me to think you should be ill in the coach."

"Maybe it might," briefly replied the unknown, with a species of meaning in his words I could not then understand. "Did ye never hear tell of Barney Doyle?" said he.

"Not to my recollection."

Then I'm Barney," said he, "that's in all the newspapers in the metropolis. I'm seventeen weeks in Jervis Street Hospital, and four in the Lunatic, and the devil a better after all. You must be a stranger, I'm thinking, or you'd know me now."

"Why, I do confess I've only been a few hours in Ireland for the last six months."

"Ay, that's the reason; I knew you would not be fond of traveling with me, if you knew who it was."

"Why, really," said I, beginning at the

moment to fathom some of the hints of my companion, "I did not anticipate the pleasure of meeting you."

"It's pleasure ye call it; then there's no accountin' for tastes, as Dr. Colles said, when he saw me bite Cusack Rooney's thumb off."

"Bite a man's thumb off!" said I in horror.

"Ay," said he, with a kind of fiendish animation, "in one chop. I wish you'd seen how I scattered the consultation; begad, they didn't wait to ax for a fee."

"Upon my soul, a very pleasant vicinity," thought I. "And may I ask, sir," said I, in a very mild and soothing tone of voice—"may I ask the reason for this singular propensity of yours?"

"There it is now, my dear," said he, laying his hand upon my knee familiarly, "that's just the very thing they can't make out. Colles says, its all the ceribellum, ye see, that's inflamed and combusted, and some of the others think it's the spine; and more, the muscles; but my real impression is, the devil a bit they know about it at all."

"And have they no name for the malady?" said I.

"Oh, sure enough they have a name for it."

"And, may I ask——"

"Why, I think you'd better not, because, ye see, maybe I might be troublesome to ye in the night, though I'll not if I can help it; and it might be uncomfortable to you to be here if I was to get one of the fits."

"One of the fits! Why, it's not possible, sir," said I, "you would travel in a public conveyance in the state you mention; your friends surely would not permit it!"

"Why, if they *knew*, perhaps," slyly responded the interesting invalid—"if they *knew*, they might not exactly like it, but, ye see, I escaped only last night, and there'll be a fine hubbub in the morning, when they find I'm off; though I'm thinking Rooney's barking away by this time."

"Rooney barking!—why, what does that mean?"

"They always bark for a day or two after they're bit, if the infection comes first from the dog."

"You are surely not speaking of hydrophobia," said I, my hair actually bristling with horror and consternation.

"Ain't I!" replied he; "maybe, you've guessed it, though."

"And have the malady on you at present?" said I, trembling for the answer.

"This is the ninth day since I took to biting," said he, gravely, perfectly unconscious, as it appeared, of the terror such information was calculated to convey.

"And with such a propensity, sir, do you think yourself warranted in traveling in a public coach, exposing others——"

"You'd better not raise your voice that way," quietly responded he. "If I'm roused, it'll be worse for ye, that's all."

"Well, but," said I, moderating my zeal, "is it exactly prudent, in your present delicate state, to undertake a journey?"

"Ah," said he, with a sigh, "I've been longing to see the fox-hounds throw off near Kilkenny; these three weeks I've been thinking of nothing else; but I'm not sure how my nerves will stand the cry; I might be troublesome."

"Upon my soul," thought I, "I shall not select that morning for my *début* in the field."

"I hope, sir, there's no river or watercourse on this road—anything else, I can, I hope, control myself against; but water—running water particularly—makes me troublesome."

Well knowing what he meant by the latter phrase, I felt the cold perspiration settling on my forehead as I remembered that we must be within about ten or twelve miles of Leighlin Bridge, where we should have to pass a very wide river. I strictly concealed this fact from him, however, and gave him to understand that there was not a well, brook, or rivulet for forty miles on either side of us. He now sank into a kind of moody silence, broken occasionally by a low muttering noise, as if speaking to himself—what this might portend, I knew not—but thought it better, under all circumstances, not to disturb him. How comfortable my present condition was, I need scarcely remark, sitting *vis-à-vis* to a lunatic, with a pair of pistols in his possession, who had already avowed his consciousness of his tendency to do mischief, and his inability to master it; all this in the dark, and in the narrow limits of a mail-coach, where there was scarcely room for defence, and no possibility of escape. How heartily I wished myself back in the coffee-room at Morrison's, with my poor friend Tom. The infernal chaise, that I cursed a hundred times, would have been an "exchange," better than into the Life Guards—ay, even the outside of the coach, if I could only reach it, would, under present circumstances, be a glorious alternative to my existing misfortune. What were rain and storm, thunder and lightning, com-

pared with the chances that awaited me here?—wet through I should inevitably be, but then I had not yet contracted the horror of moisture my friend opposite labored under. "Ha! what is that?—is it possible he can be asleep:—is it really a snore?—Heaven grant that little snort be not what the medical people call a premonitory symptom—if so, he'll be in upon me now, in no time. Ah, there it is again; he must be asleep, surely; now then is my time, or never." With these words, muttered to myself, and a heart throbbing almost audibly at the risk of his awakening, I slowly let down the window of the coach, and stretching forth my hand, turned the handle cautiously and slowly; I next disengaged my legs, and by a long continuous effort of creeping—which I had learned perfectly once, when practicing to go as a boa-constrictor to a fancy ball—I withdrew myself from the seat and reached the step, when I muttered something very like a thanksgiving to Providence for my rescue. With little difficulty I now climbed up beside the guard, whose astonishment at my appearance was indeed considerable; that any man should prefer the out, to the inside of a coach, in such a night, was rather remarkable; but that the person so doing should be totally unprovided with a box-coat, or other similar protection, argued something so strange, that I doubt not, if he were to decide upon the applicability of the statute of lunacy to a traveler in the mail, the palm would certainly have been awarded to me, and not to my late companion. Well, on we rolled, and heavily as the rain poured down, so relieved did I feel at my change of position, that I soon fell fast asleep, and never woke till the coach was driving up Patrick Street. Whatever solace to my feelings reaching the outside of the coach might have been attended with at night, the pleasure I experienced on awaking was really not unalloyed. More dead than alive, I sat a mass of wet clothes, like nothing under heaven except it be that morsel of black and spongy wet cotton at the bottom of a schoolboy's ink bottle, saturated with rain, and the black dye of my coat. My hat, too, had contributed its share of coloring matter, and several long black streaks coursed down my "wrinkled front," giving me very much the air of an Indian warrior, who had got the first priming of his war paint. I certainly must have been a rueful object, were I only to judge from the faces of the waiters as they gazed on me when the coach drew up at Rice and Walsh's Hotel. Cold, wet, and weary as I was, my curiosity to learn more of my late agreeable companion was strong as ever within me—perhaps stronger, from the sacrifices his acquaintance had exacted from me. Before, however, I had disengaged myself from the pile of trunks and carpet bags I had surrounded myself with, he had got out of the coach, and all I could catch a glimpse of was the back of a little short man in a kind of grey upper coat, and long galligaskins on his legs. He carried his two bundles under his arm, and stepped nimbly up the steps of the hotel, without ever turning his head to either side.

"Don't fancy you shall escape me *now*, my good friend," I cried out, as I sprang from the roof to the ground, with one jump, and hurried after the great unknown into the coffee-room. By the time I reached it he had approached the fire, on the table near which, having deposited the mysterious paper parcels, he was now busily engaged in divesting himself of his great-coat; his face was still turned from me, so that I had time to appear employed in divesting myself of my wet drapery before he perceived me; at last the coat was unbuttoned, the gaiters followed, and, throwing them carelessly on a chair, he tucked up the skirts of his coat, and, spreading himself comfortably, *à l'Anglais*, before the fire, displayed to my wondering and stupefied gaze the pleasant features of Doctor Finucane.

"Why, Doctor—Docter Finucane," cried I, "is this possible? Were you then really the inside in the mail last night?"

"Devil a doubt of it, Mr. Lorrequer; and, may I make bould to ask, were you the outside?"

"Then what, may I beg to know, did you mean by your damned story about Barney Doyle, and the hydrophobia, and Cusack Rooney's thumb—eh?"

"Oh, by the Lord!" said Finucane, "this will be the death of me. And it was *you* that I drove outside in all the rain last night! Oh, it will kill Father Malachi outright with laughing when I tell him." And he burst out into a fit of merriment that nearly induced me to break his head with the poker.

"Am I to understand, then, Mr. Finucane, that this practical joke of yours was contrived for *my* benefit, and for the purpose of holding *me* up to the ridicule of your confounded acquaintances?"

"Nothing of the kind, upon my conscience," said Fin, drying his eyes, and endeavoring to look sorry and sentimental.

"If I had only the least suspicion in life

that it was you, upon my oath I'd not have had the hydrophobia at all, and to tell you the truth, you were not the only one frightened—you alarmed me devilishly too."

"I alarmed you! Why, how can that be?"

"Why, the real affair is this: I was bringing these two packages of notes down to my cousin Callaghan's bank in Cork—fifteen thousand pounds, devil a less—and when you came into the coach at Naas, after driving there with your four horses, I thought it was all up with me. The guard just whispered in my ear that he saw you look at the priming of your pistols before getting in; and faith I said four Paters and a Hail Mary, before you'd count five. Well, when you got seated, the thought came into my mind that maybe, highwayman as you were, you would not like dying a natural death, more particularly if you were an Irishman; and so I trumped up that long story about the hydrophobia, and the gentleman's thumb, and devil knows what besides; and while I was telling it, the cold perspiration was running down my head and face, for every time you stirred, I said to myself, now, he'll do it. Two or three times, do you know, I was going to offer you ten shilling in the pound, and spare my life; and once, God forgive me, I thought it would not be a bad plan to shoot you by 'mistake,' do you perceive?"

"Why, upon my soul, I'm very much obliged to you for your excessively kind intentions; but really I feel you have done quite enough for me on the present occasion. But, come now, doctor, I must get to bed, and before I go, promise me two things—to dine with us to-day at the mess, and not to mention a syllable of what occurred last night—it tells, believe me, very badly for both; so, keep the secret, for if these confounded fellows of ours ever get hold of it, I may sell out and quit the army; I'll never hear the end of it!"

"Never fear, my boy; trust me. I'll dine with you, and you're safe as a churchmouse for anything I'll tell them; so, now you'd better change your clothes, for I'm thinking it rained last night."

Muttering some very dubious blessings upon the learned Fin, I left the room, infinitely more chagrined and chopfallen at the discovery I had made, than at all the misery and exposure the trick had consigned me to. "However," thought I, "if the doctor keep his word, all goes well: the whole affair is between us both solely; but, should it not be so, I may shoot half the mess before the other half would give up quizzing me." Revolving such pleasant thoughts, I betook myself to bed, and, what with mulled port, and a blazing fire, became once more conscious of being a warm-blooded animal, and fell sound asleep, to dream of doctors, strait-waistcoats, shaved heads, and all the pleasing associations my late companion's narrative so readily suggested.

CHAPTER XV.

MEMS. OF THE NORTH CORK.

At six o'clock I had the pleasure of presenting the worthy Doctor Finucane to our mess, taking at the same time an opportunity, unobserved by him, to inform three or four of my brother officers that my friend was really a character, abounding in native drollery, and richer in good stories that even the generality of his countrymen.

Nothing could possively go on better than the early part of the evening. Fin, true to his promise, never once alluded to what I could plainly perceive was ever uppermost in his mind, and what with his fund of humor, quaintness of expression, and quickness at reply, garnished throughout by his most mellifluous brogue, the true "Bocca Corkana," kept us from one roar of laughter to another. It was just at the moment in which his spirits seemed at their highest, that I had the misfortune to call upon him for a story which his cousin, Father Malachi, had alluded to on the ever-memorable evening at his house, and which I had a great desire to hear from Fin's own lips. He seemed disposed to escape telling it, and, upon my continuing to press my request, drily remarked,—

"You forget, surely, my dear Mr. Lorrequer, the weak condition I'm in; and these gentlemen here, they don't know what a severe illness I've been laboring under lately, or they would not pass the decanter so freely down this quarter."

I had barely time to throw a mingled look of entreaty and menace across the table when half a dozen others, rightly judging from the doctor's tone and seriocomic expression, that his malady had many more symptoms of fun than suffering about it, called out together,—

"Oh, doctor, by all means, tell us the nature of your late attack—pray relate it."

"With Mr. Lorrequer's permission, I'm your slave, gentlemen," said Fin, finishing off his glass.

"Oh, as for me," I cried, "Dr. Finucane has my full permission to detail whatever he pleases to think a fit subject for your amusement."

"Come, then, doctor, Harry has no objection, you see; so out with it, and we are all prepared to sympathize with your woes and misfortunes, whatever they be."

"Well, I am sure, I never could think of mentioning it without his leave; but now that he sees no objection—Eh, do you, though? If so, then, don't be winking and making faces at me; but say the word, and devil a syllable of it I'll tell to man or mortal."

The latter part of this delectable speech was addressed to me across the table, in a species of stage whisper, in reply to some telegraphic signals, I had been throwing him, to induce him to turn the conversation into another channel.

"Then, that's enough," continued he, *sotto voce*—"I see you'd rather I'd not tell it."

"Tell it and be d——d," said I, wearied by the incorrigible pertinacity with which the villain assailed me. My most unexpected energy threw the whole table into a roar, at the conclusion of which Fin began his narrative of the mail-coach adventure.

I need not tell my reader, who has followed me throughout in these my "Confessions," that such a story lost nothing of its absurdity when entrusted to the doctor's powers of narration; he dwelt with a poet's feeling upon the description of his own sufferings, and my sincere condolence and commiseration; he touched with the utmost delicacy upon the distant hints by which he broke the news to me; but when he came to describe my open and undisguised terror, and my secret and precipitate retreat to the roof of the coach, there was not a man at the table that was not convulsed with laughter—and, shall I acknowledge it, even I myself was unable to withstand the effect, and joined in the general chorus against myself.

"Well," said the remorseless wretch, as he finished his story, "if ye haven't the hard hearts to laugh at such a melancholy subject! Maybe, however, you're not so cruel after all—here's a toast for you: 'A speedy recovery to Cusack Rooney.'" This was drunk amid renewed peals, with all the honors; and I had abundant time before the uproar was over to wish every man of them hanged. It was to no purpose that I endeavored to turn the tables by describing Fin's terror at my supposed resemblance to a highwayman—his story had the precedence, and I met nothing during my recital but sly allusions to mad dogs, muzzles, and doctors; and contemptible puns were let off on every side at my expense.

"It's a little shame I take to myself for the mistake, anyhow," said Fin; "for, putting the darkness of the night out of the question, I'm not so sure I would not have ugly suspicions of you by daylight."

"And besides, doctor," added I, "it would not be your first blunder in the dark."

"True for you, Mr. Lorrequer," said he, good-humoredly: "and now that I have told them your story, I don't care if they hear mine, though, maybe, some of ye have heard it already: it's pretty well known in the North Cork."

We all gave our disclaimers on this point, and having ordered in a fresh cooper of port, disposed ourselves in our most easy attitudes, while the doctor proceeded as follows:—

"It was in the hard winter of the year '99 that we were quartered in Maynooth, as many said, for our sins—for a more stupid place, the Lord be merciful to it, never were men condemned to. The people at the college were much better off than us; they had whatever was to be got in the country, and never were disturbed by mounting guard, or night patrols. Many of the professors were good fellows, that liked grog, fully as well as Greek, and understood short whist and five-and-ten quite as intimately as they knew the Vulgate, or the confessions of St. Augustine. They made no ostentatious display of their pious zeal, but whenever they were not fasting or praying, or something of that kind, they were always pleasant and agreeable; and, to do them justice, never refused, by any chance, an invitation to dinner—no matter at what inconvenience. Well, even this solace to our affliction was soon lost by an unfortunate mistake of that Orange rogue of the world, Major Jones, that gave a wrong pass one night—Mr. Lorrequer knows the story"—(here he alluded to an adventure detailed in an early chapter of my "Confessions")—"and from that day forward we never saw the pleasant faces of the Abbé D'Array, or the Professor of the Humanities, at the mess. Well, the only thing I could do, was just to take an opportunity to drop in at the college in the evening, where we had a quiet rubber of whist, and a little social and intellectual conversation, with maybe an oyster and a glass of punch, just to season the thing, before we separated, all done discreetly and quietly—no

shouting, or even singing, for the 'superior' had a prejudice about profane songs. Well, one of those nights, it was about the first week in February—I was detained by stress of weather from eleven o'clock, when we usually bade good night, to past twelve, and then to one o'clock, waiting for a dry moment to get home to the barracks—a good mile and a half off. Every time old Father Mahony went to look at the weather, he came back, saying, 'It's worse it's getting—such a night of rain, glory be to God, never was seen. So there was no good in going out to be drenched to the skin, and I sat quietly waiting, taking between times a little punch, just not to seem impatient, nor distress their rev'rences. At last it struck two, and I thought, 'Well, the decanter is empty now, and I think, if I mean to walk, I've taken enough for the present;' so, wishing them all manner of happiness and pleasant dreams, I stumbled my way down stairs, and set out on my journey. I was always in the habit of taking a short cut on my way home across the 'Gurt na brocha,' the priests meadows, as they call them, it saved nearly a half a mile, although on the present occasion, it exposed one wofully to the rain, for there was nothing to shelter under the entire way, not even a tree. Well, out I set in a half trot, for I stayed so late I was pressed for time; besides, I felt it easier to run than to walk, I'm sure I can't tell why; maybe the drop of drink I took got into my head. Well, I was just jogging on across the common, the rain beating hard in my face, and my clothes pasted to me with the wet; notwithstanding, I was singing to myself a verse of an old song to lighten the road, when I heard suddenly a noise near me like a man sneezing. I stopped and listened—in fact, it was impossible to see your hand, the night was so dark—but I could hear nothing; the thought then came over me, maybe it's something 'not good,' for there were very ugly stories going about what the priests used to do formerly in these meadows; and bones were often found in different parts of them. Just as I was thinking this, another voice came nearer than the last, it might be only a sneeze, after all, but in real earnest it was mighty like a groan. 'The Lord be about us,' I said to myself, 'what's this? have ye the pass?' I cried out, 'Have ye the pass? or what brings ye walking here, *in nomine patri?*' for I was so confused whether it was a 'sperit' or not, I was going to address him in Latin—there's nothing equal to the dead languages to lay a ghost, everybody knows. Faith, the moment I said these words, he gave another groan, deeper and more melancholy like than before. 'If it's uneasy ye are,' says I, 'for any neglect of your friends,' for I thought he might be in purgatory longer than he thought convenient, 'tell me what you wish, and go home peaceably out of the rain, for this weather can do no good to living or dead; go home,' said I, 'and, if it's masses ye'd like, I'll give you a day's pay myself, rather than you should fret yourself this way.' The words were not well out of my mouth, when he came so near me that the sigh he gave went right through both my ears. 'The Lord be merciful to me,' said I, trembling. 'Amen,' said he, in a husky voice. The moment he said that, my mind was relieved, for I knew it was not a sperit, and I began to laugh heartily at my mistake. 'And who are ye at all,' said I, 'that's roving about at this hour of the night? Ye can't be Father Luke, for I left him asleep on the carpet before I quitted the college, and faith, my friend, if you hadn't the taste for divarsion, ye would not be out now.' He coughed then so hard, that I could not make out well what he said, but just perceived that he had lost his way on the common, and was a little disguised in liquor. 'It's a good man's case,' said I, 'to take a little too much, though it's what I don't ever do myself; so, take a hold of my hand, and I'll see you safe.' I stretched out my hand, and got him, not by the arm, as I hoped, but by the hair of the head, for he was all dripping with wet, and had lost his hat. 'Well, you'll not be better of this night's excursion,' thought I, 'if ye are liable to the rheumatism; and now, whereabouts do you live, my friend? for I'll see you safe before I leave you.' What he said then I never could clearly make out, for the wind and rain were both beating so hard against my face, that I could not hear a word; however, I was able just to perceive that he was very much disguised in drink, and spoke rather thick. 'Well, never mind,' said I, 'it's not a time of day for much conversation; so, come along, and I'll see you safe to the guard-house, if you can't remember your own place of abode in the meanwhile.' It was just at the moment I said this that I first discovered he was not a gentleman. Well, now, you'd never guess how I did it; and, faith, I always thought it a very 'cute thing of me, and both of us in the dark."

"Well, I really confess it must have been a very difficult thing, under the cir-

cumstances; pray how did you contrive?" said the major.

"Just guess how."

"By the tone of his voice, perhaps, and his accent," said Curzon.

"Devil a bit; for he spoke remarkably well, considering how far gone he was in liquor."

"Well, probably by the touch of his hand, no bad test."

"No; you're wrong again, for it was by the hair I had a hold of him for fear of falling, for he was always stooping down. Well, you'd never guess it; it was just by the touch of his foot."

"His foot! Why, how did that give you any information?"

"There it is now; that's just what only an Irishman would ever have made anything out of; for while he was stumbling about, he happened to tread upon my toes, and never since I was born did I feel anything like the weight of him. 'Well,' said I, 'the loss of your hat may give you a cold, my friend; but upon my conscience you are in no danger of wet feet with such a pair of strong brogues as you have on you.' Well, he laughed at that till I thought he'd split his sides, and, in good truth, I could not help joining in the fun, although my foot was smarting like mad, and so we jogged along through the rain, enjoying the joke just as if we were sitting by a good fire, with a jorum of punch between us. I am sure I can't tell you how often we fell that night, but my clothes the next morning were absolutely covered with mud, and my hat crushed in two; for he was so confoundedly drunk it was impossible to keep him up, and he always kept boring along with his head down, so that my heart was almost broke in keeping him upon his legs. I'm sure I never had a more fatiguing march in the whole Peninsula than that blessed mile and a half; but every misfortune has an end at last, and it was four o'clock, striking by the college clock, as we reached the barracks. After knocking a couple of times, and giving the countersign, the sentry opened the small wicket, and my heart actually leaped with joy that I had done with my friend; so I just called out the sergeant of the guard, and said, 'Will you put that poor fellow on the guard-bed till morning, for I found him on the common, and he could neither find his way home nor tell me where he lived.' 'And where is he?' said the sergeant. 'He's outside the gate there,' said I, 'wet to the skin, and shaking as if he had the ague.' 'And is this him?' said the sergeant, as we went outside. 'It is,' said I; 'maybe you k him?' 'Maybe I've a guess,' said bursting into a fit of laughing, th thought he'd choke with. 'Well, geant,' said I, 'I always took you humane man; but if that's the way treat a fellow creature in distress 'A fellow creature!' said he, laug louder than before. 'Ay, a fellow ture,' said I—for the sergeant was an angeman—'and if he differs from yo matters of religion, sure he's your f creature still.' 'Troth, doctor, I t there's another trifling difference be us,' said he. 'Damn your politics,' I; 'never let them interfere with humanity.' Wasn't I right, major? ' good care of him, and here's half-a-c for ye.' So, saying these words, I st along by the barrack wall, and, after tle groping about, got upstairs to my ters, when, thanks to a naturally constitution and regular habits of l soon fell fast asleep."

When the doctor had said thus m he pushed his chair slightly from table, and, taking off his wine, lo about him with the composure of a who has brought his tale to a termina

"Well, but, doctor," said the m "you are surely not done. You have yet told us who your interesting f turned out to be."

"That's the very thing, then, I'm able to do."

"But, of course," said another, " story does not end there."

"And where the devil would you it end?" replied he. "Didn't I brin hero home, and go asleep afterwards self, and then, with virtue rewarded, could I finish it better?"

"Oh, of course; but still you hav accounted for a principal character i narrative," said I.

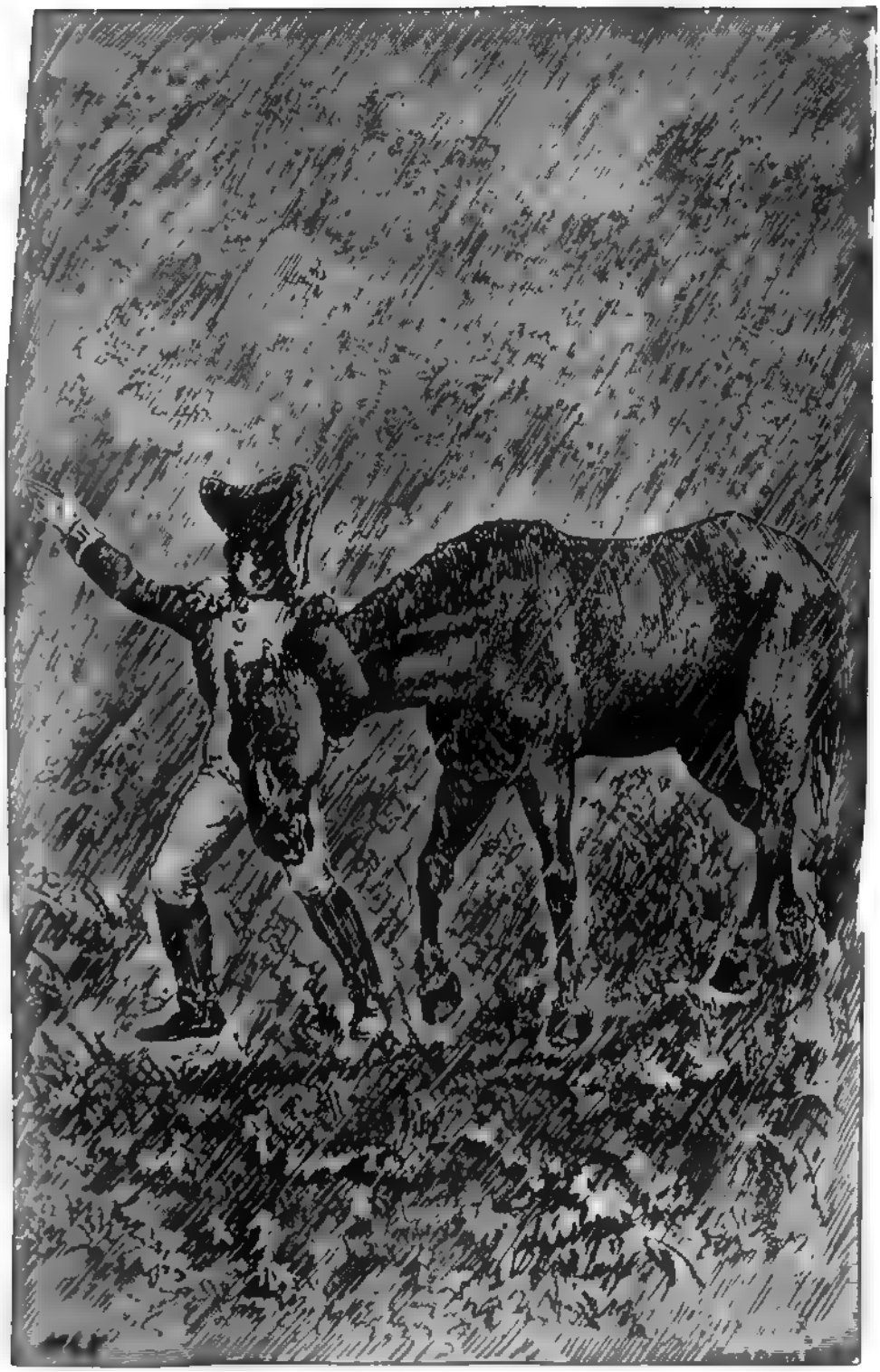
"Exactly so," said Curzon. "We all expecting some splendid catastrop the morning; that your companion tu out to be the Duke of Leinster, at le or perhaps a rebel general, with an mense price upon his head."

"Neither the one nor the other," Fin, drily.

"And do you mean to say there was any clue to the discovery of him?

"The entire affair is wrapt in myst this hour," said he. "There was a about it, to be sure, among the offi but the North Cork never wanted thing to laugh at."

"And what was the joke?" said se voices together.



WE JOGGED ALONG THROUGH THE RAIN, ENJOYING THE JOKE JUST AS IF WE WERE SITTING BY A GOOD FIRE, WITH A JORUM OF PUNCH BETWEEN US. (P. 80.)

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"Just a complaint from old Mickey Oulahan, the post-master, to the colonel in the morning, that some of the officers took away his blind mare off the common, and that the letters were late in consequence."

"And so, docter," called out seven or eight, "your friend turned out to be——"

"Upon my conscience they said so, and that rascal, the sergeant, would take his oath of it; but my own impression I'll never disclose to the hour of my death."

CHAPTER XVI.

THEATRICALS.

Our *séance* at the mess that night was a late one, for after we had discussed some coopers of claret, there was a very general public feeling in favor of a broiled bone and some devilled kidneys, followed by a very ample bowl of bishop, over which simple condiments we talked "green-room" till near the break of day.

From having been so long away from the corps I had much to learn of their doings and intentions to do, and heard with much pleasure that they possessed an exceedingly handsome theatre, well stocked with scenery, dresses, and decorations; that they were at the pinnacle of public estimation, from what they had already accomplished, and calculated on the result of my appearance to crown them with honor. I had, indeed, very little choice left me in the matter; for not only had they booked me for a particular part, but bills were already in circulation, and sundry little three-cornered notes enveloping them, were sent to the *élite* of the surrounding country, setting forth that "on Friday evening the committee of the garrison theatricals, intending to perform a dress rehearsal of *The Family Party* request the pleasure of Mr. ——and Mrs. ——'s company on the occasion. Mr. Lorrequer will undertake the part of Captain Beaugarde. Supper at twelve. An answer will oblige."

The sight of one of these pleasant little epistles, of which the foregoing is a true copy, was presented to me as a great favor that evening, it having been agreed upon that I was to know nothing of their high and mighty resolves till the following morning. It was to little purpose that I assured them all, collectively and individually, that of Captain Beaugarde I absolutely knew nothing—had never read the piece—nor even seen it performed. I felt, too, that my last appearance in character in a "Family Party" was anything but successful; and I trembled lest, in the discussion of the subject, some confounded allusion to my adventure at Cheltenham might come out. Happily they seemed all ignorant of this; and fearing to bring conversation in any way to the matter of my late travels, I fell in with their humor, and agreed that if it were possible in the limited time allowed me to manage it—I had but four days—I should undertake the character. My concurrence failed to give the full satisfaction I expected, and they so habitually did what they pleased with me, that, like all men so disposed, I never got the credit for concession which a man more niggardly of his services may always command.

"To be sure you will do it, Harry," said the major; "why not? I could learn the thing myself in a couple of hours, as for that."

Now, be it known that the aforesaid major was so incorrigibly slow of study, and dull of comprehension, that he had been successively degraded at our theatrical board from the delivering of a stage message to the office of check-taker.

"He's so devilish good in the love scene," said the junior ensign, with the white eyebrows. "I say, Curzon, you'll be confoundedly jealous though, for he is to play with Fanny."

"I rather think not," said Curzon, who was a little tipsy.

"Oh yes," said Frazer, "Hepton is right. Lorrequer has Fanny for his *première;* and, upon my soul, I should feel tempted to take the part myself upon the same terms; though I verily believe I should forget I was acting, and make fierce love to her on the stage."

"And who may *la charmante* Fanny be?" said I, with something of the air of the "Dey of Algiers" in my tone.

"Let Curzon tell him," said several voices together; "he is the only man to do justice to such perfection."

"Quiz away, my merry men," said Curzon; "all I know is, that you are a confoundedly envious set of fellows; and if so lovely a girl had thrown her eyes on one amongst you——"

"Hip! hip! hurrah!" said old Fitzgerald, "Curzon is a gone man. He'll be off to the palace for a license some fine morning, or I know nothing of such matters."

"Well, but," said I, "if matters are really as you all say, why does not Curzon take the part you destine for me?"

"We dare not trust him," said the major; "Lord bless you, when the call-boy

would sing out for Captain Beaugardo in the second act, we'd find that he had levanted with our best slashed trousers, and a bird-of-paradise feather in his cap."

"Well," thought I, "this is better at least than I anticipated, for if nothing else offers, I shall have rare fun teasing my friend Charley,"—for it was evident that he had been caught by the lady in question.

"And so you'll stay with us; give me your hand—you are a real trump." These words, which proceeded from a voice at the lower end of the table, were addressed to my friend Finucane.

"I'll stay with ye, upon my conscience," said Fin; "ye have a most seductive way about ye, and a very superior taste in milk punch."

"But, doctor," said I, "you must not be a drone in the hive; what will ye do for us? You should be a capital Sir Lucius O'Trigger, if we could get up *The Rivals*."

"My forte is the drum—the big drum; put me among what the Greeks call the 'mousikoi,' and I'll astonish ye."

It was at once agreed that Fin should follow the bent of his genius; and after some other arrangements for the rest of the party, we separated for the night, having previously toasted the "Fanny," to which Curzon attempted to reply, but sank, overpowered by punch and feelings, and looked unutterable things, without the power to frame a sentence.

During the time which intervened between the dinner and the night appointed for our rehearsal, I had more business upon my hands than a Chancellor of the Exchequer the week of the budget being produced. The whole management of every department fell, as usual, to my share, and all those who, previously to my arrival, had contributed their quota of labor, did nothing whatever now but lounge about the stage, or sit half the day in the orchestra, listening to some confounded story of Finucane's, who contrived to have an everlasting mob of actors, scene-painters, fiddlers, and call-boys always about him, who, from their uproarious mirth, and repeated shouts of merriment, nearly drove me distracted, as I stood almost alone and unassisted in the whole management. Of *la belle* Fanny, all I learned was, that she was a professional actress of very considerable talent, and extremely pretty; that Curzon had fallen desperately in love with her the only night she had appeared on the boards there; and that, to avoid his absurd persecution of her, she had determined not to come into town until the morning of the rehearsal, she being at that time on a visit to the house of a country gentleman in the neighborhood. Here was a new difficulty I had to contend with—to go through my part alone was out of the question to making it effective; and I felt so worried and harassed, that I often fairly resolved on taking the wings of the mail, and flying away to the uttermost parts of the south of Ireland, till all was still and tranquil again. By degrees, however, I got matters into better train, and by getting over our rehearsal early before Fin appeared, as he usually slept somewhat later after his night at mess, I managed to have things in something like order; he and his confounded drum, which, whenever he was not story-telling, he was sure to be practicing on, being, in fact, the greatest difficulties opposed to my managerial functions. One property he possessed, so totally at variance with all habits of order, that it completely baffled me. So numerous were his narratives, that no occasion could possibly arise, no chance expression be let fall on the stage, but Fin had something he deemed *à propos*, and which, *sans façon*, he at once related for the benefit of all whom it might concern; that was usually the entire *corps dramatique*, who eagerly turned from stage directions and groupings, to laugh at his ridiculous jests. I shall give an instance of this habit of interruption, and let the unhappy wight who has filled such an office as mine pity my woes.

I was standing one morning on the stage, drilling my *corps* as usual. One most refractory spirit, to whom but a few words were entrusted, and who bungled even those, I was endeavoring to train into something like his part.

"Come, now, Elsmore, try it again—just so. Yes, come forward in this manner—take her hand tenderly—press it to your lips; retreat towards the flat, and then bowing deferentially—thus, say 'Good night, good night;' that's very simple, eh? Well, now, that's all you have to do, and that brings you over here; so you make your exit at once."

"Exactly so, Mr. Elsmore; always contrive to be near the door under such circumstances. That was the way with my poor friend Curran. Poor Philpot, when he dined with the Guild of Merchant Tailors, they gave him a gold box, with their arms upon it—a goose proper, with needles saltier-wise, or something of that kind; and they made him free of their 'ancient

and loyal corporation,' and gave him a very grand dinner. Well, Curran was mighty pleasant and agreeable, and kept them laughing all night, till the moment he rose to go away, and then he told them that he never spent so happy an evening, and all that. 'But, gentlemen,' said he, 'business has its calls; I must tear myself away; so wishing you now'—there were just eighteen of them—'wishing you now every happiness and prosperity, permit me to take my leave'—and here he stole near the door—'to take my leave, and bid you *both* good night.'" With a running fire of such stories, it may be supposed how difficult was my task in getting anything done upon the stage.

Well, at last the long-expected Friday arrived, and I rose in the morning with all that peculiar *tourbillon* of spirits that a man feels when he is half pleased and whole frightened with the labor before him. I had scarcely accomplished dressing when a servant tapped at my door, and begged to know if I could spare a few moments to speak to Miss Ersler, who was in the drawing-room. I replied, of course, in the affirmative, and, rightly conjecturing that my fair friend must be the lovely Fanny already alluded to, followed the servant downstairs.

"Mr. Lorrequer," said the servant, and, closing the door behind me, left me in the sole possession of the lady.

"Will you do me the favor to sit here, Mr. Lorrequer?" said one of the sweetest voices in the world, as she made room for me on the sofa beside her. "I am particularly short-sighted; so pray sit near me, as I really cannot talk to any one I don't see."

I blundered out some platitude of a compliment to her eyes—the fullest and most lovely blue that ever man gazed into—at which she smiled as if pleased, and continued, "Now, Mr. Lorrequer, I have really been longing for your coming; for your friends of the 4—th are doubtless very dashing spirited young gentlemen, perfectly versed in war's alarms; but pardon me if I say that a more wretched company of strolling wretches never graced a barn. Now, come, don't be angry, but let me proceed. Like all amateur people, they have the happy knack, in distributing the characters, to put every man in his most unsuitable position; and then that poor dear thing, Curzon—I hope he's not a friend of yours—by some dire fatality always plays the lovers' parts, ha! ha! ha! True, I assure you, so that if you had not been announced as coming this week, I should have left them and gone off to Bath."

Here she rose and adjusted her brown ringlets at the glass, giving me ample time to admire one of the most perfect figures I ever beheld. She was most becomingly dressed, and betrayed a foot and ankle which for symmetry and "smallness" might have challenged the Rue Rivoli itself to match it.

My first thought was poor Curzon; my second, happy and thrice fortunate Harry Lorrequer. There was no time, however, for indulgence in such very pardonable gratulation; so I at once proceeded *pour faire l'aimable*, to profess my utter inability to do justice to her undoubted talents, but slily added "that in the love-making part of the matter she should never be able to discover that I was not in earnest." We chatted then gaily for upwards of an hour, until the arrival of her friend's carriage was announced, when tendering me most graciously her hand, she smiled benignly, and saying, "*Au revoir, done,*" drove off.

As I stood upon the steps of the hotel, viewing her "out of the visible horizon," I was joined by Curzon, who evidently, from his self-satisfied air and jaunty gate, little knew how he stood in the fair Fanny's estimation.

"Very pretty, very pretty, indeed, deeper, and deeper still," cried he, alluding to my most courteous salutation as the carriage rounded the corner, and its lovely occupant kissed her hand once more. "I say, Harry, my friend, you don't think that was meant for you, I should hope?"

"What! the kiss of the hand? Yes, faith, but I do."

"Well, certainly that is good! why, man, she just saw me coming up that instant. She and I—we understand each other—never mind, don't be cross—no fault of yours, you know."

"Ah, so she is taken with you," said I. "Eh, Charley?"

"Why, I believe that. I may confess to *you* the real state of matters. She was devilishly struck with me the first time we rehearsed together. We soon got up a little flirtation; but the other night, when I played Mirabel to her, it finished the affair. She was quite nervous, and could scarcely go through with her part. I saw it, and upon my soul I am sorry for it; she's a prodigiously fine girl—such lips and such teeth! Egad, I was delighted when you came; for, you see, I was in a manner obliged to take one line of character, and I saw pretty plainly where it must end; and you know with you it's quite different; she'll laugh and chat, and all that sort of thing, but she'll not be carried

away by her feelings; you understand me."

"Oh, perfectly; it's quite different, as you observed."

If I had not been supported internally during this short dialogue by the recently expressed opinion of the dear Fanny herself upon my *friend* Curzon's merits, I think I should have been tempted to take the liberty of wringing his neck off. However, the affair was much better as it stood, as I had only to wait a little with proper patience, and I had no fears but that my friend Charley would become the hero of a very pretty episode for the mess.

"So I suppose you must feel considerably bored by this kind of thing," I said, endeavoring to draw him out.

"Why, I do," replied he, "and I do not. The girl is very pretty. The place is dull in the morning; and altogether it helps to fill up time."

"Well," said I, "you are always fortunate, Curzon. You have ever your share of what floating luck the world affords."

"It is not exactly all luck, my dear friend; for, as I shall explain to you——"

"Not now," replied I, "for I have not yet breakfasted." So saying, I turned into the coffee-room, leaving the worthy adjutant to revel in his fancied conquest, and pity such unfortunates as myself.

After an early dinner at the club-house, I hastened down to the theatre, where numerous preparations for the night were going forward. The green-room was devoted to the office of a supper-room, to which the audience had been invited. The dressing-rooms were many of them filled with the viands destined for the entertainment, where, among the wooden fowls and "impracticable" flagons, were to be seen very imposing pasties and flasks of champagne, littered together in most admirable disorder. The confusion naturally incidental to all private theatricals was tenfold increased by the circumstances of our projected supper. Cooks and scene-shifters, fiddlers, and waiters, were most inextricably mingled; and, as in all similar cases, the least important functionaries took the greatest airs upon them, and appropriated without hesitation whatever came to their hands—thus, the cook would not have scrupled to light a fire with the violoncello of the orchestra; and I actually caught one of the "marmitons" making a "soufflé" in a brass helmet I had once worn when astonishing the world as Coriolanus.

Six o'clock struck. "In another short hour and we begin," thought I, with a sinking heart, as I looked upon the littered stage crowded with hosts of fellows that had nothing to do there. Figaro himself never wished for ubiquity more than I did, as I hastened from place to place, entreating, cursing, begging, scolding, execrating, and imploring by turns. To mend the matter, the devils in the orchestra had begun to tune their instruments, and I had to bawl like a boatswain of a man-of-war to be heard by the person beside me.

As seven o'clock struck, I peeped through the small aperture in the curtain, and saw, to my satisfaction—mingled, I confess, with fear—that the house was nearly filled, the lower tier of boxes entirely so. There were a great many ladies handsomely dressed, chatting gaily with their chaperons, and I recognized some of my acquaintance on every side; in fact, there was scarcely a family of rank in the county that had not at least some member of it present. As the orchestra struck up the overture to *Don Giovanni*, I retired from my place to inspect the arrangements behind.

Before the performance of *The Family Party* we were to have a little one-act piece, called *A Day in Madrid*, written by myself—the principal characters being expressly composed for "Miss Ersler and Mr. Lorrequer."

The story of this trifle it is not necessary to allude to; indeed, if it were, I should scarcely have patience to do so, so connected is my recollection of it with the distressing incident which followed.

In the first scene of the piece, the curtain rising displays *la belle* Fanny sitting at her embroidery in the midst of a beautiful garden, surrounded with statues, fountains, etc.; at the back is seen a pavilion in the ancient Moorish style of architecture, over which hang the branches of some large and shady trees—she comes forward, expressing her impatience at the delay of her lover, whose absence she tortures herself to account for by a hundred different suppositions, and after a very sufficient *exposé* of her feelings, and some little explanatory details of her private history, conveying a very clear intimation of her own amiability and her guardian's cruelty, she proceeds, after the fashion of other young ladies similarly situated, to give utterance to her feelings by a song; after, therefore, a suitable prelude from the orchestra, for which, considering the impassioned state of her mind, she waits patiently, she comes forward and begins a melody,—

"Oh, why is he far from the heart that adores him?"

in which, for two verses, she proceeds with sundry *sol feggi* to account for the circumstances, and show her own disbelief of the explanation in a very satisfactory manner,—meanwhile, for I must not expose my reader to an anxiety on my account, similar to what the dear Fanny here labored under, I was making the necessary preparations for flying to her presence, and clasping her to my heart—that is to say, I had already gummed on a pair of mustachios, had corked and arched a ferocious pair of eyebrows, which, with my rouged cheeks, gave me a look half Whiskerando, half Grimaldi; these operations were performed, from the stress of circumstances, sufficiently near the object of my affections to afford me the pleasing satisfaction of hearing from her own sweet lips her solicitude about me—in a word, all the dressing-rooms but two being filled with hampers of provisions, glass, china, and crockery, and from absolute necessity, I had no other spot where I could attire myself unseen, except in the identical pavilion already alluded to. Here, however, I was quite secure, and had abundant time also, for I was not to appear till scene the second, when I was to come forward in full Spanish costume, "every inch a hidalgo." Meantime, Fanny had been singing—

"Oh, why is he far," etc., etc.

At the conclusion of the last verse, just as she repeats the words "Why, why, why," in a very distracted and melting cadence, a voice behind startles her—she turns and beholds her guardian—so at least run the course of events in the real drama—that it should follow thus now, however, *Diis aliter visum*—for just as she came to the very moving apostrophe alluded to, and called out, "Why comes he not?"—a gruff voice from behind answered in a strong Cork brogue, "Ah! would ye have him come in a state of nature?" At the instant a loud whistle ran through the house, and the pavilion scene slowly drew up, discovering me, Harry Lorrequer, seated on a small stool before a cracked looking-glass, my only habiliments, as I am an honest man, being a pair of long white silk stockings, and a very richly embroidered shirt with point-lace collar. The shouts of laughter are yet in my ears, the loud roar of inextinguishable mirth, which, after the first brief pause of astonishment gave way, shook the entire building—my recollection may well have been confused at such a moment of unutterable shame and misery; yet, I clearly remember seeing Fanny, the sweet Fanny herself, fall into an armchair nearly suffocated with convulsions of laughter. I cannot go on; what I did I know not. I suppose my exit was additionally ludicrous, for a new *éclat de rire* followed me out. I rushed out of the theatre, and wrapping only my cloak round me, ran without stopping to the barracks. But I must cease; these are woes too sacred for even "Confessions" like mine, so let me close the curtain of my room and my chapter together, and say adieu for a season.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE WAGER.

It might have been about six weeks after the events detailed in my last chapter had occurred, that Curzon broke suddenly into my room one morning before I had risen, and throwing a precautionary glance around, as if to assure himself that we were alone, seized my hand with a most unusual earnestness, and, steadfastly looking at me, said,—

"Harry Lorrequer, will you stand by me?"

So sudden and unexpected was his appearance at the moment, that I really felt but half awake, and kept puzzling myself for an explanation of the scene, rather than thinking of a reply to his question; perceiving which, and auguring but badly from my silence, he continued,—

"Am I, then, really deceived in what I believed to be an old and tried friend?"

"Why, what the devil's the matter?" I cried out. "If you are in a scrape why of course you know I'm your man, but, still, it's only fair to let one know something of the matter in the meanwhile."

"In a scrape!" said he, with a long-drawn sigh, intended to beat the whole Minerva press in its romantic cadence.

"Well, but get on a bit," said I, rather impatiently; "who is the fellow you've got the row with? Not one of ours, I trust?"

"Ah, my dear Hal," said he, in the same melting tone as before, "how your imagination does run upon rows, and broils, and duelling rencontres" (he, the speaker, be it known to the reader, was the fire-eater of the regiment), "as if life had nothing better to offer than the excitement of a challenge, or the mock heroism of a meeting."

As he made a dead pause here, after

which he showed no disposition to continue, I merely added,—

"Well, at this rate of proceeding, we shall get at the matter in hand on our way out to Corfu, for I hear we are the next regiment for the Mediterranean."

The observation seemed to have some effect in rousing him from his lethargy, and he added,—

"If you only knew the nature of the attachment, and how completely all my future hopes are concerned upon the issue ——"

"Ho!" said I, "so it's a money affair, is it? and is it old Watson has issued the writ? I'll bet a hundred on it."

"Well, upon my soul, Lorrequer," said he, jumping from his chair, and speaking with more energy than he had before evinced, "you are, without exception, the most worldly-minded, cold-blooded fellow I ever met. What have I said that could have led you to suppose I had either a duel or a lawsuit upon my hands this morning? Learn, once and for all, man, that I am in love—desperately and over head and ears in love."

"*E poi?*" said I, coolly.

"And intend to marry immediately."

"Oh, very well," said I; "the fighting and debt will come later, that's all. But to return—now for the lady."

"Come, you must make a guess."

"Why, then, I really must confess my utter inability; for your attentions have been so generally and impartially distributed since our arrival here, that it may be any fair one, from your venerable partner at whist last evening, to Mrs. Henderson, the pastrycook, inclusive, for whose macaroni and cherry-brandy your feelings have been as warm as they are constant."

"Come, no more quizzing, Hal. You surely must have remarked that lovely girl I waltzed with at Power's ball on Tuesday last."

"Lovely girl! Why, in all her seriousness, you don't mean the small woman with the tow wig?"

"No, I do *not* mean any such thing—but a beautiful creature, with the brightest locks in Christendom—the very light-brown waving ringlets Domenichino loved to paint, and a foot—did you see her foot?"

"No; that was rather difficult, for she kept continually bobbing up and down, like a boy's cork-float in a fishpond."

"Stop there. I shall not permit this any longer—I came not here to listen to ——"

"But, Curzon, my boy, you're not angry?"

"Yes, sir, I am angry."

"Why, surely, you have not been serious all this time?"

"And why not, pray?"

"Oh! I don't exactly know—that is, faith, I scarcely thought you were in earnest, for if I did of course I should honestly have confessed to you that the lady in question struck me as one of the handsomest persons I ever met."

"You think so really, Hal?"

"Certainly I do, and the opinion is not mine alone; she is, in fact, universally admired."

"Come, Harry, excuse my bad temper. I ought to have known you better—give me your hand, old boy, and wish me joy, for with your aiding and abetting she is mine to-morrow morning."

I wrung his hand heartily—congratulating myself, meanwhile, how happily I had got out of my scrape; as I now, for the first time, perceived that Curzon was actually in earnest.

"So you will stand by me, Hal?" said he.

"Of course. Only show me how, and I'm perfectly at your service. Anything from riding postilion on the leaders to officiating as bridesmaid, and I am your man. And if you are in want of such a functionary I shall stand *in loco parentis* to the lady, and give her away with as much *onction* and tenderness as though I had as many marriageable daughters as King Priam himself. It is with me, in marriage as in duelling—I'll be anything rather than a principal; and I have long since disapproved of either method as a means of 'obtaining satisfaction.'"

"Ah, Harry, I shall not be discouraged by your sneers. You've been rather unlucky, I'm aware; but now to return. Your office, on this occasion, is an exceedingly simple one, and yet that which I could only confide to one as much my friend as yourself. You must carry my dearest Louisa off."

"Carry her off! Where?—when?—how?"

"All that I have already arranged, as you shall hear."

"Yes. But first of all please to explain why, if going to run away with the lady, you don't accompany her yourself."

"Ah! I knew you would say that: I could have laid a wager you'd ask that question, for it is just that very explanation will show all the native delicacy and feminine propriety of my darling Loo; and first, I must tell you, that old Sir Alfred Jonson, her father, has some con-

founded prejudice against the army, and never would consent to her marriage with a red-coat; so that, his consent being out of the question, our only resource is an elopement. Louisa consents to this, but only upon one condition, and this she insists upon so firmly—I had almost said obstinately—that, notwithstanding all my arguments and representations, and even entreaties against it, she remains inflexible; so that I have at length yielded, and she is to have her own way."

"Well, and what is the condition she lays such stress upon?"

"Simply this, that we are never to travel a mile together until I obtain my right to do so by making her my wife. She has got some trumpery notions in her head that any slight transgression over the bounds of delicacy made by women before marriage is ever after remembered by the husband to their disadvantage, and she is therefore resolved not to sacrifice her principle even at such a crisis as the present."

"All very proper, I have no doubt; but still, pray explain what I confess appears somewhat strange to me at present. How does so very delicately-minded a person reconcile herself to traveling with a perfect stranger under such circumstances?"

"That I can explain perfectly to you. You must know that when my darling Loo consented to take this step, which I induced her to do with the greatest difficulty, she made the proviso I have just mentioned; I at once showed her that I had no maiden aunt or married sister to confide her to at such a moment, and what was to be done? She immediately replied, 'Have you no elderly brother officer, whose years and discretion will put the transaction in such a light as to silence the slanderous tongues of the world, for with such a man I am quite ready and willing to trust myself.' You see I was hard pushed there. What could I do?—whom could I select! Old Hayes, the paymaster, is always tipsy; Jones is five-and-forty—but still, if he found out there was thirty thousand pounds in the case, egad! I'm not so sure I'd have found my betrothed at the end of the stage. You were my only hope: I knew I could rely upon you. You would carry on the whole affair with tact and discretion: and as to age, your stage experience would enable you, with a little assistance from costume, to pass muster; besides that, I have always represented you as the very Methuselah of the corps; and in the gray dawn of an autumnal morning—with maiden bashfulness assisting—the scrutiny is not likely to be a close one. So now, your consent is alone wanting to complete the arrangements which, before this time to-morrow, shall have made me the happiest of mortals."

Having expressed, in fitting terms, my full sense of obligation for the delicate flattery with which he pictured me as "Old Lorrequer" to the lady, I begged a more detailed account of his plan, which I shall shorten for my reader's sake, by the following brief *exposé*.

A post-chaise and four was to be in waiting at five o'clock in the morning to convey me to Sir Alfred Jonson's residence, about twelve miles distant. There I was to be met by a lady at the gate-lodge, who was subsequently to accompany me to a small village on the Nore, where an old college friend of Curzon's happened to reside as parson, and by whom the treaty was to be concluded.

This was all simple and clear enough—the only condition necessary to insure success being punctuality, particularly on the lady's part. As to mine, I readily promised my best aid and warmest efforts in my friend's behalf.

"There is only one thing more," said Curzon. "Louisa's younger brother is a devilish hot-headed, wild sort of a fellow; and it would be as well, just for precaution's sake, to have your pistols along with you, if, by any chance, he should make out what was going forward—not but that you know if anything serious was to take place, I should be the person to take all that upon my hands."

"Oh! of course—I understand," said I. Meanwhile I could not help running over in my mind the pleasant possibilities such an adventure presented, heartily wishing that Curzon had been content to marry by banns, or any other of the legitimate modes in use, without risking his friend's bones. The other *pros* and *cons* of the matter, with full and accurate directions as to the road to be taken on obtaining possession of the lady, being all arranged, we parted, I to settle my costume and appearance for my first performance in an old man's part, and Curzon to obtain a short leave for a few days from the commanding officer of the regiment.

When we again met, which was at the mess-table, it was not without evidence on either side of that peculiar consciousness which persons feel who have, or think they have, some secret in common, which the world wots not of. Curzon's unusually quick and excited manner would at once have struck any close observer as indicating the eve of some important step, no less

than continual allusions to whatever was going on, by sly and equivocal jokes and ambiguous jests. Happily, however, on the present occasion, the party were otherwise occupied than watching him—being most profoundly and learnedly engaged in discussing medicine and matters medical with all the acute and accurate knowledge which characterizes such discussions among the non-medical public.

The present conversation originated from some mention our senior surgeon, Fitzgerald, had just made of a consultation which he was invited to attend on the next morning, at the distance of twenty miles, and which necessitated him to start at a most uncomfortably early hour. While he continued to deplore the hard fate of such men as himself, so eagerly sought after by the world, that their own hours were eternally broken in upon by external claims, the juniors were not sparing of their mirth on the occasion, at the expense of the worthy doctor, who, in plain truth, had never been disturbed by a request like the present within any one's memory. Some asserted that the whole thing was a puff, got up by Fitz himself, who was only going to have a day's partridge-shooting; others hinting that it was a blind to escape the vigilance of Mrs. Fitzgerald—a well-known virago in the regiment—while Fitz enjoyed himself; and a third party, pretending to sympathize with the doctor, suggested that a hundred pounds would be the least he could possibly be offered for such services as his on so grave an occasion.

"No, no, only fifty," said Fitz, gravely.

"Fifty! Why, you tremendous old humbug, you don't mean to say you'll make fifty pounds before we are out of our beds in the morning?" cried one.

"I'll take your bet on it," said the doctor, who had in this instance reason to suppose his fee would be a large one.

During this discussion, the claret had been pushed round rather freely; and fully bent as I was upon the adventure before me, I had taken my share of it as a preparation. I thought of the amazing prize I was about to be instrumental in securing for my friend—for the lady had really thirty thousand pounds—and I could not conceal my triumph at such a prospect of success in comparison with the meaner object of ambition. They all seemed to envy poor Fitzgerald. I struggled with my secret for some time, but my pride and the claret together got the better of me, and I called out, "Fifty pounds on it, then, that before ten to-morrow morning, I'll make a better hit of it than you, and the mess shall decide between us afterwards as to the winner."

"And if you will," said I, seeing some reluctance on Fitz's part to take the wager, and getting emboldened in consequence, "let the judgment be pronounced over a couple of dozen of champagne, paid by the loser."

This was a *coup d'état* on *my* part, for I knew at once there were so many parties to benefit by the bet, terminate which way it might, there could be no possibility of evading it. My device succeeded, and poor Fitzgerald, fairly badgered into a wager, the terms of which he could not in the least comprehend, was obliged to sign the conditions inserted in the adjutant's note-book, his greatest hope in so doing being in the quantity of wine he had seen me drink during the evening. As for myself, the bet was no sooner made than I began to think upon the very little chance I had of winning it; for even supposing my success perfect in the department allotted to me, it might with great reason be doubted what peculiar benefit I myself derived as a counterbalance to the fee of the doctor. For this, my only trust lay in the justice of a decision which I conjectured would lean more towards the goodness of a practical joke than the equity of the transaction. The party at mess soon after separated, and I wished my friend good night for the last time before meeting him as a bridegroom.

I arranged everything in order for my start. My pistol-case I placed conspicuously before me, to avoid being forgotten in the haste of departure; and, having ordered my servant to sit up all night in the guard-room until he heard the carriage at the barrack-gate, threw myself on my bed, but not to sleep. The adventure I was about to engage in suggested to my mind a thousand associations, into which many of the scenes I have already narrated entered. I thought how frequently I had myself been on the verge of that state which Curzon was about to try, and how it always happened that when nearest to success failure had intervened. From my very schoolboy days, my love adventures had the same unfortunate abruptness in their issue; and there seemed to be something very like a fatality in the invariable unsuccess of my efforts at marriage. I feared, too, that my friend Curzon had placed himself in very unfortunate hands, if augury were to be relied upon. "Something will surely happen," thought I, "from my confounded ill luck, and all will be blown up." Wearied at last with

thinking, I fell into a sound sleep for about three-quarters of an hour, at the end of which I was awoke by my servant informing me that a chaise-and-four was drawn up at the end of the barrick lane.

"Why, surely they are too early, Stubbes? It's only four o'clock."

"Yes, sir; but they say that the road for eight miles is very bad, and they must go it almost at a walk."

"That is certainly pleasant," thought I, "but I'm in for it now, so can't help it."

In a few minutes I was up and dressed, and so perfectly transformed by the addition of a brown scratch-wig and large green spectacles, and a deep-flapped waistcoat, that my servant, on re-entering my room, could not recognize me. I followed him now across the barrack-yard, as with my pistol-case under one arm, and a lantern in his hand, he proceeded to the barrack-gate.

As I passed beneath the adjutant's window, I saw a light,—the sash was quickly thrown open, and Curzon appeared.

"Is that you, Harry?"

"Yes; when do you start?"

"In about two hours. I've only eight miles to go; you have upwards of twelve, and no time to lose. Success attend you, my boy! we'll meet soon."

"Here's the carriage, sir; this way."

"Well, my lads, you know the road, I suppose?"

"Every inch of it, your honor's glory; we're always coming in for doctors and 'pothecaries; they're never a week without them."

I was soon seated, the door clapped to, and the words "all right" given, and away we went.

Little as I had slept during the night, my mind was too much occupied with the adventure I was engaged in to permit any thoughts of sleep now, so that I had abundant opportunity afforded me of pondering over all the bearings of the case with much more of deliberation and caution than I had yet bestowed upon it. One thing was certain, whether success did or did not attend our undertaking, the risk was mine and mine only; and if by any accident the affair should be already known to the family, I stood a very fair chance of being shot by one of the sons, or stoned to death by the tenantry; while my excellent friend Curzon should be eating his breakfast with his reverend friend, and only interrupting himself in his fourth muffin to wonder "what could keep them;" and besides, for minor miseries will, like the blue devils in *Don Giovanni*, thrust up their heads among their better-grown brethren, my fifty-pound bet looked rather blue; for even under the most favorable light considered, however Curzon might be esteemed a gainer, it might well be doubted how far I had succeeded better than the doctor, when producing his fee in evidence. Well, well, I'm in for it now; but it certainly is strange all these very awkward circumstances never struck me so forcibly before; and after all, it was not quite fair of Curzon to put any man forward in such a transaction; the more so, as such a representation might be made of it at the Horse Guards as to stop a man's promotion, or seriously affect his prospects for life; and I at last began to convince myself that many a man so placed would carry the lady off himself, and leave the adjutant to settle the affair with the family. For two mortal hours did I conjure up every possible disagreeable contingency that might arise. My being mulct of my fifty, and laughed at by the mess, seemed inevitable, even were I fortunate enough to escape a duel with the fire-eating brother. Meanwhile a thick misty rain continued to fall, adding so much to the darkness of the early hour, that I could see little of the country about me, and know nothing of where I was.

Troubles are like laudanum, a small dose only excites, a strong one set you to sleep—not a very comfortable sleep mayhap—but still it is sleep, and often very sound sleep; so it now happened with me. I had pondered over, weighed, and considered all the *pros, cons*, turnings, and windings of this awkward predicament, till I had fairly convinced myself that I was on the high road to a confounded scrape; and then, having established that fact to my entire satisfaction, I fell comfortably back in the chaise, and sank into a most profound slumber.

If to any of my readers I may appear hear to have taken a very despondent view of this whole affair, let him only call to mind my invariable ill luck in such matters, and how always it had been my lot to see myself on the fair road to success only up to that point at which it is certain; besides——But why explain? These are my "Confessions." I may not alter what are matters of fact, and my reader must only take me with all the imperfections of wrong motives and headlong impulses upon my head, or abandon me at once.

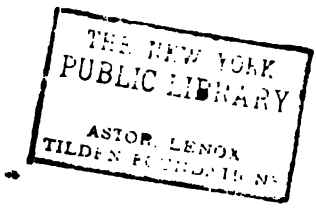
Meanwhile the chaise rolled along, and the road being better and the pace faster,

my sleep became more easy; thus, about an hour and a half after I had fallen asleep passed rapidly over, when the sharp turning of an angle disturbed me from my leaning position, and I awoke. I started up and rubbed my eyes; several seconds elapsed before I could think where I was or whither going. Consciousness at last came, and I perceived that we were driving up a thickly-planted avenue. Why, confound it, they can't have mistaken it, thought I, or are we really going up to the house, instead of waiting at the lodge? I at once lowered the sash, and stretching out my head, cried out, "Do you know what ye are about, lads; is this all right?" but unfortunately, amid the rattling of the gravel and the clatter of the horses, my words were unheard; and thinking I was addressing a request to go faster, the villains cracked their whips, and breaking into a full gallop, before five minutes flew over, they drew up with a jerk at the foot of a long portico to a large and spacious cut-stone mansion. When I rallied from the sudden check, which had nearly thrown me through the window, I gave myself up for lost; here I was, *vis-à-vis* the very hall-door of the man whose daughter I was about to elope with; whether so placed by the awkwardness and blundering of the wretches who drove me, or delivered up by their treachery, it mattered not, my fate seemed certain; before I had time to determine upon any line of acting in this confounded dilemma, the door was jerked open by a servant in sombre livery, who, protruding his head and shoulders into the chaise, looked at me steadily for a moment, and said, "Ah! then, doctor, darlin', but ye're welcome." With the speed with which sometimes the bar of an air long since heard, or the passing glance of an old familiar face can call up the memory of our very earliest childhood, bright and vivid before us, did that one single phrase explain the entire mystery of my present position, and I saw in one rapid glance that I had got into the chaise intended for Dr. Fitzgerald, and was absolutely, at that moment, before the hall-door of the patient. My first impulse was an honest one to avow the mistake and retrace my steps, taking my chance to settle with Curzon, whose matrimonial scheme I foresaw was doomed to the untimely fate of all those I had ever been concerned in. My next thought—how seldom is the adage true which says "that second thoughts are best"—was upon my luckless wager: for even supposing that Fitzgerald should follow me in the other chaise, yet, as I had the start of him, if I could only pass muster for half an hour, I might secure the fee, and evacuate the territory; besides that, there was a great chance of Fritz's having gone on *my* errand, while I was journeying on *his*, in which case I should be safe from interruption. Meanwhile, Heaven only could tell what his interference in poor Curzon's business might not involve. These serious reflections took about ten seconds to pass through my mind, as the grave-looking old servant proceeded to encumber himself with my cloak and my pistol-case, remarking as he lifted the latter, "And may the Lord grant ye won't want the instruments this time, doctor, for they say he is better this morning." Heartily wishing amen to the benevolent prayer of the honest domestic, for more reasons than one, I descended leisurely, as I conjectured a doctor ought to do, from the chaise, and with a solemn pace and grave demeanor followed him into the house.

In the small parlor to which I was ushered, sat two gentlemen somewhat advanced in years, who I rightly supposed were my medical *confrères*. One of these was a tall, pale, ascetic-looking man, with gray hair and retreating forehead, slow in speech, and lugubrious in demeanor. The other, his antithesis, was a short, rosy-cheeked, apoplectic-looking subject, with a laugh like a suffocating wheeze, and a paunch like an alderman; his quick, restless eye and full nether lip denoting more of the *bon vivant* than the abstemious disciple of Æsculapius. A moment's glance satisfied me, that if I had only these to deal with, I was safe, for I saw that they were of that stamp of country practitioner, half-physician, half-apothecary, who rarely come in contact with the higher orders of their art, and then only to be dictated to, obey, and grumble.

"Doctor, may I beg to intrude myself, Mr. Phipps, on your notice? Dr. Phipps or Mr., it's all one; but I have only a license in pharmacy, though they call me doctor. Surgeon Riley, sir, a very respectable practitioner," said he, waving his hand toward his rubicund *confrère*.

I at once expressed the great happiness it afforded me to meet such highly informed and justly celebrated gentlemen; and fearing every moment the arrival of the real Simon Pure should cover me with shame and disgrace, begged they would afford me, as soon as possible, some history of the case we were convened for. They accordingly proceeded to expound, in a species of duet, some curious particulars of an old gentleman who had the evil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"DOES THAT HURT YOU, SIR?" SAID I, IN A SOOTHING AND AFFECTIONATE TONE OF VOICE.
(P. 91.)

fortune to have them for his doctors, and who labored under some swelling of the neck, which they differed as to the treatment of, and in consequence of which the aid of a third party (myself, Heaven bless the mark!) was requested.

As I could by no means divest myself of the fear of Fitz's arrival, I pleaded the multiplicity of my professional engagments as a reason for at once seeing the patient; upon which I was conducted upstairs by my two brethren, and introduced to a half-lighted chamber. In a large easy-chair sat a florid-looking old man, with a face in which pain and habitual ill-temper had combined to absorb every expression.

"This is the doctor of the regiment, sir, that you desired to see," said my tall coadjutor.

"Oh! then, very well; good morning, sir. I suppose you will find out something new the matter, for them two there have been doing so every day this two months."

"I trust, sir, I replied stiffly, "that with the assistance of my learned friends much may be done for you. Ha! hem! so this is the malady. Turn your head a little to that side." Here an awful groan escaped the sick man, for I, it appears, had made considerable impression upon rather a delicate part, not unintentionally, I must confess; for as I remembered Hoyle's maxim at whist, "when in doubt play a trump," so I thought it might be true in physic, when posed by a difficulty, to do a bold thing also. "Does that hurt you, sir?" said I, in a soothing and affectionate tone of voice.

"Like the devil," growled the patient.

"And here?" said I.

"Oh! oh! I can't bear it any longer."

"Oh! I perceive," said I, "the thing is just as I expected." Here I raised my eyebrows, and looked indescribably wise at my *confrères*.

"No aneurism, doctor," said the tall one.

"Certainly not."

"Maybe," said the short one—"maybe it's a stay-at-home-with-us tumor after all,"—so at least he appeared to pronounce a confounded technical, which I afterwards learned was "steatomatous." Conceiving that my rosy-friend was disposed to jeer at me, I gave him a terrific frown and resumed, "This must not be touched."

"So you won't operate upon it," said the patient.

"I would not take a thousand pounds to do so," I replied. "Now, if you please, gentlemen," said I making a step towards the door, as if to withdraw for consultation; upon which they accompanied me downstairs to the breakfast-room. As it was the only time in my life I had performed in this character, I had some doubts as to the propriety of indulging a very hearty breakfast appetite, not knowing if it were unprofessional to eat; but from this doubt my learned friends speedily relieved me, by the entire devotion which they bestowed for about twenty minutes upon ham, rolls, eggs, and cutlets, barely interrupting these important occupations by sly allusions to the old gentleman's malady, and his chance of recovery.

"Well, doctor," said the pale one, as at length he rested from his labors, "what are we to do?"

"Ay," said the other, "there's the question."

"Go on," said I, "go on as before; I can't advise you better." Now, this was a deep stroke of mine; for up to the present moment I did not know what treatment they were practising; but it looked a shrewd thing to guess it and it certainly was civil to approve of it.

"So you think that will be best?"

"I am certain that I know nothing better," I answered.

"Well, I'm sure, sir, we have every reason to be gratified for the very candid manner in which you have treated us. Sir, I'm your most obedient servant," said the fat one.

"Gentlemen, both your good healths and professional success also." Here I swallowed a glass of brandy, thinking all the while there were worse things than the practice of physic.

"I hope you are not going?" said one, as my chaise drew up at the door.

"Business calls me," said I, "and I can't help it."

"Could not you manage to see our friend here again, in a day or two?" said the rosy one.

"I fear it will be impossible," replied I; besides, I have a notion he may not desire it."

"I have been commissioned to hand you this," said the tall doctor, with a half sigh, as he put a cheque into my hand.

I bowed slightly, and stuffed the crumpled paper with a half-careless air into my waistcoat pocket, and wishing them both every species of happiness and success, shook hands four times with each, and drove off, never believing myself safe till I saw the gate-lodge behind me, and felt myself flying on the road to Kilkenny at about twelve miles Irish an hour.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ELOPEMENT.

It was past two o'clock when I reached the town. On entering the barrack-yard, I perceived a large group of officers chatting together, and every moment breaking into immoderate fits of laughter. I went over, and immediately learned the source of their mirth, which was this. No sooner had it been known that Fitzgerald was about to go to a distance, on a professional call, than a couple of young officers laid their heads together, and wrote an anonymous note to Mrs. Fitz, who was the very dragon of jealousy, informing her that her husband had feigned the whole history of the patient and consultation as an excuse for absenting himself on an excursion of gallantry; and that if she wished to satisfy herself of the truth of the statement she had only to follow him in the morning, and detect his entire scheme; the object of these amiable friends being to give poor Mrs. Fitz a twenty miles' jaunt, and confront her with her injured husband at the end of it.

Having a mind actively alive to suspicions of this nature, the worthy woman made all her arrangements for a start, and scarcely was the chaise-and-four, with her husband, out of the town, than was she on the track of it, with a heart bursting with jealousy, and vowing vengeance to the knife against all concerned in this scheme to wrong her.

So far the plan of her persecutors had perfectly succeeded; they saw her depart, on a trip of, as they supposed, twenty miles, and their whole notions of the practical joke were limited to the *éclaircissement* that must ensue at the end. Little, however, were they aware how much more near the suspected crime was the position of the poor doctor to turn out; for as, by one blunder, I had taken his chaise, so he, without any inquiry whatever, had got into the one intended for me; and never awoke from a most refreshing slumber till shaken by the shoulder by the postilion, who whispered in his ear, "Here we are, sir; this is the gate."

"But why stop at the gate? Drive up the avenue, my boy."

"His honor told me, sir, not for the world to go farther than the lodge; nor to make as much noise as a mouse."

"Ah! very true. He may be very irritable, poor man! Well, stop here, and I'll get out."

Just as the doctor had reached the ground, a very smart-looking soubrette tripped up, and said to him,—

"Beg pardon, sir; but are you the gentleman from the barrack, sir?"

"Yes, my dear," said Fitz, with a knowing look at the pretty face of the damsel, "what can I do for you?"

"Why, sir, my mistress is here in the shrubbery: but she is so nervous, and so frightened, I don't know she'll go through it?"

"Ah! she's frightened, poor thing, is she? Oh! she must keep up her spirits; while there's life there's hope."

"Sir?"

"I say, my darling, she must not give way. I'll speak to her a little. Is not *he* rather advanced in life?"

"Oh, Lord! no, sir. Only two-and-thirty, my mistress tells me."

"Two-and-thirty! Why, I thought he was above sixty."

"Above sixty! Law! sir. You have a bright fancy. This is the gentleman, ma'am. Now, sir, I'll just slip aside for a moment, and let you talk to her."

"I am grieved, ma'am, that I have not the happiness to make your acquaintance under happier circumstances."

"I must confess, sir—though I am ashamed——"

"Never be ashamed, ma'am; your grief, although I trust causeless, does you infinite honor. Upon my soul, she is rather pretty," said the doctor to himself here.

"Well, sir! as I have the most perfect confidence in you, from all I have heard of you, I trust you will not think me abrupt in saying that any longer delay here is dangerous."

"Dangerous! Is he in so critical a state as that, then?"

"Critical a state, sir! Why, what do you mean?"

"I mean, ma'am, do you think, then, it must be done to-day?"

"Of course I do, sir, and I shall never leave the spot without your assuring me of it."

"Oh! in that case make your mind easy. I have the instruments in the chaise."

"The instruments in the chaise! Really, sir, if you are not jesting—I trust you don't think this is a fitting time for such—I entreat of you to speak more plainly and intelligibly."

"Jesting, ma'am! I'm incapable of jesting at such a moment."

"Ma'am, ma'am! I see one of the rangers, ma'am, at a distance; so don't

lose a moment, but get into the chaise at once."

"Well, sir, let us away; for I have now gone too far to retract."

"Help my mistress into the chaise, sir. Lord! what a man it is."

A moment more saw the poor doctor seated beside the young lady, while the postilions plied whip and spur with their best energy; and the road flew beneath them. Meanwhile the delay caused by this short dialogue enabled Mrs. Fitz's slower conveyance to come up with the pursuit, and her chaise had just turned the angle of the road as she caught a glimpse of a muslin dress stepping into the carriage with her husband.

There are no words capable of conveying the faintest idea of the feelings that agitated Mrs. Fitz at this moment. The fullest confirmation to her worst fears was before her eyes—just at the very instant when a doubt was beginning to cross over her mind that it might have been merely a hoax that was practised on her, and that the worthy doctor was innocent and blameless. As for the poor doctor himself, there seemed little chance of his being enlightened as to the real state of matters; for from the moment the young lady had taken her place in the chaise, she had buried her face in her hands, and sobbed continually. Meanwhile he concluded that they were approaching the house by some back entrance to avoid noise and confusion, and waited with due patience for the journey's end.

As, however, her grief continued unabated, Fitz at length began to think of the many little consolatory acts he had successfully practised in his professional career, and was just insinuating some very tender speech on the score of resignation, with his head inclined towards the weeping lady beside him, when the chaise of Mrs. Fitz came up alongside, and the postilions having yielded to the call to halt, drew suddenly up, displaying to the enraged wife the *tableau* we have mentioned.

"So, wretch!" she screamed rather than spoke, "I have detected you at last."

"Lord bless me! Why, it is my wife."

"Yes, villain! your injured, much-wronged wife! And you, madam, may I ask what have you to say for thus eloping with a married man?"

"Shame! My dear Jemima," said Fitz, "how can you possibly permit your foolish jealousy so far to blind your reason? Don't you see I am going upon a professional call?"

"Oh! you are, are you? Quite professional, I'll be bound."

"Oh, sir! Oh, madam! I beseech you, save me from the anger of my relatives, and the disgrace of exposure. Pray take me back at once."

"Why, heavens! ma'am what do *you* mean? You are not gone mad, as well as my wife."

"Really, Mr. Fitz," said Mrs. F., "this is carrying the joke too far. Take your unfortunate victim—as I suppose she is such—home to her parents, and prepare to accompany me to the barrack; and if there be law and justice in——"

"Well! may the Lord in his mercy preserve my senses, or you will both drive me clean mad."

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" sobbed the young lady, while Mrs. Fitzgerald continued to upbraid at the top of her voice, heedless of the disclaimers and protestations of innocence poured out with the eloquence of despair by the poor doctor. Matters were in this state, when a man dressed in a fustian jacket, like a groom, drove up to the side of the road in a tax-cart; he immediately got down, and tearing open the door of the doctor's chaise, lifted out the young lady, and deposited her safely in his own conveyance, merely adding,—

"I say, master, you're in luck this morning that Mr. William took the lower road, for if *he* had come up with you instead of me, he'd blow the roof off your skull, that's all."

While these highly satisfactory words were being addressed to poor Fitz, Mrs. Fitzgerald had removed from her carriage to that of her husband, perhaps preferring four horses to two, or perhaps she had still more unexplained views of the transaction, which might as well be told on the road homeward.

Whatever might have been the nature of Mrs. F.'s dissertation, nothing is known. The chaise containing these turtle-doves arrived late at night at Kilkenny, and Fitz was installed safely in his quarters before any one knew of his having come back. The following morning he was reported ill; and for three weeks he was but once seen, and at that time only at his window, with a flannel nightcap on his head, looking particularly pale, and rather dark under one eye.

As for Curzon, the last thing known of him that luckless morning was his hiring a post-chaise for the Royal Oak, from whence he posted to Dublin, and hastened on to England. In a few days we learned

that the adjutant had exchanged into a regiment in Canada; and to this hour there are not three men in the 4—th who know the real secret of that morning's misadventures.

CHAPTER XIX.

DETACHMENT DUTY—AN ASSIZE TOWN.

As there appeared to be but little prospect of poor Fitzgerald ever requiring any explanation from me as to the events of that morning, for he feared to venture from his room, lest he might be recognized and prosecuted for abduction, I thought it better to keep my own secret also; and it was therefore with a feeling of anything but regret that I received an order which, under other circumstances, would have rendered me miserable—to march on detachment duty. To any one at all conversant with the life we lead in the army, I need not say how unpleasant such a change usually is. To surrender your capital mess, with all its well-appointed equipments—your jovial brother officers—your West India Maderia—your cool Lafitte—your daily, hourly, and half-hourly flirtations with the whole female population—never a deficient one in a garrison town—not to speak of your matches at trotting, coursing, and pigeon-shooting, and a hundred other delectable modes of getting over the ground through life, till it please your ungrateful country and the Horse Guards to make you a major-general,—to surrender all these, I say, for the noise, dust, and damp disagreeables of a country inn, with bacon to eat, whisky to drink, and the priest, or the constabulary chief, to get drunk with—I speak of Ireland here—and your only affair, *par amours*, being the occasional ogling of the apothecary's daughter opposite, as often as she visits the shop, in the exciting occupation of measuring out garden seeds and senna. These are, indeed, the exchanges, with a difference, for which there is no compensation; and, for my own part, I never went upon such duty that I did not exclaim with the honest Irishman, when the mail went over him, "Oh, Lord! what is this for?"—firmly believing that in the earthly purgatory of such duties I was reaping the heavy retribution attendant on past offences.

Besides, from being rather a crack man in my corps, I thought it somewhat hard that my turn for such duty should come round about twice as often as that of my brother officers; but so it is. I never knew a fellow a little smarter than his neighbors that was not pounced upon by his colonel for a victim. Now, however, I looked at these matters in a very different light. To leave head-quarters was to escape being questioned: while there was scarcely any post to which I could be sent where something strange or adventurous might not turn up, and serve me to erase the memory of the past, and turn the attention of my companions in any quarter rather than towards myself.

My orders on the present occasion were to march to Clonmel, from whence I was to proceed a short distance to the house of a magistrate, upon whose information, transmitted to the chief secretary, the present assistance of a military party had been obtained; and not without every appearance of reason. The assizes of the town were about to be held, and many capital offences stood for trial in the calendar; and as it was strongly rumored that, in the event of certain convictions being obtained, a rescue would be attempted, a general attack upon the town seemed a too natural consequence; and if so, the house of so obnoxious a person as him I have alluded to would be equally certain of being assailed. Such, at least, is too frequently the history of such scenes: beginning with no one definite object—sometimes a slight one—more ample views and wider conceptions of mischief follow, and what has begun in a drunken riot—a casual rencontre—may terminate in the slaughter of a family, or the burning of a village. The finest peasantry—God bless them!—are a quick people, and readier at taking a hint than most others, and have, withal, a natural taste for fighting, that no acquired habits of other nations can pretend to vie with.

As the worthy person to whose house I was now about to proceed was, and, if I am rightly informed, is, rather a remarkable character in the local history of Irish politics, I may as well say a few words concerning him. Mr. Joseph Larkins, Esq.—(for so he signed himself)—had only been lately elevated to the bench of magistrates. He was originally one of that large but intelligent class called in Ireland "small farmers," remarkable chiefly for a considerable tact in driving hard bargains—a great skill in wethers—a rather national dislike to pay all species of imposts, whether partaking of the nature of tax, tithe, grand jury cess, or anything of that nature whatsoever. So very accountable—I had almost said (for I have been long

quartered in Ireland) so very laudable—a propensity excited but little of surprise or astonishment in his neighbors, the majority of whom entertained very similar views—none, however, possessing anything like the able and lawyer-like ability of the worthy Larkins, for the successful evasion of these inroads upon the liberty of the subject. Such, in fact, was his talent, and so great his success in this respect, that he had established what, if it did not actually amount to a statute of exemption in law, served equally well in reality; and for several years he enjoyed a perfect immunity on the subject of money-paying in general. His "little houldin'," as he unostentatiously called some five hundred acres of bog, mountain, and sheep-walk, lay in a remote part of the county, the roads were nearly impassable for several miles in that direction, land was of little value; the agent was a timid man, with a large family; of three tithe-proctors who had penetrated into the forbidden territory, two labored under a dyspepsia for life, not being able to digest parchment and sealing-wax, for they usually dined on their own writs; and the third gave five pounds out of his pocket to a large, fresh-looking man, with brown whiskers and beard, that concealed him two nights in a hayloft, to escape the vengeance of the people, which act of philanthropy should never be forgotten, if some ill-natured people were not bold enough to say that the kind individual in question was no other man then Larkins himself.

However this may be, true it is that this was the last attempt made to bring within the responsibilities of the law so refractory a subject; and so powerful is habit, that although he was to be met with at every market and cattle-fair in the county, an arrest of his person was no more contemplated than if he enjoyed the privilege of parliament to go at large without danger.

When the country became disturbed, and nightly meetings of the peasantry were constantly held, followed by outrages against life and property to the most frightful extent, the usual resources of the law were employed unavailingly. It was in vain to offer high rewards. Approvers could not be found; and so perfectly organized were the secret associations, that few beyond the very ringleaders knew anything of consequence to communicate. Special commissions were sent down from Dublin; additional police force, detatchments of military; long correspondences took place between the magistracy and the government—but all in vain. The disturbances continued; and at last to such a height had they risen, that the country was put under martial law; and even this was ultimately found perfectly insufficient to repel what now daily threatened to become an open rebellion rather than mere agrarian disturbance. It was at this precise moment, when all resources seemed to be fast exhausting themselves, that certain information reached the Castle, of the most important nature. The individual who obtained and transmitted it had perilled his life in so doing—but the result was a great one—no less than the capital conviction and execution of seven of the most influential amongst the disaffected peasantry. Confidence was at once shaken in the secrecy of their associates; distrust and suspicion followed. Many of the boldest sank beneath the fear of betrayal, and themselves became evidence for the crown; and in five months, a county abounding in midnight meetings, and blazing with insurrectionary fires, became almost the most tranquil in its province. It may well be believed that he who rendered this important service on this trying emergency could not be passed over, and the name of J. Larkins soon after appeared in the *Gazette* as one of his Majesty's justices of the peace for the county; pretty much in the same spirit in which a country gentleman converts the greatest poacher in his neighborhood by making him his gamekeeper.

In person he was a large and powerfully-built man, considerably above six feet in height, and possessing great activity, combined with powers of enduring fatigue almost incredible. With an eye like a hawk, and a heart that never knew fear, he was the person, of all others, calculated to strike terror into the minds of the country people. The reckless daring with which he threw himself into danger—the almost impetuous quickness with which he followed up a scent, whenever information reached him of an important character—had their full effect upon a people who, long accustomed to the slowness and the uncertainty of the law, were almost paralyzed at beholding detection and punishment follow on crime as certainly as the thunder-crash follows the lightning.

His great instrument for this purpose was the obtaining information from sworn members of the secret societies, and whose names never appeared in the course of a trial or a prosecution, until the measure of their iniquity was completed, when they usually received a couple of hundred pounds, blood-money, as it was called,

with which they took themselves away to America or Australia—their lives being only secured while they remained by the shelter afforded them in the magistrate's own house. And so it happened that constantly there numbered from ten to twelve of these wretches, inmates of his family, each of whom had the burden of participation in one murder at least, waiting for an opportunity to leave the country, unnoticed and unwatched.

Such a frightful and unnatural state of things can hardly be conceived; and yet, shocking as it was, it was a relief to that which led to it. I have dwelt, perhaps, too long upon this painful subject; but let my reader now accompany me a little farther, and the scene shall be changed. Does he see that long, low, white house, with a tall, steep roof, perforated with innumerable narrow windows? There are a few straggling beech-trees upon a low, bleak-looking field before the house, which is called by courtesy the lawn; a pig or two, some geese, and a tethered goat, are here and there musing over the state of Ireland; while some rosy, curly-headed, noisy, and bare-legged urchins are gambolling before the door. This is the dwelling of the worshipful justice, to which myself and my party were now approaching with that degree of activity which attends on most marches of twenty miles, under the oppressive closeness of a day in autumn. Fatigued and tired as I was, yet I could not enter the little enclosure before the house without stopping for a moment to admire the view before me. It was a large tract of rich country, undulating on every side, and teeming with corn-fields, in all the yellow gold of ripeness; here and there, almost hid by small clumps of ash and alder, were scattered some cottages, from which the blue smoke rose in a curling column into the calm evening sky. All was graceful and beautifully tranquil; and you might have selected the picture as emblematic of that happiness and repose we so constantly associate with our ideas of the country; and yet, before that sun had even set, which now gilded the landscape, its glories would be replaced by the lurid glare of nightly incendiarism, and —— But here, fortunately for my reader, and, perhaps, myself, I am interrupted in my meditations by a rich, mellifluous accent, saying, in the true Doric of the South,—

"Mr. Lorrequer! you're welcome to Curryglass, sir. You've had a hot day for your march. Maybe you'd take a taste of sherry before dinner? Well then, we'll not wait for Molowny, but order it up at once."

So saying, I was ushered into a long, low drawing-room, in which were collected together about a dozen men, to whom I was specially and severally presented, and among whom I was happy to find my boarding-house acquaintance, Mr. Daly, who, with the others, had arrived that same day, for the assizes, and who were all members of the legal profession, either barristers, attorneys, or clerks of the peace.

The hungry aspect of the guests, no less than the speed with which dinner made its appearance after my arrival, showed me that my coming was only waited for to complete the party—the Mr. Molowny before alluded to being unanimously voted present. The meal itself had but slight pretensions to elegance; there were no delicacies of Parisian taste; no triumphs of French cookery; but in their place stood a lordly fish of some five-and-twenty pounds weight, a massive sirloin, with all the usual armament of fowls, ham, pigeon-pie, beefsteak, etc., lying in rather a promiscuous order along either side of the table. The party were evidently disposed to be satisfied, and I acknowledge I did not prove an exception to the learned individuals about me, either in my relish for the good things, or my appetite to enjoy them, *Dulce est desipere in loco*, says some one, by which I suppose is meant, that a rather slang company is occasionally good fun. Whether from my taste for the "humanities" or not, I am unable to say, but certainly, in my then humor, I should not have exchanged my position for one of much greater pretensions to elegance and *ton*. There was first a general onslaught upon the viands, crashing of plates, jingling of knives, mingling with requests for "more beef," "the hard side of the salmon," or "another slice of ham." Then came a dropping fire of drinking wine, which quickly increased, the decanters of sherry for about ten minutes resting upon the table about as long as Taglioni touches this mortal earth in one of her flying movements. Acquaintances were quickly formed between the members of the bar and myself, and I found that my momentary popularity was likely to terminate in my downfall; for, as each introduction was followed by a bumper of strong sherry, I did not expect to last till the end of the feast. The cloth at length disappeared, and I was just thanking Providence for the respite from hob-nobbing which I imagined was to follow, when a huge, square decanter of whisky appeared, flanked by an enormous jug of boiling water, and renewed prepa-

rations for drinking upon a large scale, seriously commenced. It was just at this moment that I, for the first time, perceived the rather remarkable figure who had waited upon us at dinner, and who, while I chronicle so many things of little import, deserves a slight mention. He was a little old man of about fifty-five or sixty years, wearing upon his head a barrister's wig, and habited in clothes which originally had been the costume of a very large and bulky person, and which, consequently, added much to the drollery of his appearance. He had been, for forty years, the servant of Judge Vandeleur, and had entered his present service rather in the light of a preceptor than a menial, invariably dictating to the worthy justice upon every occasion of etiquette or propriety, by a reference to what "the judge himself" did, which always sufficed to carry the day in Nicholas's favor, opposition to so correct a standard never being thought of by the justice.

"That's Billy Crow's own whisky, the *'small still,'*" said Nicholas, placing the decanter upon the table; "make muchof it, for there isn't such dew in the county."

With this commendation upon the liquor, Nicholas departed, and we proceeded to fill our glasses.

I cannot venture—perhaps it is so much the better that I cannot—to give any idea of the conversation which at once broke out, as if the barriers that restrained it had at length given way. But law-talk, in all its plentitude, followed; and for two hours I heard of nothing but writs, detainers, declarations, traverses in prox, and alibis, with sundry hints for *qui tam processes*, interspersed, occasionally, with sly jokes about packing juries and confounding witnesses, among which figured the usual number of good things attributed to the Chief Baron O'Grady and the other sayers of smart sayings at the bar.

"Ah!" said Mr. Daly, drawing a deep sigh at the same instant—"the bar is sadly fallen off since I was called in the year '76. There was not a leader in one of the circuits at that time that couldn't puzzle any jury that ever sat in a box; and as for driving through an act of parliament, it was, as Sancho Panza says, cakes and gingerbread to them. And then, there is one special talent lost for ever to the present generation—just like stained glass and illuminated manuscripts, and slow poisons and the like—that were all known years ago—I mean the beautiful art of addressing the judge before the jury, and not letting them know you were quizzing them, if ye like to do that same. Poor Peter Purcell for that—rest his ashes—he could cheat the devil himself if he had need—and maybe he has had, before now. Peter is sixteen years dead last November."

"And what was Peter's peculiar tact in that respect, Mr. Daly?" said I.

"Oh, then, I might try for hours to explain it to you in vain; but I'll just give you an instance that'll show you better than all my dissertations on the subject, and I was present myself when it happened, more by token, it was the first time I ever met him on circuit.

"I suppose there is scarcely any one here now, except myself, that remembers the great cause of Mills *versus* Mulcahy, a widow, and others, that was tried in Ennis, in the year '82. It's no matter if there is not. Perhaps it may be more agreeable for me, for I can tell my story in my own way, and not be interrupted. Well, that was called 'The old record,' for they tried it seventeen times. I believe, on my conscience, it killed old Jones, who was in the Common Pleas; he used to say, if he put it for trial on the day of judgment, one of the parties would be sure to lodge an appeal. Be that as it may, the Milses engaged Peter special, and brought him down with a great retainer, in a chaise-and-four, flags flying, and favors in the postilions' hats, and a fiddler on the roof, playing the 'Hare in the Corn.' The inn was illuminated the same evening, and Peter made a speech from the windows upon the liberty of the press and religious freedom all over the globe, and there wasn't a man in the mob didn't cheer him, which was the more civil, because few of them knew a word of English, and the others thought he was a play-actor. But it all went off well, nevertheless, for Peter was a clever fellow; and although he liked money well, he liked popularity more, and he never went anywhere 'special' that he hadn't a public meeting of some kind or other, either to abolish rents, or suppress parsons, or some such popular and beneficial scheme, which always made him a great favorite with the people, and got him plenty of clients. But I am wandering from the record. Purcell came down, as I said before, special for Mills; and when he looked over his brief, and thought of the case, he determined to have it tried by a gentlemen jury, for although he was a groet man with the mob, he liked the country gentlemen better in the jury-box, for he was always coming out with quotations from the classics, which, whether the grand jury understood or not, they always

applauded very much. Well, when he came into court that morning, you may guess his surprise and mortification to find that the same jury that had tried a common ejectment case were still in the box, and waiting, by the Chief Justice's direction, to try Mills *versus* Mulcahy, the great case of the assizes.

"I hear they were a set of common clod-hopping wretches, with frieze coats and brogues, that no man could get round at all, for they were as cunning as foxes, and could tell blarney from good sense, rather better than people with better coats on them.

"Now, the moment that Mr. Purcell came into the court, after bowing politely to the judge, he looked up to the box, and when he saw the dirty faces of the dealers in pork and potatoes, and the unshaven chins of the small farmers, his heart fell within him, and he knew in a minute how little they'd care for the classics—if he quoted 'Cæsar's Commentaries' itself for them—ignorant creatures as they were!

"Well, the cause was called, and up gets Peter, and he began to 'express' (as he always called it himself) 'the great distress his client and himself would labor under, if the patient and most intelligent jury then on the panel should come to the consideration of so very tedious a case as this promised to be, after their already most fatiguing exertions;' he commented upon their absence from their wives and families, their farms neglected, their crops hazarded, and in about fifteen minutes he showed them they were, if not speedily released and sent home, worse treated and harder used than many of the prisoners condemned to three months' imprisonment; and actually so far worked upon the feelings of the chief himself, that he turned to the foreman of the jury, and said, 'that although it was a great deviation from his habitual practice, if at this pressing season their prospects were involved to the extent the learned counsel had pictured, why, then, he would so far bend his practice on this occasion, and they should be dismissed.' Now Peter, I must confess, here showed the most culpable ignorance in not knowing that a set of country fellows, put up in a jury box, would rather let every blade of corn rot in the ground than give up what they always supposed so very respectable an appointment; for they invariably imagine in these cases that they are something very like my lord the judge, 'barrin' the ermine;' besides, that on the present occasion, Peter's argument in their favor decided them upon staying, for they now felt like martyrs, and firmly believed that they were putting the chief justice under an obligation to them for life.

"When, therefore, they heard the question of the court, it did not take a moment's time for the whole body to rise *en masse*, and bowing to the judge, call out, 'We'll stay, my lord, and try every mother's son of them for you; ay, if it lasted till Christmas.'

"'I am sure, my lord,' said Peter, collecting himself for an effort, 'I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude for the great sacrifice these gifted and highly intelligent gentlemen are making in my client's behalf; for being persons who have great interests in the country at stake, their conduct on the present occasion is the more praiseworthy; and I am certain they fully appreciate, as does your lordship, the difficulty of the case before us, when documents will be submitted, requiring a certain degree of acquaintance with such testimonials sufficiently to comprehend. Many of the title-deeds, as your lordship is aware, being obtained under old abbey charters, are in the learned languages; and we all know how home to our hearts and bosoms comes the beautiful line of the Greek poet, "Vacuus viator cantabit ante latronem.'" The sound of the quotation roused the chief justice, who had been in some measure inattentive to the preceding part of the learned counsel's address, and he called out rather sharply, "Greek! Mr. Purcell—why, I must have mistaken—will you repeat the passage?"

"'With pleasure, my lord. I was just observing to your lordship and the jury, with the eloquent poet Hergesius, "Vacuus viator cantabit ante latronem."'

"'Greek, did you call it?'

"'Yes, my lord, of *course* I did.'

"'Why, Mr. Purcell, you are quoting Latin to me—and what do you mean by talking of the learned Hergesius and Greek all this time?—the line is Juvenal's.'

"'My lord, with much submission to your lordship, and every deference to your great attainments and very superior talents, let me still assure you that I am quoting Greek, and that your lordship is in error.'

"'Mr. Purcell, I have only to remark that if you are desirous to make a jest of the court, you had better be cautious, I say, sir;' and here the judge waxed exceeding wroth. 'I say the line is Latin—Latin, sir—Juvenal's Latin, sir—every schoolboy knows it.'

"'Of course, my lord,' said Peter, with

great humility, 'I bow myself to the decision of your lordship; the line is, therefore, Latin. Yet I may be permitted to hint that were your lordship disposed to submit this question, as you are shortly about to do another and a similar one, to those clear-sighted and intelligent gentlemen there, I am satisfied, my lord, it would be Greek to every man of them.'

"The look, the voice, and the peculiar emphasis with which Peter gave these words were perfectly successful. The acute judge anticipated the wish of the counsel—the jury were dismissed, and Peter proceeded to his case before those he knew better how to deal with, and with whom the result was more certain to be as he wished it."

To this anecdote of the counsellor succeeded many others, of which, as the whisky was potent and the hour late, my memory is not over retentive: the party did not break up till near four o'clock, and even then, our *séance* only concluded because some one gravely remarked, "that as we should be all actively engaged on the morrow, early hours were advisable."

CHAPTER XX.

THE ASSIZE TOWN.

I HAD not been above a week in my new quarters when my servant presented me, among my letters one morning, with a packet, which, with considerable pains, I at length recognized to be directed to me. The entire envelope was covered with writing in various hands, among which I detected something which bore a faint resemblance to my name; but the address which followed was perfectly unreadable, not only to me, as it appeared, but also to the "experts" of the different post-offices, for it had been followed by sundry directions to try various places beginning with T, which seemed to be the letter commencing the "great unknown locality;" thus I read. "Try Tralee," "Try Tyrone," "Try Tanderagee," etc., etc. I wonder that they didn't add, "Try Teheran," and I suppose they would at last, rather than abandon the pursuit.

"But, Stubbes," said I, as I conned over the various addresses on this incomprehensible cover, "are you sure this is for me?"

"The postmaster, sir, desired me to ask if you'd have it, for he has offered it to every one down in these parts lately; the waterguard officers will take it at 8d., sir, if you won't, but I begged you might have the refusal."

"Oh! very well; I am happy to find matters are managed so impartially in the post-office here. Nothing like a public auction for making matters find their true level. Tell the postmaster, then, I'll keep the letter, and the rather, as it happens, by good luck, to be intended for me."

"And now for the interior," said I, as I broke the seal, and read:—

"Paris, Rue Castiglione.

"MY DEAR MR. LORREQUER,—As her ladyship and my son have in vain essayed to get anything from you in the shape of reply to their letters, it has devolved upon me to try my fortune, which, were I to augur from the legibility of my writing, may not, I should fear, prove more successful than the "——(what can the word be?)——"the—the"—(why, it can't be damnable, surely?—no, it is amiable, I see)—"than the amiable epistle of my lady. I cannot, however, permit myself to leave this without apprising you that we are about to start for Baden, where we purpose remaining a month or two. Your cousin Guy, who has been staying for some time with us, has been obliged to set out for Geneva, but hopes to join in some weeks hence. He is a great favorite with us all, but has not effaced the memory of our older friend, yourself. Could you not find means to come over and see us, if only a flying visit? Rotterdam is the route, and a few days would bring you to our quarters. Hoping that you may feel so disposed, I have enclosed herewith a letter to the Horse Guards, which I trust may facilitate your obtaining leave of absence. I know of no other mode of making your peace with the ladies, who are too highly incensed at your desertion to send one civil postscript to this letter, and Kilkee and myself are absolutely exhausted in our defence of you.

"Believe me, yours truly,

"CALLONBY."

Had I received an official notification of my being appointed paymaster to the forces, or chaplain to Chelsea Hospital, I believe I should have received the information with less surprise than I perused this letter. That, after the long interval which had elapsed, during which I had considered myself totally forgotten by this family, I should now receive a letter—and such a letter, too—quite in the vein of our

former intimacy and good feeling, inviting me to their house, and again professing their willingness that I should be on the terms of our old familiarity, was little short of wonderful to me. I read, too—with what pleasure!—that slight mention of my cousin, whom I had so long regarded as my successful rival, but who I began now to hope had not been preferred to me. Perhaps it was not yet too late to think that all was not hopeless. It appeared, too, that several letters had been written which had never reached me; so, while I accused them of neglect and forgetfulness, I was really more amenable to the charge myself; for, from the moment I had heard of my cousin Guy's having been domesticated amongst them, and the rumors of his marriage had reached me, I suffered my absurd jealousy to blind my reason, and never wrote another line after. I ought to have known how "*bavard*" Guy always was; that he never met with the most commonplace attentions anywhere, that he did not immediately write home about settlements and pin-money, and portions for younger children, and all that sort of nonsense. Now I saw it all plainly, and ten thousand times quicker than my hopes were extinguished before they were again kindled, and I could not refrain from regarding Lady Jane as a mirror of constancy, and myself the most fortunate man in Europe. My old castle-building propensities came back upon me in an instant, and I pictured myself, with Lady Jane as my companion, wandering among the beautiful scenery of the Neckar, beneath the lofty ruins of Heidelberg, or skimming the placid surface of the Rhine, while, "mellowed by distance," came the rich chorus of a student's melody, filling the air with its flood of song. How delightful, I thought, to be reading the lyrics of Uhland, or Bürger, with one so capable of appreciating them, with all the hallowed associations of the "Vaterland" about us! "Yes," said I, aloud, repeating the well-known line of a German "Lied":—

"Bekranzt mit Laub, den lieben vollen Becher."

"Upon my conscience," said Mr. Daly, who had for some time past been in silent admiration of my stage-struck appearance—"upon my conscience, Mr. Lorrequer, I had no conception you knew Irish."

The mighty talisman of the counsellor's voice brought me back in a moment to a consciousness of where I was then standing, and the still more unfortunate fact that I was only a subaltern in his Majesty's 4—th.

"Why, my dear counsellor, that was German I was quoting, not Irish."

"With all my heart," said Mr. Daly,—breaking the top off his third egg,—"with all my heart; I'd rather you'd talk it than me. Much conversation in that tongue, I'm thinking, would be mighty apt to loosen one's teeth."

"Not at all; it is the most beautiful language in Europe, and the most musical too. Why, even for your own peculiar taste in such matters, where can you find any language so rich in Bacchanalian songs as German?"

"I'd rather hear the 'Cruiskeen Lawn,' or the 'Jug of Punch,' as my old friend Pat Sampson could sing them, than a score of your high Dutch jawbreakers."

"Shame upon ye, Mr. Daly; and for pathos, for true feeling, where is there anything equal to Schiller's ballads?"

"I don't think I've ever heard any of his; but if you will talk of ballads," said the counsellor, "give me old Mosey M'Garry's: what's finer than"—(and here he began, with a most nasal twang and dolorous emphasis, to sing)—

"And I stepp'd up unto her,
An' I made a congee—
And I ax'd her her pardon
For the making so free.

"And then the next verse she says—

"Are you goin' to undo me,
In this desert alone?——

There's a shake there."

"For Heaven's sake," I cried, "stop; when I spoke of ballads, I never meant such infernal stuff as that."

"I'll not give up my knowledge of ballads to any man breathing," said Mr. Daly; "and with God's blessing, I'll sing you one this evening, after dinner, that will give you a cramp in the stomach."

An animated discussion upon lyrical poetry was here interrupted by a summons from our host to set out for the town. My party were, by the desire of the magistracy, to be in readiness near the court-house, in the event of any serious disturbance, which there existed but too much reason to apprehend from the highly excited state of feeling on the subject of the approaching trials. The soldiers were, under the guidance of Mr. Larkins, safely ensconced in a tan-yard; and I myself having consigned them for the present to a non-commissioned officer, was left at perfect liberty

to dispose of my time and person as it might please me.

While these arrangements were taking place, I had entirely lost sight of Mr. Daly, under whose guidance and protection I trusted to obtain a place within the bar to hear the trials; so that I was now perfectly alone, for my host's numerous avocations entirely precluded any thought of my putting myself under his care.

My first object was to reach the court-house, and there could be little difficulty in finding it, for the throng of persons in the street were all eagerly bending their way thither. I accordingly followed with the stream, and soon found myself among an enormous multitude of frieze-coated and red-cloaked people, of both sexes, in a large open square, which formed the market-place, one side of which was flanked by the court-house—for as such I immediately recognized a massive-looking gray stone building—in which the numerous windows, all open and filled with people, exhaled a continued steam from the crowded atmosphere within. To approach it was perfectly impossible: for the square was packed so closely, that as the people approached by the various streets, they were obliged to stand in the avenues leading to it, and regard what was going on from a distance. Of this large multitude I soon became one, hoping that at length some fortunate opportunity might enable me to obtain admission through some of my legal acquaintances.

That the fate of those who were then upon their trial for their lives absorbed the entire feelings of those without, a momentary glance at the hundreds of anxious and careworn faces in the crowd would completely satisfy. Motionless and silent they stood: they felt no fatigue—no want of food or refreshment—their interest was one and undivided—all their hopes and fears were centred in the events then passing at a short distance from them, but to which their ignorance imparted an additional and more painful excitement—the only information of how matters were going on being by an occasional word, sometimes a mere gesture, from some one stationed in the windows to a friend in the crowd.

When the contemplation of this singularly impressive scene was beginning to weary from the irksomeness of my position, I thought of retiring, but soon discovered how impossible was such a step. The crowd had blocked up so completely all the avenues of approach, that even had I succeeded in getting from the market-place, it would be only to remain firmly impacted among the mob in the street.

It now also occurred to me, that although I had been assured by Larkins no call could possibly be made upon my services or those of my party till after the trial, yet were that to conclude at any moment, I should be perfectly unable to gain the place where I had stationed them, and the most serious consequences might ensue from the absence of their officer if the men were required to act.

From the time this thought took possession of me, I became excessively uncomfortable. Every expression of the people that denoted the progress of the trial only alarmed me for the conclusion, which I supposed might not be distant, and I began, with all my ingenuity, to attempt my retreat, which, after half an hour's severe struggle, I completely abandoned, finding myself scarcely ten yards from where I started.

At length the counsel for the Crown, who had been speaking to evidence, ceased; and an indistinct murmur was heard through the court-house, which was soon repressed by the voice of the crier calling "Silence!" All now seemed still and silent as the grave—yet, on listening attentively, for some time, you could catch the low tones of a voice speaking, as it appeared, with great deliberation and slowness. This was the judge addressing the jury. In a short time this also ceased; and, for about half an hour, the silence was perfectly unbroken, and both within and without there reigned one intense and aching sense of anxiety that absorbed every feeling, and imparted to every face an expression of almost agonizing uncertainty. It was, indeed, a moment well calculated to excite such emotions. The jury had retired to deliberate upon their verdict. At length a door was heard to open, and the footsteps of the jury, as they resumed their places, sounded through the court, and were heard by those without. How heavily upon many a stout heart those footsteps fell! They had taken their seats—then came another pause—after which the monotonous tones of the clerk of the court were heard, addressing the jury for their verdict. As the foreman rises every ear is bent—every eye strained—every heartstring vibrates; his lips move, but he is not heard: he is desired by the judge to speak louder: there is another pause—he appears to labor for a few seconds with a mighty effort, and, at last, pronounces the words, "Guilty, my lord—all guilty!"

I have heard the wild war-whoop of the

Red Indian, as, in his own pine forest, he has unexpectedly come upon the track of his foe, and the almost extinguished hope of vengeance has been kindled again in his cruel heart—I have listened to the scarcely less savage hurra of a storming party, as they have surmounted the crumbling ruins of a breach, and devoted to fire and sword, with that one yell, all who await them—and once in my life it has been my fortune to have heard the last yell of defiance from a pirate crew, as they sank beneath the raking fire of a frigate, rather than surrender, and went down with a cheer of defiance that rose even above the red artillery that destroyed but could not subdue them;—but never, in any or all of these awful moments, did my heart vibrate to such sounds as rent the air when the fatal "Guilty" was heard by those within, and repeated to those without. It was not grief—it was not despair—neither was it the cry of sharp and irrepressible anguish, from a suddenly blighted hope—but it was the long pent-up and carefully-concealed burst of feeling which called aloud for vengeance—red and reeking revenge upon all who had been instrumental in the sentence then delivered. It ceased, and I looked towards the court-house, expecting that an immediate and desperate attack upon the building and those whom it contained would at once take place. But nothing of the kind ensued; the mob were already beginning to disperse, and before I recovered perfectly from the excitement of these few and terrible moments, the square was nearly empty, and I almost felt as if the wild and frantic denunciation that still rang through my ears had been conjured up by a heated and fevered imagination.

When I again met our party at the dinner table, I could not help feeling surprised on perceiving how little they sympathized in my feeling for the events of the day; which, indeed, they only alluded to in a professional point of view—criticizing the speeches of the council on both sides, and the character of the different witnesses who were examined.

"Well," said Mr. Daly, addressing our host, "you never could have had a conviction to-day if it wasn't for Mike. He's the best evidence I ever heard. I'd like to know very much how you ever got so clever a fellow completely in your clutches?"

"By a mere accident, and very simply," replied the justice. "It was upon one of our most crowded fair days—half the county was in town, when the information arrived that the Walshes were murdered the night before at the cross-roads above Telenamuck mills. The news reached me as I was signing some tithe warrants, one of which was against Mickey. I sent for him into the office; knowing that, as he was in the secret of all the evil doings, I might as well pretend to do him a service, and offer to stop the warrant out of kindness, as it were. Well, one way or another, he was kept waiting several hours while I was engaged in writing, and all the country people, as they passed the window, could look in and see Mickey Sheehan standing before me, while I was employed busily writing letters. It was just at this time that a mounted policeman rode in with the account of the murder; upon which I immediately issued a warrant to arrest the two MacNeills and Owen Shirley upon suspicion. I thought I saw Mike turn pale as I said the names over to the sergeant of police, and I at once determined to turn it to account; so I immediately began talking to Mickey about his own affairs, breaking off, every now and then, to give some directions about the men to be captured. The crowd outside was increasing every instant, and you need not have looked at their faces twice to perceive that they had regarded Mickey as an approver; and the same night that saw the MacNeills in custody, witnessed the burning of Sheehan's house and haggart, and he only escaped by a miracle over to Curryglass, where, once under my protection, with the imputation upon his character of having turned king's evidence, I had little trouble in persuading him that he might as well benefit by the report as enjoy the name without the gain. He soon complied, and the convictions of this day are partly the result."

When the applause which greeted this clever stroke of our host had subsided, I inquired what results might, in all likelihood, follow the proceedings of which I had that day been a witness.

"Nothing will be done immediately," replied the justice, "because we have a large force of police and military about us; but let either, or unhappily both, be withdrawn, and the cry you heard given in the market-place to-day will be the death-wail for more than one of those who are well and hearty at this moment."

The train of thought inevitably forced upon me by all I had been a spectator of during the day but little disposed me to be a partaker in the mirth and conviviality which, as usual, formed the staple of the assize dinners of Mr. Larkins; and I accordingly took an early opportunity to quit the company and retire for the night.

CHAPTER XXI.

A DAY IN DUBLIN.

On a third day of my residence at Curryglass, arrived my friend Mortimer to replace me, bringing my leave from the colonel, and a most handsome letter, in which he again glanced at the prospect before me in the Callonby family, and hinted at my destination, which I had not alluded to, adding, that if I made the pretence of study in Germany the reason for my application at the Horse Guards, I should be almost certain to obtain a six months' leave. With what spirits I ordered Stubbes to pack up my portmanteau, and secure our places in the Dublin mail for that night, while I myself hurried to take leave of my kind entertainer and his guests, as well as to recommend to their favor and attention my excellent friend Mortimer. He, being a jovial fellow, not at all in love, was a happy exchange for me, since, despite Daly's capital stories, I had spent the last two days in watching the high road for my successor's arrival.

Once more, then, I bade adieu to Curryglass and its hospitable owner, whose labors for "justice to Ireland" I shall long remember, and depositing myself in the bowels of his majesty's mail, gave way to the full current of my hopes and imaginings, which at last ended in a sound and refreshing sleep, from which I only awoke as we drew up at the door of the Hibernian, in Dawson Street.

Even at that early hour there was considerable bustle and activity of preparation, which I was at some loss to account for, till informed by the waiter that there were upwards of three hundred strangers in the house, it being the day of his Majesty's expected arrival on his visit to Ireland, and a very considerable section of the County of Galway being at that moment, with their wives and families, installed, for the occasion, in this, their favorite hotel.

Although I had been reading of this approaching event every day for the last three months, I could not help feeling surprised at the intense appearance of excitement it occasioned, and, in the few minutes' conversation I held with the waiter, learned the total impossibility of procuring a lodging anywhere, and that I could not have a bed, even where I to offer five guineas for it. Having, therefore, no inclination for sleep, even upon easier terms, I ordered my breakfast to be ready at ten, and set out upon a stroll through the town. I could not help, in my short ramble through the streets, perceiving how admirably adapted were the worthy Dublinites for all the honors that awaited them; garlands of flowers, transparencies, flags, and the other insignia of rejoicing, were everywhere in preparation, and, at the end of Sackville Street, a considerable erection, very much resembling an impromptu gallows, was being built for the purpose, as I afterwards learnt, of giving the worshipful the lord mayor the opportunity of opening the city gates to royality; creating the obstacle where none existed being a very ingenious conceit, and considerably Irish into the bargain. I could not help feeling some desire to witness how all should go off, to use the theatrical phrase; but, in my anxiety to get on to the Continent, I at once abandoned every thought of delay. When I returned to the coffee-room of my hotel, I found it crowded to excess; every little table, originally destined for the accommodation of one, having at least two, and sometimes three occupants. In my hurried glance round the room, to decide where I should place myself, I was considerably struck with the appearance of a stout elderly gentleman with red whiskers, and a high, bald forehead; he had, although the day was an oppressively hot one, three waistcoats on, and by the brown York tan of his long-topped boots, evinced a very considerable contempt either for weather or fashion; in the quick glance of his sharp gray eye I read that he listened half doubtingly to the narrative of his companions, whose back was turned towards me, but who appeared, from the occasional words which reached me, to be giving a rather marvellous and melodramatic version of the expected pleasures of the capital. There was something in the tone of the speaker's voice that I thought I recognized; I accordingly drew near, and what was my surprise to discover my friend Tom O'Flaherty. After our first salutation was over, Tom presented me to his friend, Mr. Burke, of somewhere, who, he continued to inform me, in a stage whisper, was a "regular quiz," and never in Dublin in his life before.

"And so, you say, sir, that His Majesty cannot enter without the permission of the lord mayor?"

"And the aldermen, too," replied Tom. "It is an old feudal ceremony; when His Majesty comes up to the gate, he demands admission, and the lord mayor refuses, because he would be thus surrendering his great prerogative of head of the city;

then the aldermen get about him, and cajole him, and by degrees he's won over by the promise of being knighted, and the king gains the day, and enters."

"Upon my conscience, a mighty ridiculous ceremony it is, after all," said Mr. Burke, "and very like a bargain for sheep in Ballinasloe fair, when the buyer and seller appear to be going to fight, till a mutual friend settles the bargain between them."

At this moment, Mr. Burke suddenly sprang from his chair, which was nearest the window, to look out; I accordingly followed his example, and beheld a rather ludicrous procession, if such it could be called, consisting of so few persons. The principal individual in the group was a florid, fat, happy-looking gentleman of about fifty, with a profusion of nearly white whiskers, which met at his chin, mounted upon a sleek charger, whose half-ambling, half-prancing pace, had evidently been acquired by long habit of going in procession; this august figure was habited in a scarlet coat and cocked-hat, having "tags," and all the other appanage of a general officer; he also wore tight buck-skin breeches, and high jack-boots, like those of the Horse Guards; as he looked from side to side, with a self-satisfied, contented air, he appeared quite insensible of the *cortége* which followed and preceded him; the latter consisting of some score of half-ragged boys, yelling and shouting with all their might, and the former being a kind of installment in hand of the Dublin Militia Band, and who, in numbers and equipment, closely resembled the "army" which accompanies the first appearance of Bombastes, the only difference, that these I speak of did not play the "Rogue's March," which might have perhaps appeared personal.

As this goodly procession advanced, Mr. Burke's eyes became riveted upon it; it was the first wonder he had yet beheld, and he devoured it.

"May I ask, sir," said he, at length, "who that is?"

"Who that is!" said Tom, surveying him leisurely as he spoke; "why surely, sir, you must be jesting, or you would not ask such a question; I trust, indeed, every one knows who he is. Eh, Harry?" said he, looking at me for a confirmation of what he said, and to which, of course, I assented by a look.

"Well, but, my dear Mr. O'Flaherty, you forget how ignorant I am of everything here——"

"Ah, true," said Tom, interrupting; "I forget you never saw him before."

"And who is he, sir?"

"Why, that's the Duke of Wellington, sir!"

"Lord have mercy upon me, is it?" said Mr. Burke, as he upset the table, and all its breakfast equipage, and rushed through the coffee-room like one possessed. Before I could half recover from the fit of laughing this event threw me into, I heard him as he ran full speed down Dawson Street, waving his hat, and shouting at the top of his lungs, "God bless your Grace! —Long life to your Grace!—Hurra for the hero of Waterloo!—the great captain of the age!" etc., etc., which I grieve to say, for the ingratitude of the individual lauded, seemed not to afford him half the pleasure, and none of the amusement, it did the mob, who re-echoed the shouts and cheering till he was hid within the precincts of the Mansion House.

"And now," said Tom, to me, "finish your breakfast as fast as possible; for, when Burke comes back, he will be boring me to dine with him, or some such thing, as a kind of acknowledgment of his gratitude for showing him the Duke. Do you know, he has seen more wonders through my poor instrumentality within the last three days in Dublin, than a six months' trip to the Continent would show most men. I have made him believe that Burke Bethel is Lord Brougham, and I am about to bring him to a *soirée* at Miladi's, whom he supposes to be the Marchioness of Conyngham. *A propos* to the dear 'Blew,' let me tell you of a 'good hit' I was witness to a few nights since. You know, perhaps, old Sir Charles Giesecke, eh?"

"I have seen him once, I think,—the professor of mineralogy."

"Well, poor old Sir Charles, one of the most modest and retiring men in existence, was standing the other night among the mob, in one of the drawing-rooms, while a waltzing-party were figuring away, at which, with that fondness for *la danse* that characterizes every German of any age, he was looking with much interest, when my lady came tripping up, and the following short dialogue ensued within my ear-shot:—

"'Ah, moncher Sir Charles, ravi de vous voir. But why are you not dancing?'

"'Ah, miladi, je ne puis pas, c'est-à-dire, ich kann es nicht; I am too old; ich bin——'

"'Oh, you horrid man! I understand you perfectly. You hate ladies, that is the real reason. You do—you know you do.'

"'Ah, miladi, gnädige Frau; glauben

sie mich; I **do loave** de ladies; I do adore de ser. Do **you know**, miladi, when I was in Greenland **I did** keep four womans.'

"'Oh, **shocking**, horrid, vile Sir Charles! how could **you tell** *me* such a story? I shall die of it!'

"'Ah, mine **Gott**, miladi, sie irren sich; vous vous **trompez**. You are quite in mistake; it was **only** to *row my boat!*'

"I leave **you** to guess how my lady's taste for the **broadside** of the story, and poor Sir Charle's vindication of himself, in regard to his estimation of *le beau sexe*, amused all who heard it: as for me, I had to leave the room, half-choked with suppressed laughter. And now, let us bolt, for I see Burke coming, and, upon my soul, I am tired of telling him lies, and must rest on my oars for a few hours at least."

"But where is the necessity for so doing?" said I; "surely, where there is so much of novelty as a large city presents to a visitor for the first time there is little occasion to draw upon imagination for your facts."

"Ah, my dear Harry, how little do you know of life! There is a kind of man whose appetite for the marvelous is such, that he must be crammed with miracles or he dies of inanition, and you might as well attempt to feed a tiger upon *pâté de foie gras*, as satisfy him by mere naked unvarnished truth. I'll just give you an easy illustration; you saw his delight this morning when the 'Duke' rode past; well, I'll tell you the converse of that proposition now. The night before last, having nothing better to do, we went to the theatre; the piece was *La Pérouse*, which they have been playing here for the last two months to crowded houses, to exhibit some North American Indians whom some theatrical speculator brought over 'special,' in all the horrors of fur, wampum, and yellow ochre. Finding the 'spectacle' rather uninteresting, I leaned back in my box, and fell into a doze. Meanwhile, my inquiring friend, Mr. Burke, who felt naturally anxious, as he always does, to get *au fond* of matters, left his place to obtain information about the piece, the audience, and, above all, the authenticity of the Indians, who certainly astonished him considerably.

"Now it so happened that about a fortnight previously some violent passion to return home to their own country had seized these interesting individuals, and they felt the most irresistible longing to abandon the savage and unnatural condiments of roast beef and Guinness's porter, and resume their ancient and more civilized habits of life. In fact, like the old African lady mentioned by the missionary at the Cape, they felt they could die happy if they 'could only once more have a roast child for supper,' and, as such luxuries are dear in this country, stay another week they would not, whatever the consequences might be; the manager reasoned, begged, implored, and threatened, by turns; all would not do, go they were determined, and all that the unfortunate proprietor could accomplish was to make a purchase of their properties in fur, belts, bows, arrows, and feathers, and get them away quietely, without the public being the wiser. The piece was too profitable a one to abandon, so he looked about anxiously, to supply the deficiency in his *corps dramatique*. For several days nothing presented itself to his thoughts, and the public were becoming more clamorous for the repetition of a drama which had greatly delighted them. What was to be done? In a mood of doubt and uncertainty, the wretched manager was taking his accustomed walk upon the lighthouse pier, while a number of unfortunate country fellows, bare-legged and lanky, with hay ropes fastening their old gray coats around them, were standing beside a packet, about to take their departure for England for the harvest. Their uncouth appearance, their wild looks, their violent gestures, and, above all, their strange and guttural language—for they were all speaking Irish—attracted the attention of the manager; the effect, to his professional eye, was good; the thought struck him at once. Here were the very fellows he wanted. It was scarcely necessary to alter anything about them, they were ready made to his hand and in many respects better savages than their prototypes. Through the mediation of some whisky, the appropriate liquor in all treaties of this nature, a bargain was readily struck, and in two hours more these 'forty thieves' were rehearsing upon the classic boards of our theatre, and once more *La Pérouse*, in all the glory of red capital letters, shone forth in the morning advertisements. The run of the piece continued unabated; the Indians were the rage; nothing else was thought or spoken of in Dublin, and already the benefit of Ashewaballagh Ho was announced, who, by the bye, was a little fellow from Martin's estate in Connemara, and one of the drollest dogs I ever heard of. Well, it so happened that it was upon one of their nights of performing that I found myself, with Mr. Burke, a spectator of their proceedings; I had

fallen into an easy slumber, when a dreadful row in the box lobby roused me from my dream, and the loud cry of 'Turn him out!' 'Pitch him over!' 'Beat his brains out!' and other humane proposals of the like nature, effectually restored me to consciousness. I rushed out of the box into the lobby, and there, to my astonishment, in the midst of a considerable crowd, beheld my friend, Mr. Burke, belaboring the box-keeper with all his might with a cotton umbrella of rather unpleasant proportions, accompanying each blow with an exclamation of 'Well, are they Connaughtmen, now, you rascal—eh?—are they all west of Athlone, tell me that, now? I wonder what's preventing me beating the soul out of ye.' After obtaining a short cessation of hostilities, and restoring poor Sharkey to his legs, much more dead than alive from pure fright, I learned, at last, the *teterrima causa belli*. Mr. Burke, it seems, had entered into conversation with Sharkey, the box-keeper, as to all the particulars of the theatre, and the present piece, but especially as to the real and authentic history of the Indians, whose language he remarked, in many respects, to resemble Irish. Poor Sharkey, whose benefit night was approaching, thought he might secure a friend for life by imparting to him an important state secret; and when, therefore, pressed rather closely as to the 'savages' whereabout,' resolved to try a bold stroke, and trust his unknown interrogator. 'And so you don't really know where they come from, nor can't guess?' 'Maybe, Peru,' said Mr. Burke, innocently. 'Try again, sir,' said Sharkey, with a knowing grin. 'Is it Behring's Straits?' said Mr. Burke. 'What do you think of Galway, sir?' said Sharkey, with a leer intended to cement a friendship for life. The words were no sooner out of his lips, than Burke, who immediately took them as a piece of direct insolence to himself and his country, felled him to the earth, and was in the act of continuing the discipline when I arrived on the field of battle."

CHAPTER XXII.

A NIGHT AT HOWTH.

"AND you must really leave us so soon," said Tom, as we issued forth into the street; "why, I was just planning a whole week's adventure for you. Town is so full of all kinds of idle people, I think I could manage to make your time pass pleasantly enough."

"Of that," I replied, "I have little doubt; but, for the reasons I have just mentioned, it is absolutely necessary that I should not lose a moment; and after arranging a few things here, I shall start tomorrow by the earliest packet, and hasten up to London at once."

"By Jupiter," said Tom, "how lucky. I just remember something which comes admirably *à propos*. You are going to Paris—is it not so?"

"Yes, direct to Paris."

"Nothing could be better. There is a particularly nice person, a great friend of mine—Mrs. Bingham—waiting for several days in hopes of a *chaperon* to take care of herself and daughter—a lovely girl, only nineteen, you wretch—to London, *en route* to the Continent; the mamma a delightful woman, and a widow, with a very satisfactory jointure—you understand; but the daughter, a regular, downright beauty, and a ward in Chancery, with how many thousand pounds I am afraid to trust myself to say. You must know, then, they are the Binghams of——, upon my soul, I forget where, but highly respectable."

"I regret I have not the pleasure of their acquaintance, and the more because I shall not be able to make it now."

"As why?" said Tom, gravely.

"Because, in the first place, I am so confoundedly pressed for time, that I could not possibly delay under any contingency that might arise; and your fair friends are, doubtless, not too eagerly determined upon traveling night and day till they reach Paris. Secondly, to speak candidly, with my present hopes and fears weighing upon my mind, I should not be the most agreeable traveling companion to two ladies with such pretensions as you speak of; and, thirdly——"

"Confound your thirdly. I suppose we shall have sixteenthly, like a Presbyterian minister's sermon, if I let you go on. Why, they'll not delay you one hour. Mrs. Bingham, man, cares as little for the road as yourself; and as for your *petits soins*, I suppose if you get the fair ladies through the Custom House, and see them safe in a London hotel, it is all that will be required at your hands."

"Notwithstanding all you say, I see the downright impossibility of my taking such a charge at this moment, when my own affairs require all the little attention I can bestow; and when, were I once involved with your fair friends, it might be completely out of my power to prosecute my own plans."

As I said this, we reached the door of a

handsome-looking house in Kildare Street, upon which Tom left my arm, and, informing me that he desired to drop a card, knocked loudly.

"Is Mrs. Bingham at home?" said he, as the servant opened the door.

"No, sir, she's out in the carriage."

"Well, you see, Harry, your ill-luck befriends you; for I was resolved on presenting you to my friends, and leaving the rest to its merits."

"I can safely assure you that I should not have gone upstairs," said I. "Little as I know of myself, there is one point of my character I have never been deceived in, the fatal facility by which every new incident or adventure can turn me from following up my best matured and longest digested plans; and as I feel this weakness and cannot correct it, the next best thing I can do is to fly the causes."

"Upon my soul," said Tom, "you have become quite a philosopher since we met. There is an old adage which says, 'No king is ever thoroughly gracious if he has not passed a year or two in dethronement:' so I believe your regular lady-killer—yourself, for instance—becomes a very quiet animal for being occasionally jilted. But now, as you have some commissions to do, pray get done with them as fast as possible, and let us meet at dinner. Where do you dine to-day?"

"Why, upon that point, I am at your service completely."

"Well, then, I have got a plan which I think will suit you. You said you wished to go by Holyhead, for fear of delay; so we'll drive down at six o'clock to Skinner's, and dine with him on board the packet at Howth. Bring your luggage with you, and it will save you a vast deal of fuss and trouble in the morning."

Nothing could be better management for me than this, so I accordingly promised acquiescence; and having appointed a rendezvous for six o'clock, bade O'Flaherty good-by, inwardly rejoicing that my plans were so far forwarded, and that I was not to be embarrassed with either Mrs. Bingham or her daughter, for whose acquaintance or society I had no peculiar ambition.

My commissions, though not very numerous, occupied the few hours which remained, and it was already a few minutes past six o'clock when I took my stand under the piazza of the Post-office to wait for O'Flaherty. I had not long to do so, for immediately after I had reached the spot, he arrived in an open barouche and four posters, with three other young men, to whom he severally introduced me, but whose names I have totally forgotten; I only remember that two of the party were military men, then quartered in town.

When I had taken my seat, I could not help whispering to Tom, that although his friend Skinner might be "*bon*" for a visitation for two at his dinner, yet as we were now so strong a party, it might be as well to dine at the hotel.

"Oh," said he, "I have arranged all that; I have sent him a special messenger two hours since, and so make your mind easy—we shall not be disappointed, nor be short-taken."

Our drive, although a long one, passed quickly over, and before we had reached our destination, I had become tolerably intimate with all the party, who were evidently picked men, selected by O'Flaherty for a pleasant evening.

We drove along the pier to the wharf, where the steamer lay, and were received at once by Tom's friend with all the warm welcome and hospitality of a sailor, united with the address and polish of a very finished gentleman. As we descended the companion-ladder to the cabin, my mind became speedily divested of any fears I might have indulged in as to the want of preparation of our entertainer. The table was covered with handsome plate and cut glass, while the side-tables glittered with a magnificent dessert, and two large wine-coolers presented an array of champagne necks shining with their leaden cravats that would have tempted an anchorite.

I remember very ltttle else of that evening than the *coup d' œil* I have mentioned; besides, were my memory more retentive, I might scruple to trespass farther on my reader's patience, by the detail of those pleasures which, like love-letters, however agreeable to the parties immediately concerned, are very unedifying to all others. I do remember, certainly, that good stories and capital songs succeeded each other with a rapidity only to be equalled by the popping of corks; and have also a very vague and indistinct recollection of a dance round the table, evidently to finish a chorus, but which, it appears, finished me too, for I saw no more that night.

How many have commemorated the waking sensations of their fellow-men, after a night's debauch! yet, at the same time, I am not aware of any one having perfectly conveyed even a passing likeness to the mingled throng of sensations which crowd one's brain on such an occasion. The doubt of what has passed, by degrees yielding to the half-consciousness of the

truth, the feeling of shame, inseparable, except to the habitually hard-goer, from the events thus dimly pictured, the racking headache and intense thirst, with the horror of the potation recently indulged in; the recurring sense of the fun or drollery of a story or an incident which provokes us again to laugh despite the jarring of our brain from the shaking,—all this, and more, most men have felt, and happy are they when their waking thoughts are limited to such, at times like these. The matter becomes considerably worse, when the following morning calls for some considerable exertion, for which, even in your best and calmest moments, you barely find yourself equal.

It is truly unpleasant, on rubbing your eyes and opening your ears, to discover that the great bell is ringing the half-hour before your quarterly examination at college, while Locke, Lloyd, and Lucian are dancing a reel through your brain, little short of madness; scarcely less agreeable is it to learn that your friend Captain Wildfire is at the door in his cab, to accompany you to the Phœnix, to stand within twelve paces of a cool gentleman who has been sitting with his arm in cold water for the last half-hour, that he may pick you out "artist-like." There are, besides these, innumerable situations in which our preparations of the night would appear as none of the wisest; but I prefer going at once to my own, which, although considerably inferior in difficulty, was not without its own *désagrémens*.

When I awoke, therefore, on board the *Firefly*, the morning after our dinner-party, I was perfectly unable, by any mental process within my reach, to discover where I was. On ship-board I felt I must be—the narrow berth, the gilded and panelled cabin which met my eye through my half-open curtains, and that peculiar swelling motion inseparable from a vessel in the water, all satisfied me of this fact. I looked about me, but could see no one to give me the least idea of my position. Could it be that we were on our way out to Corfu, and that I had been ill for some time past?

But this cabin had little resemblance to a transport; perhaps it might be a frigate, I knew not. Then again, were we sailing, or at anchor? for the ship was nearly motionless; at this instant a tremendous noise like thunder crashed through my head, and for a moment I expected we had exploded, and would be all blown up; but an instant after I discovered it must be the escape of steam, and that I was on board a packet-ship. Here, then, was some clue to my situation, and one which would probably have elicited all in due season; but just at this moment a voice on deck saved me from any further calculations. Two persons were conversing whose voices were not altogether unknown to me, but why I knew not.

"Then, captain, I suppose you consider this as an excellent passage?"

"Yes, of course I do," replied the captain, "it's only five hours since we left Howth, and now, you see, we are nearly in; if we have this run of the tide we shall reach the Head before twelve o'clock."

"Ha, ha!" said I to myself, "now I begin to learn something. So we have crossed the channel while I was sleeping, not the least agreeable thing for a man to hear who suffers martyrdom from sea-sickness. But let me listen again."

"And that large mountain there, is that Snowdon?"

"No; you cannot see Snowdon; there is too much mist about it; that mountain is Capel Carrig! and there that bold bluff to the eastward, that is Penmen Mawr."

"Come, there is no time to be lost," thought I; so springing out of my berth, accoutred as I was, in merely trousers and slippers, with a red handkerchief, fastened nightcap fashion round my head, I took my way through the cabin.

My first thought on getting upon my legs was, how tremendously the vessel pitched, which I had not remarked while in my berth, but now I could scarce keep myself from falling at every step. I was just about to call the steward, when I again heard the voices on deck.

"You have but few passengers this trip."

"I think only yourself and a Captain Lorrequer," replied the captain, "who, by the bye, is losing all this fine coast, which is certainly a great pity."

"He shall not do so much longer," thought I; "for as I find that there are no other passengers, I'll make my toilet on deck, and enjoy the view besides." With this determination I ascended slowly and cautiously the companion-ladder, and stepped out upon the deck; but scarcely had I done so, when a roar of the loudest laughter made me turn my head towards the poop, and there, to my horror of horrors, I beheld Tom O'Flaherty seated between two ladies, whose most vociferous mirth I soon perceived was elicited at my expense.

All the party of the preceding night were also there, and as I turned from their

grinning faces to the land, I saw, to my shame and confusion, that we were still lying beside the pier at Howth; while the bandboxes, trunks, and imperials of new arrivals were incessantly pouring in, as traveling carriages kept driving up to the place of embarkation. I stood perfectly astounded and bewildered—shame for my ridiculous costume would have made me fly at any other time—but there I remained to be laughed at, patiently, while that villain O'Flaherty, leading me passively forward, introduced me to his friends—"Mrs. Bingham, Mr. Lorrequer; Mr. Lorrequer, Miss Bingham. Don't be prepossessed against him, ladies, for when not in love, and properly dressed, he is a marvelously well-looking young gentleman; and as——"

What the remainder of the sentence might be, I knew not, for I rushed down into the cabin, and locking the door, never opened it till I could perceive from the stern windows that we were really off on our way to England, and recognized once more the laughing face of O'Flaherty, who, as he waved his hat to his friends from the pier, reminded them that "they were under the care and protection of his friend Lorrequer, who, he trusted, would condescend to increase his wearing apparel under the circumstances."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE JOURNEY.

When I did at last venture upon deck, it was with a costume studiously accurate, and as much of manner as I could possibly muster, to endeavor at once to erase the unfortunate impression of my first appearance; this, however, was not destined to be a perfectly successful maneuver, and I was obliged, after a few minutes, to join the laugh, which I found could not be repressed, at my expense. One good result certainly followed from all this. I became almost immediately on intimate terms with Mrs. Bingham and her daughter, and much of the awkwardness in my position as their chaperon, which, *bon gré, mal gré*, I was destined to be, was at once got over. Mrs. Bingham herself was of that style of widow which comes under the "fat, fair, and forty" category, with a never-ceasing flow of high, almost boisterous spirits—an excellent temper, good health—and a well-stocked purse. Life to her was like a game of her favorite "speculation." When she *believed* the "company honest," and *knew* her cards trumps, she was tolerably easy for the result. She liked Kingstown—she liked whist—she liked the military—she liked "the junior bar," of which she knew a good number—she had a well-furnished house in Kildare Street—and a well-cushioned pew in St. Anne's—she was a favorite at the Castle—and Dr. Labatt "knew her constitution." Why, with all these advantages, she should ever have thought of leaving the "happy valley" of her native city, it was somewhat hard to guess. Was it that thoughts of matrimony, which the Continent held out more prospect for, had invaded the fair widow's heart? was it that the altered condition to which politics had greatly reduced Dublin had effected this change of opinion? or was it like that indescribable longing for the unknown something, which we read of in the pathetic history of the fair lady celebrated, I believe, by Petrarch? But I quote from memory:—

> "Mrs. Gill is very ill,
> Nothing can improve her,
> But to see the Tuileries,
> And waddle through the Louvre."

None of these, I believe, however good and valid reasons in themselves, were the moving powers upon the present occasion; the all-sufficient one being that Mrs. Bingham had a daughter. Now Miss Bingham was Dublin too—but Dublin of a later edition—and a finer, more hot-pressed copy than her mamma. She had been educated at Mrs. Somebody's seminary in Mountjoy Square—had been taught to dance by Montague—and had learned French from a Swiss governess—with a number of similar advantages—a very pretty figure—dark eyes—long eyelashes and a dimple—and last, but of course least, the deserved reputation of a large fortune. She had made a most successful *début* in the Dublin world, where she was much admired and flattered, and which soon suggested to her quick mind, as it has often done in similar cases to a young provincial *débutante*, not to waste her attractions upon the minor theatres, but at once to appear upon the "great boards;" so far evidencing a higher flight of imagination and enterprise than is usually found among the class of her early associates, who may be characterized as that school of young ladies, who admire "The Corsair" and Kingstown, and say, "Ah, don't!"

She possessed much more common sense than her mamma, and promised, under proper advantages, to become speedily quite

sufficiently acquainted with the world and its habitudes. In the meanwhile, I perceived that she ran a very considerable risk of being carried off by some mustachioed Pole, with a name like a sneeze, who might pretend to enjoy access to the fashionable circles of the Continent.

Very little study of my two friends enabled me to see thus much; and very little "usage" sufficed to render me speedily intimate with both; the easy good-nature of the mamma, who had a very methodistical appreciation of what the "connection" call "creature comforts," amused me much, and opened one ready path to her good graces by the opportunity afforded of getting up a luncheon of veal cutlets and London porter, of which I partook, not a little to the evident loss of the fair daughter's esteem.

While, therefore, I made the tour of the steward's cell in search of Harvey's sauce, I brushed up my memory of "The Corsair" and "Childe Harold," and alternately discussed Stilton and Southey, Shelley and lobsters, Haynes Bayley and ham.

The day happened to be particularly calm and delightful, so that we never left the deck; and the six hours which brought us from land to land quickly passed over in this manner; and ere we reached "The Head," I had become the warm friend and legal adviser of the mother; and with the daughter I was installed as chief confidant of all her griefs and sorrows, both of which appointments cost me a solemn promise to take care of them till their arrival in Paris, where they had many friends and acquaintances awaiting them. Here, then, as usual, was the fatal facility with which I gave myself up to any one who took the trouble to influence me! One thing, nevertheless, I was determined on, to let no circumstance defer my arrival at Paris a day later than was possible; therefore, though my office as chaperon might engage me on the road, it should not interfere with the object before me. Had my mind not been so completely engaged with my own immediate prospects, when hope, suddenly and unexpectedly revived, had become so tinged with fears and doubts as to be almost torture, I must have been much amused with my present position, as I found myself seated with my two fair friends, rolling along through Wales in their comfortable traveling carriage—giving all the orders at the different hotels—seeing after the luggage—and acting *en maître* in every respect.

The good widow enjoyed particularly the difficulty which my precise position with regard to her and her daughter threw the different innkeepers on the road into, sometimes supposing me to be her husband, sometimes her son, and once her son-in-law; which very alarming conjecture brought a crimson tinge to the fair daughter's cheek, an expression which, in my ignorance, I thought looked very like an inclination to faint in my arms.

At length we reached London, and having been there safely installed at Mivart's, I sallied forth to present my letter to the Horse Guards, and obtain our passport for the Continent.

"Number nine, Poland Street, sir," said the waiter, as I inquired the address of the French Consul. Having discovered that my interview with the commander-in-chief was appointed for four o'clock, I determined to lose no time, but make every possible arrangement for leaving London in the morning.

A cab quietly conveyed me to the door of the Consul, around which stood several other vehicles of every shape and fashion, while in the doorway were to be seen numbers of people, thronging and pressing, like the Opera pit on a full night. Into the midst of this assemblage I soon thrust myself, and, borne upon the current, at length reached a small back parlor, filled also with people; a door opening into another small room in the front showed a similar mob there, with the addition of a small elderly man, in a bag-wig and spectacles, very much begrimed with snuff, and speaking in a very choleric tone to the various applicants for passports, who, totally ignorant of French, insisted upon interlarding their demands with an occasional stray phrase, making a kind of tesselated pavement of tongues, which would have shamed Babel. Nearest to the table at which the functionary sat stood a mustachioed gentleman, in a blue frock and white trousers, a white hat jauntily set upon one side of his head, and primrose gloves. He cast a momentary glance of a very undervaluing import upon the crowd around him, and then, turning to the Consul, said in a very soprano tone:—

"Passport, monsieur!"

"Que voulez-vous que je fasse," replied the old Frenchman, gruffly.

"Je suis — j'ai — that is, donnez-moi passport."

"Where do you go?" replied the Consul.

"Calai."

"Comment, diable, speak Inglis, an I understan you as besser. Your name?"

"Lorraine Snaggs, gentilhomme."

"What age have you?—how old?"

"Twenty-two."

"C'est ça," said the old Consul, flinging the passport across the table with the air of a man who thoroughly comprehended the applicant's pretension to the designation of gentilhomme Anglais.

As I followed the worthy representative of Seven Dials with my eye, another person had neared the table. She was a rather pretty young woman, with blue eyes, and brown hair braided quietly on her forehead, and wearing a plain close bonnet of a very coquettish appearance.

"Will you be seated, mam'selle?" said the polite old Frenchman, who had hitherto been more like a bear than a human being. "Où allez-vous donc? where to, ma chère?"

"To Paris, sir."

"By Calais?"

"No, sir; by Boulogne."

"C'est bon; quel âge avez-vous. What old, ma belle?"

"Nineteen, sir, in June."

"And are you alone, quite, eh?"

"No, sir, my little girl."

"Ah! your leetel girl—c'est fort bien—je m'aperçois; and your name?"

"Fanny Linwood, sir."

"C'est fini, ma chère,—Mademoiselle Fanny Linwood," said the old man, as he wrote down the name."

"Oh, sir, I beg your pardon, but you have put me down Mademoiselle, and—and—you see, sir, I have my little girl."

"Ah! c'est égal, mam'selle, they don't mind these things in France. Au plaisir de vous voir—adieu."

"They don't mind these things in France," said I to myself, repeating the old Consul's phrase, which I could not help feeling as a whole chapter on his nation.

My business was soon settled, for I spoke nothing but English—very little knowledge of the world teaching me that when we have any favor, however slight, to ask, it is always good policy to make the demand by propitiating the self-esteem of the granter—if, happily, there be an opportunity for so doing.

When I returned to Mivart's, I found a written answer to my letter of the morning, stating that his lordship of the Horse Guards was leaving town that afternoon, but would not delay my departure for the Continent, to visit which a four months' leave was granted me, with a recommendation to study at Weimar.

The next day brought us to Dover, in time to stroll about the cliffs during the evening, when I again talked sentiment with the daughter till very late. The mamma herself was too tired to come out, so that we had our walk quite alone. It is strange enough how quickly this traveling together has shaken us into intimacy. Isabella says she feels as if I were her brother; and I began to think myself she is *not* exactly like a sister. She has a marvelously pretty foot and ankle.

The climbing of cliffs is a very dangerous pastime. How true the French adage—"C'est plus facile de glisser sur le gazon que sur la glace." But still nothing can come of it; for if Lady Jane be not false, I must consider myself an engaged man.

"Well, but I hope," said I, rousing myself from a reverie of some minutes, and inadvertently pressing the arm which leaned upon me, "your mamma will not be alarmed at your long absence?"

"Oh! not in the least; for she knows I'm with *you*."

And here I felt a return of the pressure—perhaps also inadvertently given, but which, whether or not, effectually set all my reasonings and calculations astray; and we returned to the hotel, silent on both sides.

The appearance of "mamma" beside the hissing tea-urn brought us both back to ourselves; and, after an hour's chatting, we said "Good night," to start on the morrow for the Continent.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CALAIS.

It was upon a lovely evening in autumn, as the Dover steamboat rounded the wooden pier at Calais, amid a fleet of small boats filled with eager and anxious faces, soliciting, in every species of bad English and *patois* French, the attention and patronage of the passengers.

"Hôtel des Bains, milor."

"Hôtel d'Angleterre," said another, in a voice of the most imposing superiority. "C'est superbe—pretty well."

"Hôtel du Nord, votre Excellence—remise de poste and 'delays' (query, relays) at all hours."

"Commissionnaire, miladi," sang out a small shrill treble from the midst of a crowded cock-boat, nearly swamped beneath our paddle-wheel.

What a scene of bustle, confusion, and excitement does the deck of a steamer

present upon such an occasion. Every one is running hither or thither. *Sauve que peut* is now the watchword; and friendships that promised a lifelong endurance only half an hour ago, find here a speedy dissolution. The lady who slept all night upon deck, enveloped in the folds of your Astrakhan cloak, scarcely deigns an acknowledgment of you, as she adjusts her ringlets before the looking-glass over the stove in the cabin. The polite gentleman, that would have flown for a reticule or a smelling-bottle upon the high seas, won't leave his luggage in the harbor; and the gallantry and devotion that stood the test of half a gale of wind and a wet jacket is not proof when the safety of a carpet-bag or the security of a "Mackintosh" is concerned.

And thus, here, as elsewhere, is prosperity the touchstone of good feeling. All the various disguises which have been assumed, *per viaggio*, are here immediately abandoned, and, stripped of the traveling costume of urbanity and courtesy, which they put on for the voyage, they stand forth in all the unblushing front of selfishness and self-interest.

Some tender scenes yet find their place amid the ruins of this chaotic state. Here may be seen a careful mother adjusting innumerable shawls and handkerchiefs round the throat of a sea-green young lady with a cough; her maid, at the same instant, taking a tender farewell of the steward in the after-cabin.

Here, is a very red-faced and hot individual, with punch-colored breeches and gaiters, disputing "one brandy too much" in his bill, and vowing that the company shall hear of it when he returns to England. There, a tall, elderly woman, with a Scotch-grey eye, and a sharp cheek-bone, is depositing within her muff various seizable articles, that, until now, had been lying quietly in her trunk. Yonder, that raw-looking young gentleman, with the crumpled frock-coat, and loose cravat, and sea-sick visage, is asking every one "if they think he may land without a passport." You scarcely recognize him for the cigar-smoking dandy of yesterday, that talked as if he had lived half his life on the Continent. While there, a rather pretty girl is looking intently at some object in the blue water, beside the rudder post. You are surprised you cannot make it out; but then, she has the advantage of you, for the tall, well-looking man, with the knowing whiskers, is evidently whispering something in her ear.

"Steward, this is not my trunk; mine was a leather——"

"All the 'leathers' are gone in the first boat, sir."

"Most scandalous way of doing business."

"Trouble you for two-and-sixpence sir."

"There's Matilda coughing again," says a thin, shrewish woman, with a kind of triumphant scowl at her better half; "but you *would* have her wear that thin shawl!"

"Whatever may be the fault of the shawl, I fancy no one will reproach her ankles for thinness," murmurs a young Guardsman, as he peeps up the companion-ladder.

Amid all the Babel of tongues and uproar of voices, the thorough bass of the escape steam keeps up its infernal thunders, till the very brain reels, and, sick as you have been of the voyage, you half wish yourself once more at sea, if only to have a moment of peace and tranquillity.

Numbers now throng the deck who have never made their appearance before. Pale, jaundiced, and crumpled, they have all the sea-sick look and haggard cheek of the real martyr—all except one, a stout, swarthy, brown-visaged man, of about forty, with a frame of iron, and a voice like the fourth string of a violoncello. You wonder why he should have taken to his bed: learn, then, that he is his Majesty's courier from the Foreign Office, with despatches to Constantinople, and that, as he is not destined to lie down in a bed for the next fourteen days, he is glad even of the narrow resemblance to one he finds in the berth of a steamboat. At length you are on shore, and marched off in a long string, like a gang of convicts, to the Bureau de l'Octroi; and here is begun an examination of the luggage, which promises, from its minuteness, to last for the three months you destined to spend in Switzerland. At the end of an hour you discover that the *soi-disant* commissionaire will transact all this affair for a few francs; and, after a tiresome wait in a filty room, jostled, elbowed, and trampled upon by boors with sabots, you adjourn to your inn, and begin to feel that you are not in England.

Our little party had but few of the miseries here recounted to contend with. My *savoir faire*, with all modesty be it spoken, had been long schooled in the art and practice of traveling; and while our less experienced fellow-travelers were deep in the novel mysteries of cotton stockings and petticoats, most ostentatiously displayed upon every table of the Bureau, we were comfortably seated in the handsome saloon of the Hôtel du Nord, looking out upon a pretty grass-plot, surrounded with

orange-trees, and displaying in the middle a fountain about the size of a walking-stick.

"Now, Mr. Lorrequer," said Mrs. Bingham, as she seated herself by the open window, "never forget how totally dependent we are upon your kind offices. Isabella has discovered already that the French of Mountjoy Square, however intelligible in that neighborhood, and even as far as Mount Street, is Coptic and Sanscrit here; and, as for myself, I intend to affect a deaf and dumbness till I reach Paris, where I hear every one can speak English a little."

"Now, then, to begin my functions," said I, as I rang for the waiter, and ran over in my mind rapidly how many invaluable hints for my new position my present trip might afford me, "always provided" (as the lawyers say), that Lady Jane Callonby might feel herself tempted to become my traveling companion, in which case —But, confound it, how I am castle-building again! Meanwhile, Mrs. Bingham is looking as hungry and famished as though she would eat the waiter. "Ha! this is the *carte*."

"Now, then, to order supper."

"Cotelettes d'agneau."

"Mayonnaise de homard."

"Perdreaux rouges aux truffes—mark that, aux truffes."

"Gelée au maraschino."

"And the wine, sir," said the waiter, with a look of approval at my selection. "Champagne—no other wine, sir?"

"No," said I, "champagne only. Frappé, of course," I added. And the waiter departed with a bow that would have graced St. James's.

As long as our immaterial and better part shall be doomed to keep company with its fleshy tabernacle, with all its attendant miseries of gout and indigestion, how much of our enjoyment in this world is dependent upon the mere accessory circumstances by which the business of life is carried on and maintained, and to despise which is neither good policy nor sound philosophy. In this conclusion, a somewhat long experience of the life of a traveler has fully established me. And nowhere does it press more forcibly upon the mind than when first arrived in a continental inn, after leaving the best hotels of England still fresh in your memory. I do not for a moment dispute the very great superiority in comfort of the latter, by which I would be understood to mean all those resemblances to one's own home which an English hotel so eminently possesses, and every other one so markedly wants; but I mean that in contrivances to elevate the spirit, cheer the jaded and tired wayfarer by objects which, however they may appeal to the mere senses, seem, at least, but little sensual, give me a foreign inn; let me have a large, spacious saloon, with its lofty walls, and its airy, large-paned windows (I shall not object if the cornices and mouldings be guilded, because such is usually the case)—let the sun and heat of a summer's day come tempered through the deep lattices of a well-fitting "jalousie," bearing upon them the rich incense of a fragrant orange-tree in blossom—and the sparkling drops of a neighboring fountain, the gentle plash of which is faintly audible amid the hum of the drone-bee—let such be the *agrémens* without—while within, let the more substantial joys of the table await, in such guise as only a French *cuisine* can present them—give me these, I say, and I shall never sigh for the far-famed and long-deplored comforts of a box in a coffee-room, like a pew in a parish church, though certainly not so well cushioned, and fully as dull, with a hot waiter and a cold beefsteak —the only thing higher than your game being your bill, and the only thing less drinkable than your port being the porter.

With such exotic notions, imagine, my dear reader, whether or not I felt happy as I found myself seated between my two fair friends doing the honors of a little supper, and assisting the exhilaration of our champagne by such efforts of wit as, under favorable circumstances like these, are ever successful—and which, being like the foaming liquid which washes them down, to be swallowed without waiting, are ever esteemed good, from the excitement that results, and never seriously canvassed for any more sterling merit. Nothing ever makes a man so agreeable as the belief that he is so; and certainly my fair companions appeared to have the most excellent idea of my powers in that respect; and I fancy that I made more *bons mots*, hit off more epigrams, and invented more choice incidents on that happy evening, than, if now remembered would suffice to pay my tailor's bill, when collated for *Bentley's Miscellany*, and illustrated by Cruikshank. Alas! that, like the good liquor that seasoned them, both are gone by, and I am left but to chronicle the memory of the fun in dulness, and counterfeit the effervescence of the grape-juice by soda-water. One thing, however is certain—we formed a most agreeable party; and if a feeling of gloom ever momant-

arily shot through my mind, it was, that evenings like these came so rarely in this work-a-day world, that each such should be looked on as our last.

If I had not already shown myself up to my readers as a weathercock of the first water, perhaps I should now hesitate about confessing that I half regretted the short space during which it should be my privilege to act as the guide and mentor of my two friends. The impetuous haste which I before felt necessary to exercise in reaching Paris immediately was now tempered by prudent thoughts about traveling at night, and reflections about sun-stroke by day; and even moments most devoted to the object of my heart's aspirations were fettered by the very philosophic idea that it could never detract from the pleasure of the happiness that awaited me, if I traveled on the primrose path to its attainment. I argued thus: if Lady Jane be true—if—if, in a word, I am destined to have any success in the Callonby family, then will a day or two more not risk it. My present friends I shall, of course, take leave of at Paris, where their own acquaintances await them; and, on the other hand, should I be doomed once more to disappointment, I am equally certain I should feel no disposition to form a new attachment. Thus did I reason, and thus I believed; and though I was a kind of "consultation opinion" among my friends in "suits of love," I was really then unaware that at no time is a man so prone to fall in love as immediately after his being jilted. If common sense will teach us not to dance a bolero upon a sprained ankle, so might it also convey the equally important lesson, not to expose our more vital and inflammatory organ to the fire the day after its being singed.

Reflections like these did not occur to me at this moment; besides that I was "going the pace" with a forty-horse power of agreeability that left me little time for thought — least of all, of serious thought. So stood matters. I had just filled our tall, slender glasses with the creaming and "sparkling" source of wit and inspiration, when the loud crack, crack, crack of a postilion's whip, accompanied by the shaking trot of a heavy team, and the roll of wheels, announced a new arrival.

"Here they come," said I; "only look at them—four horses and one postilion, all apparently straggling and straying after their own fancy, but yet going surprisingly straight, notwithstanding. See how they come through that narrow archway—it might puzzle the best four-in-hand in England to do it better."

"What a handsome young man, if he had not those odious mustachios. Why, Mr. Lorrequer, he knows *you*: see, he is bowing to you."

"*Me!* Oh! no. Why, surely, it must be—the devil—it is Kilkee, Lady Jane's brother! I know his temper well. One five minutes' observation of my present intimacy with my fair friends, and adieu to all hopes for me of calling Lord Callon-my father-in-law. There is not, therefore, a moment to lose."

As these thoughts revolved through my mind, the confusion I felt had covered my face with scarlet, and, with a species of blundering apology for abruptly leaving them for a moment, I ran downstairs only in time sufficient to anticipate Kilkee's questions as to the number of my apartment, to which he was desirous of proceeding at once. Our first greetings over, Kilkee questioned me as to my route, adding, that his now was necessarily an undecided one, for, if his family happened not to be at Paris, he should be obliged to seek after them among the German watering-places. "In any case, Lorrequer," said he, "we shall hunt them in couples. I must insist upon your coming along with me."

"Oh! that," said I, "you must not think of. Your carriage is a *coupé*, and I cannot think of crowding you."

"Why, you don't seriously wish to affront me, I hope; for I flatter myself that a more perfect carriage for two people cannot be built. Hobson made it on a plan of my own, and I am excessively proud of it, I assure you. Come, that matter is decided—now for supper. Are there many English here just now? By-the-by, the ladies I think I saw you standing with on the balcony—who are they?"

"Oh! the ladies—oh! yes, people I came over with——"

"One was pretty, I fancied. Have you supped? Just order something, will you; meanwhile, I shall write a few lines before the post leaves." Saying which, he dashed upstairs after the waiter, and left me to my meditations.

"This begins to be pleasant," thought I, as the door closed, leaving me alone in the *salon*. In circumstances of such moment I had never felt so nonplussed as now, how to decline Kilkee's invitation, without discovering my intimacy with the Binghams—and yet I could not, by any possibility, desert them thus abruptly. Such was the dilemma. "I see but one thing for it," said I, gloomily, as I strode

through the coffee-room, with my head sunk, and my hands behind my back—"I see but one thing left—I must be taken ill to-night, and not be able to leave my bed in the morning—a fever—a contagious fever—blue and red spots all over me—and be raving wildly before breakfast-time: and if ever any discovery takes place of my intimacy above stairs, I must only establish it as a premonitory symptom of insanity, which seized me in the packet. And now for a doctor that will understand my case, and listen to reason, as they would call it in Ireland." With this idea uppermost, I walked out into the court-yard to look for a commissionnaire to guide me in my search. Around on every side of me stood the various carriages and vehicles of the hotel and its inmates, to the full as distinctive and peculiar in character as their owners. "Ah! there is Kilkee's," said I, as my eye lighted upon the well-balanced and elegant little carriage which he had been only with justice encomimizing. "It is certainly perfect, and yet I'd give a handful of louis d'or if it was like that venerable cabriolet yonder, with the one wheel and no shafts. But, alas! those springs give little hope of a break-down, and that confounded axle will outlive the patentee. But still, can nothing be done—eh? Come, the thought is a good one. I say, *garçon*, who greases the wheels of the carriages here?"

"*C'est moi, monsieur,*" said a great oaf, in wooden shoes and a blouse.

"Well, then, do you understand these?" said I, touching the patent axle-boxes with my cane.

He shook his head.

"Then who does here?"

"Ah! Michel understands them perfectly."

"Then bring him here," said I.

In a few minutes a little, shrewd old fellow, with a smith's apron, made his appearance, and introduced himself as M. Michel. I had not much difficulty in making him master of my plan, which was, to detach one of the wheels, as if for the purpose of oiling the axle, and afterwards render it incapable of being replaced—at least for twenty-four hours.

"This is my idea," said I; "nevertheless, do not be influenced by me. All I ask is, disable the carriage from proceeding to-morrow, and here are three louis d'or at your service."

"*Soyez bien tranquille, monsieur;* milor shall spend to-morrow in Calais if I know anything of my art." Saying which, he set out in search of his tools, while I returned to the *salon* with my mind relieved, and fully prepared to press the urgency of my reaching Paris without any delay.

"Well, Lorrequer," said Kilkee, as I entered, "here is supper waiting, and I am as hungry as a wolf."

"Oh! I beg pardon—I've been getting everything in readiness for our start to-morrow morning, for I have not told you how anxious I am to get to Paris before the 8th—some family business, which requires my looking after, compelling me to do so."

"As to that, let your mind be at rest, for I shall travel to-morrow night if you prefer it. Now for the *Volnay*. Why, you are not drinking your wine. What do you say to our paying our respects to the fair ladies above stairs? I am sure the attentions you have practised coming over would permit the liberty."

"Oh, hang it, no! There's neither of them pretty, and I should rather avoid the risk of making a regular acquaintance with them," said I.

"As you like, then—only, as you'll not take any wine, let us have a stroll through the town."

After a short ramble through the town, in which Kilkee talked the entire time, but of what I know not, my thoughts being upon my own immediate concerns, we returned to the hotel. As we entered the *porte-cochère*, my friend Michel passed me, and as he took off his hat in salutation, gave me one rapid glance of his knowing eye, that completely satisfied me that Hobson's pride in my friend's carriage had by that time received quite sufficient provocation to throw him into an apoplexy.

"By the bye," said I, "let us see your carriage. I am curious to look at it,"—(and so I was).

"Well, then, come along this way; they have placed it under some of these sheds, which they think coach-houses."

I followed my friend through the court till we arrived near the fatal spot; but before reaching he had caught a glimpse of the mischief, and shouted out a most awful imprecation upon the author of the deed which met his eye. The forewheel of the *coupé* had been taken from the axle, and in the difficulty of so doing, from the excellence of the wormanship, two of the spokes were broken, the patent box was a mass of rent metal, and the end of the axle turned downwards like a hoe.

I cannot convey any idea of poor Kilkee's distraction; and, in reality, my o

was little short of it; for the wretch had so far outstripped my orders that I became horrified at the cruel destruction before me. We both, therefore, stormed in the most imposing English and French, first separately and then together. We offered a reward for the apprehension of the culprit, whom no one appeared to know, although, as it happened, every one in a large household was aware of the transaction but the proprietor himself. We abused all—innkeeper, waiters, ostlers, and chambermaids, collectively and individually; condemned Calais as a den of iniquity, and branded all Frenchmen as rogues and vagabonds. This seemed to alleviate considerably my friend's grief, and excite my thirst—fortunately, perhaps, for us, for if our eloquence had held out much longer I am afraid our auditory might have lost their patience; and, indeed, I am quite certain, if our French had not been in nearly as disjointed a condition as the spokes of the *calèche*, such must have been the case.

"Well, Lorrequer, I suppose, then, we are not destined to be fellow-travelers—for if you must go to-morrow——"

"Alas! it is imperative," said I.

"Then, in any case, let us arrange where we shall meet, for I hope to be in Paris the day after you."

"I'll stop at Meurice's."

"Meurice's be it," said he; "so now good night, till we meet in Paris."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE GENDARME.

I HAD fortunately sufficient influence upon my fair friends to persuade them to leave Calais early on the morning following; and two hours before Kilkee had opened his eyes upon this mortal life we were far upon the road to Paris.

Having thus far perfectly succeeded in my plot, my spirit rose rapidly, and I made every exertion to make the road appear short to my fellow-travelers. This part of France is unfortunately deficient in any interest from scenery; large undivided tracts of waving corn-fields, with a background of apparently interminable forests, and occasionally, but rarely, the glimpse of some old time-worn château, with its pointed gable and terraced walk, are nearly all that the eye can detect in the intervals between the small towns and villages. Nothing, however, is "flat or unprofitable" to those who desire to make it otherwise; good health, good spirits, and fine weather are wonderful traveling companions, and render one tolerably independent of the charms of scenery. Every mile that separated me from Calais, and took away the chance of being overtaken, added to my gaiety, and I flatter myself that a happier party have rarely traveled that well-frequented road.

We reached Abbeville to dinner, and adjourned to the beautiful little garden of the inn for our coffee; the evening was so delightful that I proposed to walk on the Paris road, until the coming up of the carriage, which required a screw, or a washer, or some such trifle as always occurs in French posting. To this "mamma" objected, she being tired, but added, that Isabella and I might go on, and that she would take us up in half an hour. This was an arrangement so very agreeable and unlooked for by me, that I pressed Miss Bingham as far as I well could, and at last succeeded in overcoming her scruples, and permitting me to shawl her. One has always a tremendous power of persuasion with the uninitiated abroad, by a reference to a standard of manners and habits totally different from our own. Thus the talismanic words: "Oh, don't be shocked; remember you are in France," did more to satisfy my young friend's mind than all I could have said for an hour. Little did she know that in England only has an unmarried young lady any liberty, and that the standard of foreign propriety on this head is far, very far, more rigid than our own.

"*La première rue à gauche*," said an old man of whom I inquired the road. "*Et puis*," added I.

"And then quite straight; it is a *chaussée* all the way, and you can not mistake it."

"Now for it, mademoiselle," said I. "Let us try if we cannot see a good deal of the country before the carriage comes up."

We had soon left the town behind, and reached a beautifully shaded high road, with blossoming fruit-trees, and honeysuckle-covered cottages; there had been several light showers during the day, and the air had all the fresh, fragrant feeling of an autumn evening, so tranquilizing and calming that few there are who have not felt, at some time or other of their lives, its influence upon their minds. I fancied my fair companion did so, for, as she walked beside me, her silence, and the gentle pressure of her arm, were far more eloquent than words.

If that extraordinary flutter and flurry of sensations which will now and then seize you, when walking upon a lonely country road with a pretty girl for your companion, whose arm is linked in yours, and whose thoughts, as far as you can guess, at least, are traveling the same path with your own—if this be animal magnetism, or one of its phenomena, then do I swear by Mesmer! whatever it be, delusion or otherwise, it has given me the brightest moments of my life—these are the real "winged dreams" of pleasures which outlive others of more absorbing and actual interest at the time. After all, for how many of our happiest feelings are we indebted to the weakness of our nature. The man that is wise at nineteen, *je lui en fais mon compliment*, but I assuredly do not envy him; and now, even now, when I number more years than I should like to "confess," rather than suffer the suspicious watchfulness of age to creep on me, I prefer to "go on believing;" even though every hour of the day should show me duped and deceived. While I plead guilty to this impeachment, let me show, in mitigation, that it has its enjoyments—first, although I am the most constant and devoted man breathing, as a very cursory glance at these "Confessions" may prove, yet I have never been able to restrain myself from a propensity to make love merely as a pastime. The gambler that sits down to play cards, or dice, against himself, may perhaps be the only person that can comprehend this tendency of mine. We both of us are playing for nothing (or love, which I suppose is synonymous); we neither of us put forth our strength; for that very reason—and in fact, like the waiter at Vauxhall, who was complimented upon the dexterity with which he poured out the lemonade, and confessed that he spent his mornings "practysing with vater,"—we pass a considerable portion of our lives in a mimic warfare, which, if it seem unprofitable, is, nevertheless, pleasant.

After all this long tirade, need I say how our walk proceeded? We had fallen into a kind of discussion upon the singular intimacy which had so rapidly grown up between us, and which years long might have failed to engender. We attempted also to analyze the reasons for, and the nature of, the friendship thus so suddenly established—a rather dangerous and difficult topic, when the parties were both young—one eminently handsome, and the other disposed to be most agreeable. Oh, my dear young friends of either sex, whatever your feelings be for one another, keep them to yourselves; I know of nothing half so hazardous as that "comparing of notes" which sometimes happens. Analysis is a beautiful thing in mathematics or chemistry, but it makes sad havoc when applied to the "functions of the heart."

"Mamma appears to have forgotten us," said Isabella, as she spoke, after walking for some time in silence beside me.

"Oh, depend upon it, the carriage has taken all this time to repair; but are you tired?"

"Oh, by no means; the evening is delightful, but——"

"Then, perhaps you are *ennuyée*," said I, half pettishly, to provoke a disclaimer, if possible. To this insidiously put quere I received, as I deserved, no answer, and again we sauntered on without speaking.

"To whom does that château belong, my old friend?" said I, addressing a man on the roadside.

"To Monsieur le marquis, sir," replied he.

"But what's his name, though?"

"Ah, that I can't tell you," replied the man, again.

There you may perceive how, even yet, in provincial France, the old respect for the aristocracy still survives; it is sufficient that the possessor of that fine place is "Monsieur le marquis;" but any other knowledge of who he is, and what, is superfluous. "How far are we from the next village, do you know?"

"About a league."

"Indeed. Why, I thought La Scarpe was quite near us."

"Ah, are you thinking of the Amiens road."

"Yes, of course; and is not this the Amiens road?"

"Oh, no; the Amiens road lies beyond those low hills to the right. You pass the turn at the first *barriére*."

"Is it possible we could have come wrong?"

"Oh, Mr. Lorrequer, don't say so, I entreat of you."

"And what road is this, then, my friend?"

"This is the road to Albert and Peronne."

"Unfortunately, I believe he is quite right. Is there any cross-road from the village before us now to the Amiens road?"

"Yes; you can reach it about two leagues hence."

"And we can get a carriage at the inn, probably?"

"Ah, that I am not sure of. Perhaps at the Lion d'Or you may."

"But why not go back to Abbeville?"

"Oh, Mrs. Bingham must have left long since, and besides, you forget the distance; we have been walking two hours."

"Now for the village," said I, as I drew my friend's arm closer within mine, and we set out on a fast walk.

Isabella seemed terribly frightened at the whole affair; what her mamma might think, and what might be her fears at not finding us on the road, and a hundred other encouraging reflections of this nature, she poured forth unceasingly. As for myself, I did not know well what to think of it; my old fondness ever for adventure being sufficiently strong in me to give a relish to anything which bore the least resemblance to one. This I now concealed, and sympathized with my fair friend upon our mishap, assuring her, at the same time, that there could be no doubt of our overtaking Mrs. Bingham before her arrival at Amiens.

"Ah, there is the village in the valley; how beautifully situated."

"Oh, I can't admire anything now, Mr. Lorrequer, I am so frightened."

"But surely without cause," said I, looking tenderly beneath her bonnet.

"Is this," she answered, "nothing?" And we walked on in silence again.

On reaching the Lion d'Or we discovered that the only conveyance to be had was a species of open market-cart drawn by two horses, and in which it was necessary that my fair friend and myself should seat ourselves side by side upon straw: there was no choice; and as for Miss Bingham, I believe, if an ass with panniers had presented itself, she would have preferred it to remaining where she was. We, therefore, took our places, and she could not refrain from laughing as we set out upon our journey in this absurd equipage, every jolt of which threw us from side to side, and rendered every attention on my part requisite to prevent her being upset.

After about two hours' traveling we arrived at the Amiens road, and stopped at the *barriére*. I immediately inquired if a carriage had passed, resembling Mrs. Bingham's, and learned that it had, about an hour before, and that the lady in it had been informed that two persons, like those she asked after, had been seen in a *caléche*, driving rapidly to Amiens, upon which she set out as fast as possible in pursuit.

"Certainly," said I, "the plot is thickening; but for that unlucky mistake, she might in all probability have waited here for us. Amiens is only two leagues now, so our drive will not be long, and before six o'clock we shall all be laughing over the matter as a very good joke."

On we rattled, and as the road became less frequented, and the shadows lengthened, I could not but wonder at the strange situations which the adventurous character of my life had so often involved me in. Meanwhile, my fair friend's spirits became more and more depressed, and it was not without the greatest difficulty I was enabled to support her courage. I assured her, and not altogether without reason, that though so often in my eventful career accidents were occurring which rendered it dubious and difficult to reach the goal I aimed at, yet the results had so often been more pleasant than I could have anticipated, that I always felt a kind of involuntary satisfaction at some apparent obstacle to my path, setting it down as some especial means of fortune, to heighten the pleasure awaiting me; "and now," added I, "even here, perhaps, in this very mistake of our road—the sentiments I have heard—the feelings I have given utterance to——" What I was about to say, Heaven knows—perhaps nothing less than a downright proposal was coming, but at that critical moment a gendarme rode up to the side of our wagon, and surveyed us with the peculiarly significant scowl his order is gifted with. After trotting alongside for a few seconds, he ordered the driver to halt, and, turning abruptly to us, demanded our passports. Now our passports were, at that precise moment, peaceably reposing in the side-pocket of Mrs. Bingham's carriage; I, therefore, explained to the gendarme how we were circumstanced, and added, that on arriving at Amiens the passports should be produced. To this he replied that all might be perfectly true, but he did not believe a word of it—that he had received an order for the apprehension of two English persons traveling that road—and that he should accordingly request our company back to Chantraine, the commissaire of which place was his officer.

"But why not take us to Amiens," said I; "particularly when I tell you that we can then show our passports?"

"I belong to the Chantraine district," was the laconic answer; and like the gentleman who could not weep at the sermon because he belonged to another parish, this specimen of a French Dogberry would not hear reason except in his own district.

No arguments which I could think of had any effect upon him, and amid a volley of entreaty and imprecation, both equally vain, we saw ourselves turn back upon the

road to Amiens, and set out at a round trot to Chantraine, on the road to Calais.

Poor Isabella, I really pitied her; hitherto her courage had been principally sustained by the prospect of soon reaching Amiens: now there was no seeing where our adventure was to end. Besides that, actual fatigue from the wretched conveyance began to distress her, and she was scarcely able to support herself, though assisted by my arm. What a perilous position mine, whispering consolation and comfort to a pretty girl on a lonely road, the only person near being one who comprehended nothing of the language we spoke in. Ah, how little do we know of fate, and how often do we despise circumstances that determine all our fortunes in the world! To think that a gendarme should have anything to do with my future lot in life, and that the real want of a passport to travel should involve the probable want of a license to marry. "Yes, it is quite in keeping," thought I, "with every step I have taken through life. I may be brought before the 'maire' as a culprit, and leave him as a Benedict."

On reaching the town, we were not permitted to drive to the inn, but at once conveyed to the house of the "commissaire," who was also the "maire" of the district. The worthy functionary was long since in bed, and it was only after ringing violently for half an hour that a head, surmounted with a dirty cotton nightcap, peeped from an upper window, and seemed to survey the assemblage beneath with patient attention. By this time a considerable crowd had collected from the neighboring ale-houses and *cabarets*, who deemed it a most fitting occasion to honor us with the most infernal yells and shouts, as indicating their love of justice and delight in detecting knavery; and that we were both involved in such suspicion we had not long to learn. Meanwhile, the poor old maire, who had been an *employé* in the stormy days of the Revolution, and also under Napoleon, and who fully concurred with Swift that "a crowd is a mob, if composed even of bishops," firmly believed that the uproar beneath in the street was the announcement of a new change of affairs at Paris, determined to be early in the field, and shouted, therefore, with all his lungs—"*Vive la nation!—Vive la charte!—Abas les autres!*" A tremendous shout of laughter saluted this exhibition of unexpected republicanism, and the poor maire retired from the window, having learned his mistake, covered with shame and confusion.

Before the mirth caused by this blunder had subsided, the door had opened, and we were ushered into the bureau, accompanied by the anxious crowd, all curious to know the particulars of our crime.

The maire soon appeared, his nightcap being replaced by a small black velvet skull-cap, and his lanky figure enveloped in a tarnished silk dressing-gown! he permitted us to be seated, while the gendarme recounted the suspicious circumstances of our traveling, and produced the order to arrest an Englishman and his wife who had arrived in one of the late Boulogne packets, and who had carried off from some banking-house money and bills to a large amount.

"I have no doubt these are the people," said the gendarme; "and here is the 'carte descriptive.' Let us compare it: 'Forty-two or forty-three years of age.'"

"I trust, Monsieur le maire," said I, overhearing this, "that ladies do not recognize me as so much."

"'Of a pale and cadaverous aspect,'" continued the gendarme.

"Civil and complimentary, certainly," added I.

"'Squints much with the left eye.' Look at Monsieur le maire, if you please, sir," said the gendarme.

Upon this the old functionary, wiping his spectacles with a snuffy handkerchief, as if preparing them to examine an eclipse of the sun, regarded me fixedly for several minutes, and said, "Oh, yes, I perceive it plainly; continue the description."

"'Five feet three inches,'" said the gendarme.

"Six feet one in England, whatever this climate may have done since."

"'Speaks broken and bad French.'"

"Like a native," said I; "at least, so said my friends in the Chaussée d'Antin, in the year fifteen."

Here the catalogue ended, and a short conference between the maire and the gendarme ensued, which ended in our being committed for examination on the morrow; meanwhile, we were to remain at the inn, under the surveillance of the gendarme.

On reaching the inn, my poor friend was so completely exhausted, that she at once retired to her room, and I proceeded to fulfil a promise I had made her to dispatch a note to Mrs. Bingham at Amiens by a special messenger, acquainting her with all our mishaps, and requesting her to come or send to our assistance. This done, and a good supper smoking before me, of which with difficulty I persuaded

Isabella to partake in her own room, I again regained my equanimity, and felt once more at ease.

The gendarme in whose guardianship I had been left was a fine specimen of his caste; a large and powerfully built man of about fifty, with an enormous beard of grizzly brown and gray hair, meeting above and beneath his nether lip; his eyebrows were heavy and beetling, and nearly concealed his sharp gray eyes, while a deep sabre-wound had left upon his cheek a long white scar, giving a most warlike and ferocious look to his features.

As he sat apart from me for some time, silent and motionless, I could not help imagining in how many a hard-fought day he had borne a part, for he evidently, from his age and bearing, had been one of the soldiers of the Empire. I invited him to partake of my bottle of Médoc, by which he seemed flattered. When the flask became low, and was replaced by another, he appeared to have lost much of his constrained air, and seemed forgetting rapidly the suspicious circumstances which he supposed attached to me, waxed wondrous confidential and communicative, condescending to impart some traits of a life which was not without its vicissitudes, for he had been, as I suspected, one of the "Garde"—the old Garde—was wounded at Marengo, and received his decoration in the field of Wagram from the hands of the Emperor himself. The headlong enthusiasm of attachment to Napoleon which his brief and stormy career elicited, even from those who suffered long and deeply in his behalf, is not one of the least singular circumstances which this portion of history displays. While the rigors of the conscription had invaded every family in France, from Normandy to La Vendée—while the untilled fields, the ruined granaries, the half-deserted villages, all attested the depopulation of the land, those talismanic words, *l'Empereur et la Gloire*, by some magic mechanism seemed all-sufficient not only to repress regret and suffering, but even stimulate pride and nourish valor; and even yet, when it might be supposed that like the brilliant spectacle of a magic lantern, the gaudy pageant had passed away, leaving only the darkness and desolation behind it, the memory of those days under the Empire survives untarnished and unimpaired, and every sacrifice of friends or fortune is accounted but little in the balance when the honor of *la belle* France and the triumphs of the *grande armée* are weighed against them. The infatuated and enthusiastic followers of this great man would seem, in some respects, to resemble the drunkard in the *vaudeville*, who alleged as his excuse for drinking, that whenever he was sober, his poverty disgusted him. "My cabin," said he, "is a cell, my wife a mass of old rags, my child a wretched object of misery and malady. But give me brandy, let me only have that, and then my hut is a palace, my wife is a princess, and my child the very picture of health and happiness;" so with these people—intoxicated with the triumphs of their nation, *tête montée* with victory—they cannot exist in the horror of sobriety which peace necessarily enforces; and whenever the subject turns in conversation upon the distresses of the time or the evil prospects of the country, they call out, not like the drunkard for brandy, but in the same spirit, they say, "Ah, if you would again see France flourishing and happy, let us once more have our *croix d'honneur*, our epaulets, our voluntary contributions, our Murillos, our Velasques, our spoils from Venice, and our increased territories to rule over." This is the language of the Bonapartist everywhere and at all seasons; and the mass of the nation is wonderfully disposed to participate in the sentiment. The Empire was the "Æneid" of the nation, and Napoleon the only hero they could believe in. You may satisfy yourself of this easily. Every café will give evidence of it, every society bears testimony to it, and even the most wretched *vaudeville*, however trivial the interest, however meagre the story and poor the diction, let the Emperor but have his *rôle*, let him be as laconic as possible, carry his hands behind his back, wear the well-known low cocked hat and the *redingote grise*, the success is certain, every sentence he utters is applauded, and not a single allusion to the Pyramids, the sun of Austerlitz, *la Gloire, et la Vieille Garde*, but is sure to bring down thunders of acclamation. But I am forgetting myself, and perhaps my reader too; the conversation of the old gendarme accidentally led me into reflections like these, and he was well calculated in many ways to call them forth. His devoted attachment, his personal love of the Emperor, of which he gave me some touching instances, was admirably illustrated by an incident, which I am inclined to tell, and hope it may amuse the reader as much as it did myself on hearing it.

When Napoleon had taken possession of the papal dominions, as he virtually did, and carried off the Pope Pius VI. to Paris, this old soldier, then a musketeer in the

"Garde," formed part of the company that mounted guard over the holy father. During the earlier months of the holy father's confinement he was at liberty to leave his apartments at any hour he pleased, and cross the court-yard of the palace to the chapel where he performed mass. At such moments the portion of the Imperial Guard then on duty stood under arms, and received from the august hand of the Pope his benediction as he passed. But one morning a hasty express arrived from the Tuileries, and the officer on duty communicated his instructions to his party, that the apostolic vicar was not to be permitted to pass, as heretofore, to the chapel, and that a most rigid superintendence was to be exercised over his movements. My poor companion had his turn for duty on that ill-starred day; he had not been long at his post when the sound of footsteps was heard approaching, and he soon saw the procession, which always attended the holy father to his devotions, advancing towards him; he immediately placed himself across the passage, and, with his musket in rest, barred the exit, declaring, at the same time, that such were his orders. In vain the priests who formed the *cortege* addressed themselves to his heart, and spoke to his feelings, and, at last, finding little success by these methods, explained to him the mortal sin and crime, for which eternal damnation itself might not be a too heavy retribution, if he persisted in preventing his holiness to pass, and thus be the means of opposing an obstacle to the head of the whole Catholic Church from celebrating the mass. The soldier remained firm and unmoved, the only answer he returned being, "that he had his orders, and dared not disobey them." The Pope, however, persisted in his resolution, and endeavored to get by, when the hardy veteran retreated a step, and placing his musket and bayonet at the charge, called out, "*Au nom de l' Empereur,*" when the pious party at last yielded, and slowly retired within the palace.

Not many days after, this severe restriction was recalled, and once more the father was permitted to go to and from the chapel of the palace at such times as he pleased, and again, as before, in passing the corridor, the guards presented arms, and received the holy benediction, all except one; upon him the head of the Church frowned severely, and turned his back while extending his pious hands towards the others. "And yet," said the poor fellow, in concluding his story—"and yet I could not have done otherwise; I had my orders, and must have followed them, and had the Emperor commanded it, I should have run my bayonet through the body of the holy father himself.

"Thus, you see, my dear sir, how I have loved the Emperor, for I have many a day stood under fire for him in this world, *et il faut que j' aime encore au feu pour lui après ma mort.*"

He received in good part the consolations I offered him on this head, but I plainly saw they did not, could not relieve his mind from the horrible conviction he lay under, that his soul's safety forever had been bartered for his attachment to the Emperor.

This story had brought us to the end of the third bottle of Médoc; and, as I was neither the Pope, nor had any very decided intentions of saying mass, he offered no obstacle to my retiring for the night, and betaking myself to my bed.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE INN AT CHANTRAINE.

When contrasted with the comforts of an English bedroom in a good hotel, how miserably short does the appearance of a French one fall in the estimation of the tired traveler. In exchange for the carpeted floor, the well-curtained windows, the richly-tapestried bed, the well-cushioned armchair, and the innumerable other luxuries which await him, he has naught but a narrow, uncurtained bed, a bare floor—occasionally a flagged one—three hard, cane bottomed chairs, and a looking-glass, which may convey an idea of how you would look under the combined influence of the cholera and a stroke of apoplexy, one half of your face being twice the length of the other, and the entire of it of a bluish-green tint—pretty enough in one of Turner's landscapes, but not at all becoming when applied to the "human face divine." Let no late arrival from the Continent contradict me here by his late experiences, which a stray twenty pounds and the railroads—(confound them for the same)—have enabled him to acquire. I speak of matters before it occurred to all Charing Cross and Cheapside to "take the water" between Dover and Calias, and inundate the world with the wit of the Cider Cellars and the Hole in the Wall. No! In the days I write of, the traveled were of another genus, and you might dine

at Véry's, or have your box at *Les Italiens*, without being dunned by your tailor at the one, or confronted by your washerwoman at the other. Perhaps I have written all this in the spite and malice of a man who feels that his sovereign only goes half as far now as hertofore, and attributes all his diminished enjoyments and restricted luxuries to the unceasing current of his countrymen, whom fate, and the law of imprisonment for debt, impel hither. Whether I am so far guilty or not is not now the question ; suffice it to say, that Harry Lorrequer, for reasons best known to himself, lives abroad, where he will be most happy to see any of his old and former friends who take his quarters *en route ;* and in the words of a bellicose brother of the pen, but in a far different spirit, he would add, "that any person who feels himself here alluded to may learn the author's address at his publisher's." "Now let us go back to our mutton's," as Barney Coyle used to say in the Dublin Library formerly—for Barney was fond of French allusions, which occasionally, too, he gave in their own tongue, as once describing an interview with Lord Cloncurry, in which he broke off suddenly the conference, adding, "I told him I could never consent to such a proposition, and putting my *château* (*chapeau*) on my head, I left the house at once."

It was nearly three o'clock in the morning as, accompanied by the waiter, who, like others of his tribe, had become a kind of somnambulist ex-officio, I wended my way up one flight of stairs, and down another, along a narrow corridor, down two steps, through an ante-chamber, and into another corridor, to No. 82, my habitation for the night. Why I should have been so far conducted from the habitable portion of the house I had spent my evening in, I leave the learned in such matters to explain ; as for me, I have ever remarked it, while asking for a chamber in a large, roomy hotel, the singular pride with which you are ushered up grand stair-cases, down passages, through corridors, and up narrow back flights, till the blue sky is seen through the skylight, to No. 199, "the only spare bedroom in the house," while the silence and desolation of the whole establishment would seem to imply far otherwise—the only evidence of occupation being a pair of dirty Wellingtons at the door of No. 7.

"Well, we have arrived at last," said I, drawing a deep sigh, as I threw myself upon a rickety chair and surveyed rapidly my meagre-looking apartments.

"Yes, this is Monsieur's chamber," said the waiter, with a very peculiar look, half servile, half droll. "Madame couche, No 28."

"Very well, good night," said I, closing the door hastily, and not liking the further scrutiny of the fellow's eye, as he fastened it on me, as if to search what precise degree of relationship existed between myself and my fair friend, whom he had called "Madame" purposely to elicit an observation from me. "Ten to one, though," said I, as I undressed myself, "but they think she is my wife—how good—but again—ay, it is very possible, considering we are in France. *Numéro vingt-huit*, quite far enough from this part of the house, I should suppose, from my number—that old gendarme was a fine fellow—what strong attachment to Napoleon ; and the story of the Pope ; I hope I may remember *that*. Isabella, poor girl—this adventure must really distress her—hope she is not crying over it—what a devil of a hard bed—and it is not five feet long, too—and, bless my soul, is this all by way of covering ? why, I shall be perished here. Oh ! I must certainly put all my clothes over me in addition ; unfortunately there is no hearth-rug—well, there is no help for it now, so let me try to sleep *numéro vingt-huit.*"

How long I remained in a kind of uneasy, fitful slumber, I cannot tell, but I awoke shivering with cold, puzzled to tell where I was, and my brain addled with the broken fragments of half a dozen dreams, all mingling and mixing themselves with the unpleasant realities of my situation. "What an infernal contrivance for a bed," thought I, as my head came thump against the top, while my legs projected far beyond the foot-rail, the miserable portion of clothing over me at the same time being only sufficient to temper the night air, which in autumn is occasionally severe and cutting. "This will never do. I must ring the bell, and rouse the house, if only to get a fire, if they don't possess such a thing as blankets." I immediately rose, and, groping my way along the wall, endeavored to discover the bell, but in vain ; and for the same satisfactory reason that Von Troil did not devote one chapter of his work on "Iceland" to "snakes," because there were none such there. What was now to be done ? About the geography of my present abode I knew, perhaps, as much as the public at large know about the Coppermine River and Behring's Straits. The world, it was true, was before me, "where to choose," admirable things

for an epic, but decidedly an unfortunate circumstance for a very cold gentleman in search of a blanket. Thus thinking, I opened the door of my chamber, and, not in any way resolved how I should proceed, I stepped forth into the long corridor, which was dark as midnight itself.

Tracing my path along the wall, I soon reached a door, which I in vain attempted to open; in another moment I found another and another, each of which were locked. Thus along the entire corridor I felt my way, making every effort to discover where any of the people of the house might have concealed themselves, but without success. What was to be done now? It was of no use to go back to my late abode, and find it comfortless as I left it; so I resolved to proceed in my search; by this time I had arrived at the top of a small flight of stairs, which I remembered having come up, and which led to another long passage, similar to the one I had explored, but running in a transverse direction; down this I now crept, and reached the landing, along the hall of which I was guided by my hand, as well for safety as to discover the architrave of some friendly door, where the inhabitant might be sufficiently Samaritan to lend some portion of his bedclothes. Door after door followed in succession along this confounded passage, which I began to think as long as the gallery of the lower one; at last, however, just as my heart was sinking within me from disappointment, the handle of a lock turned, and I found myself inside a chamber. How was I now to proceed; for if this apartment did not contain any of the people of the hotel, I had but a sorry excuse for disturbing the repose of any traveler who might have been more fortunate than myself in the article of blankets. To go back, however, would be absurd, having already taken so much trouble to find out a room that was inhabited—for that such was the case, a short, thick snore assured me—so that my resolve was at once made, to waken the sleeper, and endeavor to interest him in my destitute situation. I accordingly approached the place where the nasal sounds seemed to issue from, and soon reached the post of a bed. I waited for an instant, and then began,—

"Monsieur, voulez-vous bien me permettre——"

"As to short whist, I never could make it out, so there is an end of it," said my unknown friend, in a low, husky voice, which, strangely enough, was not totally unfamiliar to me; but when or how I had heard it before I could not then think.

"Well," thought I, "he is an Englishman, at all events, so I hope his patriotism may forgive my intrusion, so here goes once more to rouse him, though he seems a confoundedly heavy sleeper. I beg your pardon, sir, but unfortunately, in a point like the present, perhaps——"

"Well, do you mark the points, and I'll score the rubber," said he.

"The devil take the gambling fellow's dreaming," thought I, raising my voice at the same time.

"Perhaps a cold night, sir, may suffice as my apology."

"Cold, oh, ay! put a hot poker in it," muttered he; "a hot poker, a little sugar, and a spice of nutmeg—nothing else—then its delicious."

"Upon my soul, this is too bad," said I to myself. "Let us see what shaking will do. Sir, sir, I shall feel obliged by——"

"Well, then, don't shake me, and I'll tell you where I hid the cigars—they are under my straw hat in the window."

"Well, really, thought I, "if this gentleman's confessions were of an interesting nature, this might be good fun; but as the night is cold, I must shorten the *séance*, so here goes for one effort more."

"If, sir, you could kindly spare me even a small portion of your bed-clothes——"

"No, thank you, no more wine; but I'll sing with pleasure;" and here the wretch, in something like the voice of a frog with the quinzy, began, "'I'd mourn the hopes that leave me.'" "You shall mourn something else for the same reason," said I, as losing all patience, I seized quilt and blankets by the corner, and with one vigorous pull wrenched them from the bed, and darted from the room; in a second I was in the corridor, trailing my spoil behind, which in my haste I had not time to collect in a bundle. I flew rather than ran along the passage, reached the stairs, and in another minute had gained the second gallery, but not before I heard the slam of a door behind me, and the same instant the footsteps of a person running along the corridor, who could be no other than my pursuer, effectually aroused by my last appeal to his charity. I darted along the dark and narrow passage, but soon to my horror discovered that I must have passed the door of my chamber, for I had reached the foot of a narrow back stair, which led to the *grenier* and the servants' rooms, beneath the roof. To turn now would only have led me plump in the face of my injured countryman, of

whose thew and sinew I was perfectly ignorant, and did not much like to venture upon. There was little time for reflection, for he had just reached the top of the stair, and was evidently listening for some clue to guide him on; stealthily and silently, and scarcely drawing breath, I mounted the narrow stairs, step by step, but before I had arrived at the landing, he heard the rustle of the bedclothes, and again gave chase. There was something in the unrelenting ardor of his pursuit which suggested to my mind the idea of a most uncompromising foe; and as fear added speed to my steps, I dashed along beneath the low-roofed passage, wondering what chance of escape might yet present itself. Just at this instant, the hand by which I had guided myself along the wall touched the handle of a door—I turned it—it opened—I drew in my precious bundle, and closing the door noiselessly, sat down, breathless and still, upon the floor.

Scarcely was this, the work of a second, accomplished, when the heavy tread of my pursuer resounded on the floor.

"Upon my conscience it's strange if I haven't you now, my friend," said he, "you're in a *cul de sac* here, as they say, if I know anything of the house; and faith I'll make a salad of you, when I get you, that's all. Devil a dirtier trick ever I heard tell of."

Need I say these words had the true smack of an Irish accent, which circumstance, from whatever cause, did not by any means tend to assuage my fears in the event of discovery.

However, from such a misfortune my good genius now delivered me; for after traversing the passage to the end, he at last discovered another, which led by a long flight to the second story, down which he proceeded, venting at every step his determination for vengeance, and his resolution not to desist from the pursuit, if it took the entire night for it.

"Well now," thought I, "as he will scarcely venture up here again, and as I may, by leaving this, be only incurring the risk of encountering him, my best plan is to stay where I am, if it be possible." With this intent, I proceeded to explore the apartment, which, from its perfect stillness, I concluded to be unoccupied. After some few minutes groping, I reached a low bed, fortunately empty, and although the touch of the bedclothes led to no very favorable augury of its neatness or elegance, there was little choice at this moment, so I rolled myself up in my recent booty, and resolved to wait patiently for daybreak to regain my apartment.

As always happens in such circumstances, sleep came on unawares; so at least every one's experience, I am sure, can testify, that if you are forced to awake early to start by some morning coach, and that unfortunately you have not got to bed till late at night, the chances are ten to one that you get no sleep whatever, simply because you are desirous of it; but make up your mind ever so resolutely that you'll not slumber, and whether your determination be built on motives of propriety, duty, convenience, or health, the chances are just as strong that you are sound and snoring before ten minutes.

How many a man has found it impossible, with every effort of his heart and brain aiding his good wishes, to sit with unclosed eyes and ears through a dull sermon in the dog-days; how many an expectant, longing heir has yielded to the drowsy influence when endeavoring to look contrite under the severe correction of a lecture on extravagance from his uncle. Who has not felt the irresistible tendency to "drop off" in the half hour before dinner at a stupid country-house? I need not catalogue the thousand other situations in life infinitely more "sleep-compelling" than morphine; for myself, my pleasantest and soundest moments of perfect forgetfulness of this dreary world and all its cares, have been taken on an oaken bench, seated bold upright, and *vis-à-vis* a lecturer on botany, whose calming accents, united with the softened light of an autumnal day, piercing its difficult rays through the narrow and cobwebbed windows, the odor of the recent plants and flowers aiding and abetting, all combined to steep the soul in sleep, and you sank by imperceptible and gradual steps into that state of easy slumber, in which "come no dreams," and the last sounds of the lecturer's "hypogenous and perigenous" died away, becoming beautifully less, till your senses sank into rest, the syllable "rigging us—rigging us," seemed to melt away in the distance and fade from your memory ——Peace be with you, Dr. A.! If I owe gratitude anywhere, I have my debt with you. The very memory I bear of you has saved me no inconsiderable sum in hop and henbane. Without any assistance from the sciences on the present occasion, I was soon asleep, and woke not till the cracking of whips, and trampling of horses' feet on the pavement of the coach-yard, apprized me that the world had risen to its daily labor, and that so ought I. From the short survey of my present chamber which I took on waking, I conjectured it must have

been the den of some of the servants of the house upon occasion; two low truckle-beds of the meanest description lay along the wall opposite to mine; one of them appeared to have been slept in during the past night, but by what species of animal the Fates alone can tell. An old demi-peak saddle, capped and tipped with brass, some rusty bits, and stray stirrup-irons, lay here and there upon the floor; while upon a species of clothes-rack, attached to a rafter, hung a tarnished suit of postilion's livery, cap, jacket, leathers, and jack-boots, all ready for use; and evidently from their arrangement, supposed by the owner to be a rather creditable "turn out."

I turned over these singular habiliments with much of the curiosity with which an antiquary would survey a suit of chain armor; the long epaulets of yellow cotton cord, the heavy belt with its brass buckle, the cumbrous boots, plaited and bound with iron like churns, were in rather a ludicrous contrast to the equipment of our light and jockey-like boys in nankeen jackets and neat tops, that spin along over our level "Macadam."

"But," thought I, "it is full time I should get back to No. 82, and make my appearance below stairs;" though in what part of the building my room lay, and how I was to reach it without my clothes, I had not the slightest idea. A blanket is an excessively comfortable article of wearing apparel when in bed, but as a walking costume is by no means convenient or appropriate; while, as to making a *sortie en sauvage*, however appropriate during the night, there were many serious objections if done in broad day, and with the whole establishment awake and active; the noise of mopping, scrubbing, and polishing, which is eternally going forward in a foreign inn, amply testified there was nothing which I could adopt in my present naked and forlorn condition, save the uncouth and ridiculous dress of the postilion, and I need not say the thought of so doing presented nothing agreeable. I looked from the narrow window out upon the tiled roof, but without any prospect of being heard if I called ever so loudly.

The infernal noise of floor-cleansing, assisted by a Norman peasant's *chanson du pays*, the "time" being well marked by her heavy sabots, gave even less chance to me within; so that after more than half an hour passed in weighing difficulties and canvassing plans, I determined upon donning "the blue and yellow," and setting out for my own room without delay, hoping sincerely that, with proper precaution, I should be able to reach it unseen and unobserved.

As I laid but little stress upon the figure I should make in my new habiliments, it did not cause me much mortification to find that the clothes were considerably too small, the jacket scarcely coming beneath my arms, and the sleeves being so short that my hands and wrists projected beyond the cuffs like two enormous claws; the leathers were also limited in their length, and when drawn up to a proper height, permitted my knees to be seen beneath, like the short costume of a Spanish torreador, but scarcely as graceful; not wishing to encumber myself in the heavy and noisy masses of wood, iron, and leather they call "*les bottes fortes*," I slipped my feet into my slippers, and stole gently from the room. How I must have looked at the moment, I leave my reader to guess, as with anxious and stealthy pace I crept along the low gallery that led to the narrow staircase, down which I proceeded, step by step; but just as I reached the bottom, perceived, a little distance from me, with her back turned toward me, a short, squat peasant on her knees, belaboring with a brush the well waxed floor; to pass, therefore, unobserved was impossible, so that I did not hesitate to address her, and endeavor to interest her in my behalf, and enlist her as my guide.

"Bon jour, ma chère," said I, in a soft, insinuating tone. She did not hear me, so I repeated, "Bon jour, ma chère, bon jour."

Upon this she turned round, and looking fixedly at me for a second, called out in a thick patois, "Ah, bon Dieu, qu'il est drôle comme ça, François! Mais ce n'est pas François!" Saying which, she sprang from her kneeling position to her feet, and with a speed that her shape and sabots seemed little to promise, rushed down the stairs as if she had seen the devil himself.

"Why, what is the matter with the woman?" said I; "surely, if I am not François—which, God be thanked, is true—yet I cannot look so frightful as all this would imply." I had not much time given me for consideration now, for before I had well deciphered the number over a door before me, the loud noise of several voices on the floor beneath attracted my attention, and the moment after the heavy tramp of feet followed, and in an instant the gallery was thronged by the men and women of the house—waiters, ostlers, cooks, scullions, *filles de chambre*, mingled

with gendarmes, peasants, and townspeople—all eagerly forcing their way upstairs; yet all, on arriving at the landing-place, seemed disposed to keep at a respectful distance, and bundled themselves at one end of the corridor, while I, feelingly alive to the ridiculous appearance I made, occupied the other. The gravity with which they seemed at first disposed to regard me soon gave way, and peal after peal of laughter broke out, and young and old, men and women, even to the most severe gendarmes, all appeared incapable of controlling the desire for merriment my most singular figure inspired; and unfortunately this emotion seemed to promise no very speedy conclusion; for the jokes and witticisms made upon my appearance threatened to renew the festivities, *ad libitum*.

"Regardez donc ses épaules," said one.

"Ah, mon Dieu! Il me fait l'idée d'une grenouille avec ses jambes jaunes," cried another.

"Il vaut son pesant de fromage pour un vaudeville," said the director of the strolling theater of the place. "I'll give seventy francs a week 'd'appointements,' and Scribe shall write a piece expressly for himself, if he'll take it."

"May the devil fly away with your grinning baboon faces," said I, as I rushed up the stairs again, pursued by the mob at full cry. Scarcely, however, had I reached the top step, when the rough hand of the gendarme seized me by the shoulder, while he said in a low, husky voice, "C'est inutile, monsieur, you cannot escape—the thing was well contrived, it is true; but the gendarmes of France are not easily outwitted, and you could not have long avoided detection, even in that dress." It was my turn to laugh now; which, to their very great amazement, I did, loud and long; that I should have thought my present costume could ever have been the means of screening me from observation, however it might have been calculated to attract it, was rather too absurd a supposition even for the mayor of a village to entertain; besides, it only now occurred to me that I was figuring in the character of a prisoner. The continued peals of laughing which this mistake on their part elicited from me seemed to afford but slight pleasure to my captor, who gruffly said,—

"When you have done amusing yourself, *mon ami*, perhaps, you will do us the favor to come before the mayor."

"Certainly," I replied; "but you will first permit me to resume my own clothes; I am quite sick of masquerading 'en *tillon.*'"

"Not so fast, my friend," said the picious old follower of Fouché—"no fast; it is but right the *maire* should you in the disguise you attempted escape in. It must be especially mentio in the *procès verbal.*"

"Well, this is becoming too ludicro said I. "It need not take five minut satisfy you why, how, and where, I pu these confounded rags——"

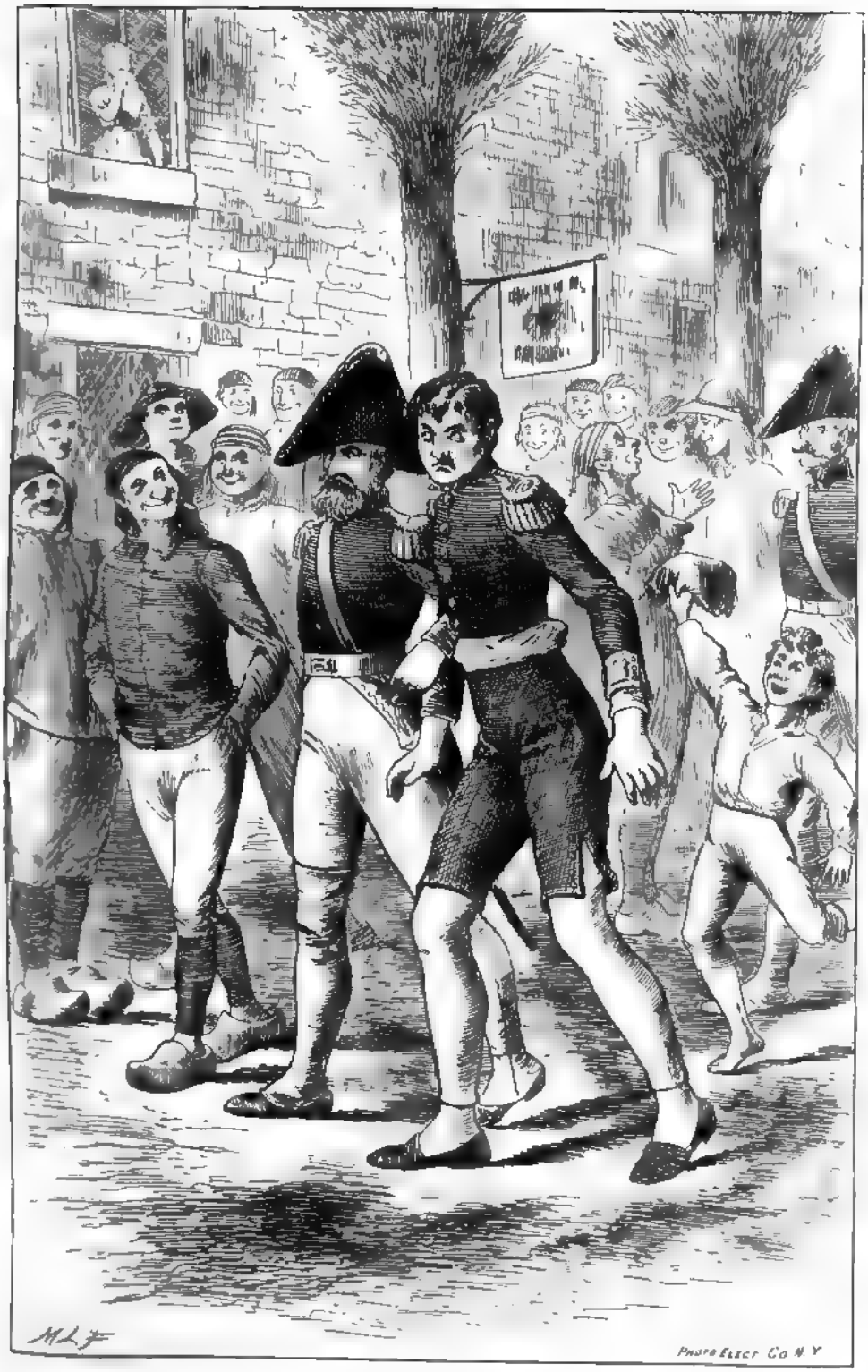
"Then tell it to the *maire*, at the reau."

"But for that purpose it is not n sary I should be conducted through streets in broad day, to be laughed No, positively, I'll not go. In my dress I'll accompany you with pleasur

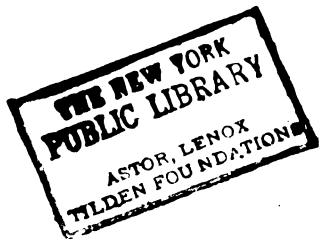
"Victor, Henri, Guillaume," said gendarme, addressing his companions, immediately closed round me. "You added he, "there is no use in resisting

Need I recount my own shame and fable disgrace? Alas! it is too Harry Lorrequer—whom Stultz entre to wear his coats, the ornament of Park, the last appeal in dress, fash and equipage—was obliged to pa through the mob of a market-tow France, with four gendarmes for his panions, and he himself habited in a grel character half postilion, half Dela Indian. The incessant yells of laught the screams of the children, and the pouring of every species of sarcasm ridicule, at my expense, were not all as I emerged from the inn door, I saw bella in the window: her eyes were with weeping; but no sooner had she held me, than she broke out into a f laughter that was audible even in street.

Rage had now taken such a hold u me, that I forgot my ridiculous app ance in my thirst for vengeance. marched on through the grinning cr with the step of a martyr. I suppose heroic bearing and warlike deportm must have heightened the drollery of scene; for the devils only laughed more. The bureau of the *maire* could contain one-tenth of the anxious and rious individuals who thronged the trance, and for about twenty minutes whole efforts of the gendarmes were l enough to keep order and maintain sile At length the *maire* made his appeara and accustomed as he had been for a l life to scenes of an absurd and extr dinary nature, yet the ridicule of my and costume was too much, and he laug



I MARCHED ON THROUGH THE GRINNING CROWD WITH THE STEP OF A MARTYR. (P. 126.)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outright. This was of course the signal for renewed mirth from the crowd, while those without doors, infected by the example, took up the jest, and I had the pleasure of a short calculation, *a la Babbage*, of how many maxillary jaws were at that same moment wagging at my expense.

However, the examination commenced; and I at length obtained an opportunity of explaining under what circumstances I had left my room, and how and why I had been induced to don this confounded cause of all my misery.

"This may be very true," said the mayor, "as it is very plausible, if you have evidence to prove what you have stated ——"

"If it's evidence only is wanting, Mr. Maire, I'll confirm one part of the story," said a voice in the crowd, in an accent and tone that assured me the speaker was the injured proprietor of the stolen blankets. I turned round hastily to look at my victim, and what was my surprise to recognize a very old Dublin acquaintance, Mr. Arthur O'Leary.

"Good morning, Mr. Lorrequer," said he; "this is mighty like our old practices in College Green; but upon my conscience the *maire* has the advantage of Gabbet. It's lucky for you I know his worship, as we'd call him at home, or this might be a serious business. Nothing would persuade them that you were not Lucien Bonaparte, or the Iron Mask, or something of that sort, if they took it into their heads."

Mr. O'Leary was as good as his word. In a species of French, that I'd venture to say would be perfectly intelligible in Mullingar, he contrived to explain to the *maire* that I was neither a runaway nor a swindler, but a very old friend of his, and consequently most respectable. The official was now as profuse of his civilities as he had before been of his suspicions, and most hospitably pressed us to stay for breakfast. This, for many reasons, I was obliged to decline—not the least of which was, my impatience to get out of my present costume. We accordingly procured a carriage, and I returned to the hotel, screened from the gaze but still accompanied by the shouts of the mob, who evidently took a most lively interest in the entire proceeding.

I lost no time in changing my costume, and was about to descend to the saloon, when the master of the house came to inform me that Mrs. Bingham's courier had arrived with the carriage, and that she expected us at Amiens as soon as possible.

"That is all right. Now, Mr. O'Leary, I must pray you to forgive the liberty I have taken with you, and also permit me to defer the explanation of many circumstances which seem at present strange, till——"

"Till *sine die*, if the story be a long one, my dear sir. There's nothing I hate so much, except cold punch."

"You are going to Paris," said I; "is it not so?"

"Yes, I'm thinking of it. I was up at Trolhatten, in Norway, three weeks ago, and I was obliged to leave it hastily, for I've an appointment with a friend in Geneva."

"Then how do you travel?"

"On foot, just as you see, except that I have a tobacco-bag upstairs, and an umbrella."

"Light equipment, certainly; but you must allow me to give you a set down as far as Amiens, and also to present you to my friends there."

To this Mr. O'Leary made no objection; and as Miss Bingham could not bear any delay, in her anxiety to join her mother, we set out at once—the only thing to mar my full enjoyment at the moment being the sight of the identical vestments I had so lately figured in, bobbing up and down before my eyes for the whole length of the stage, and leading to innumerable mischievous allusions from my friend Mr. O'Leary, which were far too much relished by my fair companion.

At twelve we arrived at Amiens, when I presented my friend Mr. O'Leary to Mrs. Bingham.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MR. O'LEARY.

At the conclusion of my last chapter I was about to introduce to my reader's acquaintance my friend Mr. O'Leary; and, as he is destined to occupy some place in the history of these Confessions, I may, perhaps, be permitted to do so at more length than his intrinsic merit at first sight might appear to warrant.

Mr. O'Leary was, and I am induced to believe is, a particularly short, fat, greasy-looking gentleman, with a head as free from phrenological development as a billiard-ball, and a countenance which, in feature and color, nearly resembled the face of a cherub, carved in oak, as we see them in old pulpits.

Short as is his stature, his limbs compose the least part of it. His hands and

feet, forming some compensation by their ample proportions, give to his entire air and appearance somewhat the look of a small fish, with short, thick fins, vulgarly called a cobler's thumb. His voice, varying in cadence from a deep barytone to a high falsetto, maintains throughout the distinctive characteristic of a Dublin accent and pronunciation, and he talks of the "Veel of Ovoca, and a beef-*steek*," with some pride of intonation. What part of *the* Island he came originally from, or what may be his age, are questions I have the most profound ignorance of; I have heard many anecdotes which would imply his being what the French call "*d'un âge mûr*"—but his own observations are generally limited to events occurring since the peace of "fifteen." To his personal attractions, such as they are, he has never been solicitous of contributing by the meretricious aids of dress. His coat, calculating from its length of waist and ample skirt, would fit Bumbo Green, while his trousers, being made of some cheap and shrinking material, have gradually contracted their limits, and look now exactly like knee-breeches, without the usual buttons at the bottom.

These, with the addition of a pair of green spectacles, the glass of one being absent, and permitting the look-out of a sharp, gray eye, twinkling with drollery and good humor, form the most palpable of his externals. In point of character, they who best knew him represented him as the best-tempered, best-hearted fellow breathing; ever ready to assist a friend, and always postponing his own plans and his own views, when he had any, to the wishes and intentions of others. Among the many odd things about him was a constant preference to traveling on foot, and a great passion for living abroad, both of which tastes he gratified, although his size might seem to offer obstacles to the one, and his total ignorance of every continental language would appear to preclude the other; with a great liking for tobacco, which he smoked all day—a fondness for whist and malt liquors—his antipathies were few; so that, except when called upon to shave more than once in the week, or wash his hands twice on the same day, it was difficult to disconcert him. His fortune was very ample; but although his mode of living was neither very ostentatious nor costly, he contrived always to spend his income. Such was the gentleman I now presented to my friends, who, I must confess, appeared strangely puzzled by his manner and appearance. This feeling, however, soon wore off; and before he had spent the morning in their company, he had made more way in their good graces, and gone farther to establish intimacy, than many a more accomplished person, with an unexceptionable coat and accurate whisker might have effected in a fortnight. What were his gifts in this way, I am, alas! most deplorably ignorant of; it was not, Heaven knows, that he possessed any conversational talent—of successful flattery he knew as much as a negro does of the national debt—and yet the *bonhomie* of his character seemed to tell at once; and I never knew him fail in any one instance to establish an interest for himself before he had completed the ordinary period of a visit.

I think it is Washington Irving who has so admirably depicted the mortification of a dandy angler, who, with his beaver garnished with brown hackles, his well-poised rod, polished gaff, and handsome landing-net, with everything befitting, spends his long summer day whipping a trout stream without a rise or even a ripple to reward him, while a ragged urchin, with a willow wand and a bent pin, not ten yards distant, is covering the greensward with myriads of speckled and scaly backs, from one pound weight to four; so it is in everything—"the race is not to the swift;" the elements of success in life, whatever be the object of pursuit, are very, very different from what we think of them at first sight, and so it was with Mr. O'Leary, and I have more than once witnessed the triumph of his homely manner and blunt humor over the more polished and well-bred taste of his competitors for favor; and what might have been the limit to such success Heaven can only tell, if it were not that he labored under a counterbalancing infirmity, sufficient to have swamped a line-of-battle ship itself. It was simply this—a most unfortunate propensity to talk of the wrong place, person, or time, in any society he found himself; and this taste for the *mal à propos* extended so far that no one ever ventured into company with him as his friend without trembling for the result; but even this, I believe his only fault, resulted from the natural goodness of his character and intentions; for, believing, as he did, in his honest simplicity, that the arbitrary distinctions of class and rank were held as cheaply by others as himself, he felt small scruple at recounting to a duchess a scene in a cabaret, and with as little hesitation would he, if asked, have sung the "Cruiskeen Lawn," or the "Jug of Punch," af-

ter Lablache had finished the "Al Idea," from *Figaro*. *Mauvaise honte*, he had none: indeed, I am not sure that he had any kind of shame whatever, except possibly, when detected with a coat that bore any appearance of newness, or if over-persuaded to wear gloves, which he ever considered as a special effeminacy.

Such was he, and how far he insinuated himself into their good graces, let the fact tell, that on my return to the breakfast-room, after about an hour's absence, I heard him detailing the particulars of a route they were to take by his advice, and also learned that he had been offered, and had accepted, a seat in their carriage to Paris.

"Then I'll do myself the pleasure of joining your party, Mrs. Bingham," said he. "Bingham, I think, madam, is your name?"

"Yes, sir."

"Any relation, may I ask, of a most dear friend of mine, of the same name, from Currynaslattery, in the county of Wexford?"

"I am really not aware," said Mrs. Bingham. "My husband's family are, I believe, many of them from that county."

"Ah, what a pleasant fellow was Tom!" said Mr. O'Leary, musingly, and with that peculiar tone which made me tremble, for I knew well that a reminiscence was coming. "A pleasant fellow, indeed."

"Is he alive, sir, now?"

"I believe so, ma'am; but I hear the climate does not agree with him."

"Ah, then, he's abroad, In Italy, probably?"

"No, ma'am, in Botany Bay. His brother, they say, might have saved him, but he left poor Tom to his fate; for he was just then paying his court to a Miss Crow, I think, with a large fortune. Oh, Lord! what have I said!—it's always the luck of me!" The latter exclamation was the result of a heavy plump upon the floor, Mrs. Bingham having fallen in a faint—she being the identical lady alluded to, and her husband the brother of pleasant Tom Bingham.

To hurl Mr. O'Leary out of the room by one hand, and ring the bell with the other, was the work of a moment; and, with proper care, and in due time, Mrs. Bingham was brought to herself, when, most fortunately, she entirely forgot the cause of her sudden indisposition, and, of course, neither her daughter nor myself suffered any clue to escape us which might lead to its discovery.

When we were once more upon the road, to efface, if it might be necessary, any unpleasant recurrence to the late scene, I proceeded to give Mrs. Bingham an account of my adventure at Chantraine, in which, of course, I endeavored to render my friend O'Leary all the honors of being laughed at in preference to myself, laying little stress upon my masquerading in the jack-boots.

"You are quite right," said O'Leary, joining in the hearty laugh against him, "quite right, I was always a very heavy sleeper—indeed, if I wasn't I wouldn't be here now, traveling about *en garçon*, as free as air;" and here he heaved a sigh, which, from its incongruity with his jovial look and happy expression, threw us all into renewed laughter.

"But why, Mr. O'Leary—what can your sleepiness have to do with such tender recollections, for such, I am sure, that sigh bespeaks them?"

"Ah! ma'am, it may seem strange, but it is, nevertheless, true, if it were not for that unfortunate tendency, I should now be the happy possessor of a most accomplished and amiable lady, and eight hundred per annum three-and-a-half per cent. stock."

"You overslept yourself on the wedding-day, I suppose?"

"You shall hear, ma'am; the story is but a short one: It is now about eight years ago, I was rambling through the south of France, and had just reached Lyons, where the confounded pavement, that sticks up like pears with the points upwards, had compelled me to rest some days and recruit; for this purpose I installed myself in the *pension* of Madame Gourgeaud, Rue des Petits Carmes—a quiet house, where we dined at twelve, ten in number, upon about two pounds of stewed beef, with garlic and carrots, a light soup—being the water which accompanied the same to render it tender in stewing—some preserved cherries, and an omelette, with a pint bottle of Beaune—*6me qualité*, I believe—a species of pyroligneous wine, made from the vine-stalks, but pleasant in summer with your salad; then, we played dominoes in the evening, or whist for *sou* points, leading altogether a very quiet and virtuous existence, or, as Madame herself expressed it, '*une vie tout-à-fait patriarchale*;' of this I cannot myself affirm how far she was right in supposing the patriarchs did exactly like us. But to proceed: in the same establishment there lived a widow, an Englishwoman, whose late husband had been a wine merchant at Dijon; he had also, I suppose from residing in that country, been imitating the patriarchs, for

he died one day. Well, the lady was delayed at Lyons for some law business, and thus it came about that her husband's testament and the sharp paving-stones in the streets determined that we should be acquainted. I cannot express to you the delight of my fair countrywoman at finding that a person who spoke English had arrived at the *pension*, a feeling I myself somewhat participated in; for, to say truth, I was not at that time a very great proficient in French. We soon became intimate, in less time, probably, than it could otherwise have happened; for, from the ignorance of all the others of one word of English, I was enabled, during dinner, to say many soft and tender things, which one does not usually venture on in company.

"I recounted my travels, and told various adventures of my wanderings, till at last, from being merely amused, I found that my fair friend began to be interested in my narratives; and frequently, when passing the *bouillon* to her, I have seen a tear in the corner of her eye; in a word, 'she loved me for the dangers I had passed,' as Othello says. Well, laugh away if you like, but it's truth I am telling you." At this part of Mr. O'Leary's story we all found it impossible to withstand the ludicrous mock-heroic of his face and tone, and laughed loud and long. When we at length became silent he resumed: "Before three weeks had passed over, I had proposed and was accepted, just your own way Mr. Lorrequer, taking the ball at the hop, the very same way you did at Cheltenham, the time the lady jilted you, and ran off with your friend Mr. Waller; I read it all in the news, though I was then in Norway, fishing," Here there was another interruption by a laugh, not, however, at Mr. O'Leary's expense. I gave him a most menacing look, while he continued: "The settlements were soon drawn up, and consisted, like all great diplomatic documents, of a series of 'gains and compensations;' thus, she was not to taste anything stronger than kirschwasse, or Nantz brandy: and I limited myself to a pound of short-cut weekly, and so on. But to proceed: the lady being a good Catholic, insisted upon being married by a priest of her own persuasion, before the performance of the ceremony at the British embassy in Paris; to this I could offer no objection, and we were accordingly united in the holy bonds the same morning after signing the law papers."

"Then Mr. O'Leary, you are really a married man."

"That's the very point I'm coming to, ma'am; for I've consulted all the jurists upon the subject, and they never can agree. But you shall hear. I dispatched a polite note to Bishop Luscombe, and made every arrangement for the approaching ceremony, took a quarter in the Rue du Helder, near the Estaminet, and looked forward with anxiety for the day which was to make me happy, for our marriage in Lyons was only a kind of betrothal. Now, my fair friend had but one difficulty remaining, poor dear soul—I refrain from mentioning her name for delicacy sake—but poor dear Mrs. Ram could not bear the notion of our going up to Paris in the same conveyance, for long as she had lived abroad, she had avoided everything French, even the language; so she proposed that I should go in the early *diligence*, which starts at four o'clock in the morning, while she took her departure at nine; thus I should be some hours sooner in Paris, and ready to receive her on her arriving; besides sparing her bashfulness all reproach of our traveling together. It was no use my telling her that I always traveled on foot, and hated a *diligence;* she cooly replied that at our time of life, we could not spare the time necessary for a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, for so she supposed the journey from Lyons to Paris to be; so fearing lest any doubt might be thrown upon the ardor of my attachment, I yielded at once, remembering at the moment what my poor friend Tom Bing—— Oh, Lord, I'm at it again!"

"Sir, I did not hear."

"Nothing, ma'am; I was just going to observe, that ladies of a certain time of life, and widows especially, like a lover that seems a little ardent or so, all the better." Here Mrs. Bingham blushed, her daughter bridled, and I nearly suffocated with shame and suppressed laughter.

"After a most tender farewell of my bride, or wife, I don't know which, I retired for the night with a mind vacillating between my hopes of happiness and my fears for the result of a journey so foreign to all my habits of traveling, and in which I could not but tremble at the many casualties my habitual laziness and dislike to any hours but my own choosing might involve me in.

"I had scarcely lain down in bed, ere these thoughts took such possession of me, that sleep for once in my life was out of the question; and then the misery of getting up at four in the morning, putting on your clothes by the flickering light of the porter's candle, getting your boots on the

wrong feet, and all that kind of annoyance, I am sure I fretted myself into the feeling of a downright martyr before an hour was over. 'Well, at least,' thought I, 'one thing is well done: I have been quite right in coming to sleep at the Messageries Hotel, where the *diligence* starts from, or the chances are ten to one that I never should wake till the time was past. Now, however, they are sure to call me; so I may sleep tranquilly till then.' Meanwhile I had forgotten to pack my trunk; and my papers, etc., laying all about the room in a state of considerable confusion. I rose at once with all the despatch I could muster; this took a long time to effect, and it was nearly two o'clock ere I finished, and sat down to smoke a solitary pipe, the last, as I supposed, it might be my lot to enjoy for Heaven knows how long, Mrs. R. having expressed, rather late in our intimacy, I confess, strong opinions against tobacco within doors.

"When I had finished my little sac of the 'weed,' the clock struck three, and I started to think how little time I was destined to have in bed. In bed! 'Why,' said I, 'there is no use thinking of it now, for I shall scarcely have lain down ere I shall be obliged to get up again.' So thinking, I set about dressing myself for the road, and as the season was winter and the weather dreadfully severe, took care to array myself in all the covering I could lay hands upon; and by the time I had enveloped myself in a pair of long Hungarian gaiters, and a kurtcha of sheep's-wool, with a brown bearskin outside, with a Welsh wig, and a pair of large dark glass goggles to defend the eyes from the snow, I was not only perfectly impervious to all effects of the weather, but so thoroughly defended from any influence of sight or sound, that a volcano might be hissing and thundering within ten yards of me, without attracting my slightest attention. Now, I thought, instead of remaining here I'll just step down to the coach, and get snugly into the diligence, and having secured the corner of the *coupé*, resign myself to sleep with the certainty of not being left behind, and probably, too, be some miles on my journey before awaking.

"I accordingly went downstairs, and to my surprise found even at that early hour, that many of the *garçons* of the house were stirring and bustling about, getting all the luggage up in the huge wooden leviathan that was to convey us on our road. There they stood, like bees around a hive, clustering and buzzing, and all so engaged, that with difficulty could I get an answer to my question of what diligence it was. 'La diligence pour Paris, Monsieur.'

"'Ah, all right then,' said I; so, watching an opportunity to do so unobserved, for I supposed they might have laughed at me, I stepped quietly into the *coupé*, and amid the creaking of cordage and the thumping of feet on the roof, fell as sound asleep as ever I did in my life, these sounds coming to my muffled ears soft as the echoes on the Rhine. When it was that I awoke I cannot say; but as I rubbed my eyes and yawned after a most refreshing sleep, I perceived that it was still quite dark all around, and that the diligence was standing before the door of some inn, and not moving. 'Ah,' thought I, 'this is the first stage; how naturally one always wakes at the change of horses, a kind of instinct implanted by Providence, I suppose, to direct us to a little refreshment on the road.' With these pious feelings I let down the glass, and called out to the *garçon* for a glass of brandy and a cigar. While he was bringing them, I had time to look about, and perceived, to my very great delight, that I had the whole *coupé* to myself. 'Are there any passengers coming in here?' said I, as the waiter came forward with my liquor. 'I should think not, sir,' said the fellow with a leer. 'Then I shall have the whole *coupé* to myself?' said I. 'Monsieur need have no fear of being disturbed; I can safely assure him that he will have no one there for the next twenty-four hours.' This was really pleasant intelligence; so I chucked him a ten-sou piece, and closing up the window as the morning was cold, once more lay back to sleep with a success that has never failed me. It was to a bright blue cloudless sky, and the sharp clear air of a fine day in winter, that I at length opened my eyes. I pulled out my watch, and discovered it was exactly two o'clock; I next lowered the glass and looked about me, and very much to my surprise discovered that the diligence was not moving, but standing very peaceably in a very crowded congregation of other similar and dissimilar conveyances, all of which seemed, I thought, to labor under some physical ailment, some wanting a box, others a body, etc., etc., and, in fact, suggesting the idea of an infirmary for old and disabled carriages of either sex, mails and others. 'Oh, I have it,' cried I, 'we are arrived at Mont-Géran, and they are all at dinner, and from my being alone in the *coupé*, they have forgotten to call me.' I

immediately opened the door and stepped out into the inn-yard, crowded with *conducteurs*, grooms, and ostlers, who, I thought, looked rather surprised at seeing me emerge from the diligence.

"'You did not know I was there?' said I, with a knowing wink at one of them as I passed.

"'*Assurément non*,' said the fellow with a laugh, that was the signal for all the others to join in it. 'Is the *table d'hôte* over?' said I, regardless of the mirth around me. 'Monsieur is just in time,' said the waiter, who happened to pass with a soup-tureen in his hand. 'Have the goodness to step this way.' I had barely time to remark the close resemblance of the waiter to the fellow who presented me with my brandy and cigar in the morning, when he ushered me into a large room, with about forty persons sitting at a long table, evidently waiting with impatience for the *potage* to begin their dinner. Whether it was they enjoyed the joke of having neglected to call me, or that they were laughing at my traveling costume, I cannot say, but the moment I came in, I could perceive a general titter run through the assembly. 'Not too late, after all, gentlemen,' said I, marching gravely up to the table.

"'Monsieur is in excellent time,' said the host, making room for me beside his chair. Notwithstanding the incumbrance of my weighty habliments, I proceeded to do ample justice to the viands before me, apologizing laughingly to the host, by pleading a traveler's appetite.

"'Then you have, perhaps, come far this morning,' said a gentleman opposite.

"'Yes,' said I, 'I have been on the road since four o'clock.'

"'And how are the roads?' said another. 'Very bad,' said I, 'the first few stages from Lyons, afterwards much better.' This was said at a venture, as I began to be ashamed of being always asleep before my fellow-travelers. They did not seem, however, to understand me perfectly; and one old fellow, putting down his spectacles from his forehead, leaned over and said: 'And where, may I ask, has Monsieur come from this morning?'

"'From Lyons,' said I, with the proud air of a man who has done a stout feat, and is not ashamed of the exploit.

"'From Lyons!' said one. 'From Lyons!' cried another. 'From Lyons!' repeated a third.

"'Yes,' said I; 'what the devil is so strange in it? Traveling is so quick now-a-days, one thinks nothing of twenty leagues before dinner.'

"The infernal shout of laughing that followed my explanation is still in my ears. From one end of the table to the other there was one continued ha, ha, ha!—from the greasy host to the little hunchbacked waiter, they were all grinning away.

"'And how did Monsieur travel?' said the old gentleman, who seemed to carry on the prosecution against me.

"'In the *coupé* of the *Aigle noir*,' said I, giving the name with some pride that I was not altogether ignorant of the conveyance.

"'Then you should certainly not complain of the roads,' said the host, chuckling; 'for the only journey that diligence has made this day has been from the street-door to the inn-yard; for as they found when the luggage was nearly packed that the axle was almost broken through, they wheeled it round to the *cour*, and prepared another for the travelers.'

"'And where am I now?' said I.

"'In Lyons,' said twenty voices, half choked with laughter at my question.

"I was thunderstruck at the news at first; but as I proceeded with my dinner I joined in the mirth of the party, which certainly was not diminished on my telling them the object of my intended journey.

"'I think, young man,' said the old fellow with the spectacles, 'that you should take the occurrence as a warning of Providence that marriage will not suit you.' I began to be of the same opinion;—but then there was the jointure. To be sure, I was to give up tobacco; and, perhaps, I should not be as free to ramble about as when a *garçon*. So, taking all things into consideration, I ordered in another bottle of Burgundy, to drink Mrs. Ram's health—got my passport *viséd* for Barèges—and set out for the Pyrenees the same evening."

"And have you never heard anything more of the lady?" said Mrs. Bingham.

"Oh, yes. She was faithful to the last; for I found out when at Rome last winter that she had offered a reward for me in the newspapers, and indeed had commenced a regular pursuit of me through the whole Continent. And to tell the real fact, I should not now fancy turning my steps towards Paris, if I had not very tolerable information that she is in full cry after me through the Wengen Alps, I having contrived a paragraph in *Galignani*, to seduce her thither, and where, with the blessing of Providence, if the snow set in early, she must pass the winter."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

PARIS.

Nothing more worthy of recording occurred before our arrival at Meurice's on the third day of our journey. My friend O'Leary had, with his usual good fortune, become indispensable to his new acquaintance, and it was not altogether without some little lurking discontent that I perceived how much less often my services were called in request since his having joined our party; his information, notwithstanding its very scanty extent, was continually relied upon, and his very imperfect French everlastingly called into requisition to interpret a question for the ladies. "Yes," thought I, "'Othello's occupation's gone'; one of two things has certainly happened, either Mrs. Bingham and her daughter have noticed my continued abstraction of mind, and have attributed it to the real cause, the preoccupation of my affections; or thinking, on the other hand, that I am desperately in love with one or other of them, have thought that a little show of preference to Mr. O'Leary may stimulate me to a proposal at once." In either case I resolved to lose no time in taking my leave, which there could be no difficulty in doing now, as the ladies had reached their intended destination, and had numerous friends in Paris to advise and assist them; besides that I had too long neglected the real object of my trip, and should lose no time in finding out the Callonbys, and at once learn what prospect of success awaited me in that quarter. Leaving my fair friends, then, to refresh themselves after the journey, and consigning Mr. O'Leary to the enjoyment of his meerschaum, through the aid of which he had rendered his apartment like a Dutch swamp in autumn, the only portion of his own figure visible through the mist being his short legs and heavy shoes, I set forth at last.

On reaching the house in the Rue de la Paix, where the Callonbys had resided, I learned that they were still at Baden, and were not expected in Paris for some weeks; that Lord Kilkee had arrived that morning, and was then dining at the Embassy, having left an invitation for me to dine with him on the following day, if I happened to call. As I turned from the door, uncertain whither to direct my steps, I walked on unconsciously towards the Boulevard, and, occupied as I was, thinking over all the chances before me, did not perceive where I stood till the bright glare of a large gas-lamp over my head apprised me that I was at the door of the well-known *Salon des Etrangers*, at the corner of the Rue Richelieu; carriages, *citadines*, and *vigilantes* were crowding, crashing, and clattering on all sides, as the host of fashion and the gaming-table were hastening to their *champ de bataille*. Not being a member of the *Salon*, and having little disposition to enter, if I had been, I stood for some minutes looking at the crowd as it continued to press on towards the splendid and brilliantly lighted stairs which led from the very street to the rooms of this palace, for such, in the magnificence and luxury of its decorations, it really was. As I was on the very eve of turning away, a large and very handsome cab-horse turned the corner from the Boulevard, with the most perfect appointment of harness and carriage I had seen for a long time.

While I continued to admire the taste and propriety of the equipage, a young man in deep mourning sprang from the inside and stood upon the pavement before me. "*A deux heures*, Charles," said he to his servant, as the cab turned slowly round. The voice struck me as well known. I waited till he approached the lamp, to catch a glimpse of the face; and what was my surprise to recognize my cousin, Guy Lorrequer, of the 10th, whom I had not met with for six years ago. My first impulse was not to make myself known to him. Our mutual position with regard to Lady Jane was so much a mystery, as regarded myself, that I feared the result of any meeting, until I was sufficiently aware of how matters stood, and whether we were to meet as friends and relations, or rivals, and consequently enemies.

Before I had time to take my resolution, Guy had recognized me, and seizing me by the hand with both his, called, "Harry, my old friend, how are you? How long have you been here? And never to call on me! Why, man, what is the meaning of this?" Before I had time to say that I was only a few hours in Paris, he again interrupted me by saying: "And how comes it that you are not in mourning? You must surely have heard it." "Heard what?" I cried, nearly hoarse from agitation. "Our poor old friend, Sir Guy, didn't you know, is dead." Only those who have felt how strong the ties of kindred are, as they decrease in number, can tell how this news fell upon my heart. All my poor uncle's kindnesses came full upon my memory; his affectionate letters of advice; his well-meant chidings, too,

even dearer to me than his praise and approval, completely unmanned me; and I stood speechless and powerless before my cousin as he continued to detail to me the rapid progress of Sir Guy's malady, an attack of gout in the head, which carried him off in three days. Letters had been sent to me in different places, but none reached; and at the very moment the clerk of my uncle's lawyer was in pursuit of me through the Highlands, where some mistaken information had induced him to follow me.

"You are, therefore," continued Guy, "unaware that our uncle has dealt so fairly by you, and, indeed, by both of us; I have got the Somersetshire estates, which go with the baronetcy; but the Cumberland property is all yours; and I heartily wish you joy of having nearly eight thousand per annum, and one of the sweetest villas that ever man fancied on Derwentwater. But come along here," continued he, and he led me through the crowded corridor and up the wide stair, "I have much to tell you, and we can be perfectly alone here; no one will trouble themselves with us." Unconscious of all around me, I followed Guy along the gilded and glittering lobby, which led to the *salon*, and it was only as the servant in rich livery came forward to take my hat and cane that I remembered where I was. Then the full sense of all I had been listening to rushed upon me, and the unfitness, and indeed the indecency of the place for such communications as we were engaged in, came most forcibly before me. Sir Guy, it is true, had always perferred my cousin to me; he it was who was always destined to succeed both to his title and his estates, and his wildness and extravagance had ever met with a milder rebuke and weaker chastisement than my follies and my misfortunes. Yet still he was my last remaining relative; the only one I possessed in all the world to whom in any difficulty or trial I had to look up; and I felt, in the very midst of my newly acquired wealth and riches, poorer and more alone than ever I had done in my lifetime. I followed Guy to a small and dimly-lighted cabinet off the great *salon*, where, having seated ourselves, he proceeded to detail to me the various events which a few short weeks had accomplished. Of himself he spoke but little, and never once alluded to the Callonbys at all; indeed, all I could learn was that he had left the army, and purposed remaining for the winter at Paris, where he appeared to have entered into all its gaiety and dissipation at once.

"Of course," said he, "you will give up 'sodgering' now; at the best it is but poor sport after five-and-twenty, and is perfectly unendurable when a man has the means of pushing himself in the gay world; and now, Harry, let us mix a little among the mob here; for *Messieurs les Banquiers* don't hold people in estimation who come here only for the *chapons au riz*, and the *champayne frappé*, as we should seem to do were we to stay here much longer."

Such was the whirl of my thoughts, and so great the confusion in my ideas from all I had just heard, that I felt myself implicitly following every direction of my cousin with a child-like obedience, of the full extent of which I became only conscious when I found myself seated at the table of the *salon*, between my cousin Guy and an old, hard-visaged, pale-countenanced man, who he told me in a whisper was Polignac the Minister.

What a study for the man who would watch the passions and emotions of his fellow-men, would the table of a *rouge et noir* gambling-house present—the skill and dexterity which games of other kinds require being here wanting, leave the player free to the full abandonment of the passion. The interest is not a gradually increasing or vacillating one, as fortune and knowledge of the game favor; the result is uninfluenced by anything of his doing; with the last turned card of the croupier is he rich or ruined; and thus in the very abstraction of the anxiety is this the most painfully exciting of all gambling whatever; the very rattle of the dice-box to the hazard-player is a relief; and the thought that he is in some way instrumental to his good or bad fortune gives a turn to his thoughts. There is something so like the inevitable character of fate associated with the result of a chance, which you can in no way affect or avert, that I have, notwithstanding a strong bias for play, ever dreaded and avoided the *rouge et noir* table. Hitherto prudential motives had their share in the resolve; a small loss at play becomes a matter of importance to a sub. in a marching regiment; and, therefore, I was firm in my determination to avoid the gambling-table. Now, my fortunes were altered; and as I looked at the heap of shining louis d'or, which Guy pushed before me in exchange for a *billet de banque* of large amount, I felt the full importance of my altered position, mingling with the old and long-practised prejudices which years had been accumulating to fix. There is, besides, some wonderful fascination to most men in the very aspect of high play; to

pit your fortune against that of another—to see whether or not your luck shall not exceed some other's—are feelings that have a place in most bosoms, and are certainly, if not naturally existing, most easily generated in the bustle and excitement of the gambling-house. The splendor of the decorations—the rich profusion of gilded ornaments—the large and gorgeously framed mirrors—the sparkling lustres, mingling their effect with the perfumed air of the apartment, filled with orange-trees and other aromatic shrubs—the dress of the company, among whom were many ladies in costumes not inferior to those of a court—the glitter of diamonds—the sparkle of stars and decorations, rendered more magical by knowing that the wearers were names in history. There, with his round but ample shoulder, and large massive head, covered with long snow-white hair, stands one, the maker and unmaker of kings, watching with a look of ill-concealed anxiety the progress of his game. Here is Soult, with his dogged look and beetle brow; there stands Balzac, the author; his gains here are less derived from the betting than the bettors; he is evidently "making his own" of some of them, while in the seeming *bonhomie* of his careless manner and easy *abandon*, they scruple not to trust him with anecdotes and traits, that from the crucible of his fiery imagination come forth like the purified gold from the furnace. And there, look at that old and weather-beaten man, with gray eye-brows and mustachios, who throws from the breast pocket of his frock, ever and anon, a handful of gold pieces upon the table; he evidently neither knows nor cares for the amount, for the banker himself is obliged to count over the stake for him—that is Blucher, the never-wanting attendant at the *salon*; he has been an immense loser, but plays on, and, with the same stern perseverance with which he would pour his bold cavalry through a ravine torn by artillery, he stands by the still waning chance with a courage that never falters.

One strong feature of the leveling character of a taste for play has never ceased to impress me most forcibly—not only do the individual peculiarities of the man give way before the all-absorbing passion, but, stranger still, the very boldest traits of nationality even fade and disappear before it; and man seems, under the high-pressure power of this greatest of all stimulants, resolved into a most abstract state.

Among all the traits which distinguish Frenchmen from natives of every country, none is more prominent than a kind of never-failing elasticity of temperament, which seems almost to defy all the power of misfortune to depress. Let what will happen, the Frenchman seems to possess some strong resource within himself, in his ardent temperament, upon which he can draw at will; and whether on the day after a defeat—the moment of being deceived in his strongest hopes of returned affection—the overthrow of some long-cherished wish—it matters not—he never gives way entirely: but see him at the gaming-table—watch the intense, the aching anxiety with which his eye follows every card as it falls from the hand of the croupier—behold the look of cold despair that tracks his stake as the banker rakes it in among his gains—and you will at once perceive that here, at least, his wonted powers fail him. No jest escapes the lips of one that would joke upon the steps of the guillotine. The mocker who would jeer at the torments of revolution stands like a coward quailing before the impassive eye and pale cheek of a croupier. While I continued to occupy myself by observing the different groups about me, I had been almost mechanically following the game, placing at each deal some gold upon the table; the result, however, had interested me so slightly, that it was only by remarking the attention my game had excited in others, that my own was drawn towards it. I then perceived that I had permitted my winnings to accumulate upon the board, and that in the very deal then commencing, I had a stake of nearly five hundred pounds.

"Faites votre jeu, le jeu est fait," said the croupier, "trente-deux."

"You have lost, by Jove!" said Guy, in a low whisper, in which I could detect some trait of agitation.

"Trente-et-un," added the croupier. "Rouge perd, et couleur."

There was a regular buzz of wonder through the room at my extraordinary luck, for thus, with every chance against me, I had won again.

As the croupier placed the *billets de banque* upon the table, I overheard the muttered commendations of an old veteran behind me, upon the coolness and judgment of my play. "So much for fortune," thought I. "My judgment consists in a perfect ignorance of the chances, and my coolness is merely a thorough indifference to success." Whether it was now that the flattery had its effect upon me, or that the passion for play, so long dormant, had suddenly seized hold upon me, I know not, but my attention became from that

moment riveted upon the game, and I played every deal. Guy, who had been from the first betting with the indifferent success which I have so often observed to attend upon the calculations of old and experienced gamblers, now gave up, and employed himself merely in watching my game."

"Harry," said he, at last, "I am completely puzzled as to whether you are merely throwing down your louis at hazard, or are not the deepest player I have ever met with."

"You shall see," said I, as I stooped over towards the banker, and whispered, "How far is the betting permitted?"

"Fifteen thousand francs," said the croupier, with a look of surprise.

"Here goes then!" said I; "quinze mille francs, rouge."

In a moment the rouge won, and the second deal I repeated the bet, and so continuing on with the like success. When I was preparing my rouleau for the fifth, the banker rose, and saying, "Messieurs, la banque est ferme pour ce soir," proceeded to lock his cassette, and close the table.

"You are satisfied now," said Guy, rising; "you see you have broken the bank, and a very pretty incident to commence with, on your first introduction to a campaign in Paris."

Having changed my gold for notes, I stuffed them, with an air of well-affected carelessness, into my pocket, and strolled through the *salon*, where I had now become an object of considerably more interest than all the marshals and ministers about me.

"Now, Hal," said Guy, "I'll just order our supper in the cabinet, and join you in a moment."

As I remained for some minutes awaiting Guy's return, my attention was drawn towards a crowd, in a smaller *salon*, among whom the usual silent decorum of the play-table seemed held in but small respect, for every instant some burst of hearty laughter, or some open expression of joy or anger burst forth, by which I immediately perceived that they were the votaries of the roulette-table, a game at which the strict propriety and etiquette ever maintained at *rouge et noir* are never exacted. As I pressed nearer, to discover the cause of the mirth, which every moment seemed to augment, guess my surprise to perceive among the foremost rank of the players my acquaintance, Mr. O'Leary, whom I at that moment believed to be solacing himself with his meerschaum at Meurice's. My astonishment at how he obtained admission to the *salon* was even less than my fear of his recognizing me. At no time is it agreeable to find that the man who is regarded as the buffo of a party turns out to be your friend; but still less is this so, when the individual claiming acquaintance with you presents any striking absurdity in his dress or manner, strongly at contrast with the persons and things about him. And thus it now happened. Mr. O'Leary's external man, as we met him on the Calais road, with its various accompaniments of blouse, cap, spectacles, and tobacco-pipe, were nothing very remarkable, but when the same figure presented itself among the *élegans* of the Parisian world, redolent of eau de Portugal, and superb in the glories of brocade waistcoats and velvet coats, the thing was too absurd, and I longed to steal away before any chance should present itself of a recognition. This, however, was impossible, as the crowd from the other table were all gathered round us, and I was obliged to stand fast, and trust that the excitement of the game, in which he appeared to be thoroughly occupied, might keep his eye fixed on another quarter. I now observed that the same scene in which I had so lately been occupied, at the *rouge et noir* table was enacting here, under rather different circumstances. Mr. O'Leary was the only player, as I had just been—not, however, because his success absorbed all the interest of the bystanders, but that, unfortunately his constant want of it elicited some strong expression of discontent and mistrust from him, which excited the loud laughter of the others, but of which, from his great anxiety in the game, he seemed totally unconscious.

"Faites votre jeu, messieurs," said the croupier.

"Wait a bit till I change this," said Mr. O'Leary, producing an English sovereign; the action interpreted his wishes, and the money was converted into *coupons de jeu*.

I now discovered one great cause of the mirth of the bystanders, at least the English portion of them. Mr. O'Leary, when placing his money upon the table, observed the singular practice of announcing aloud the amount of his bet, which, for his own information, he reduced to Irish currency; thus the stillness of the room was every instant broken by a strong Irish accent pronouncing something of this sort —"five francs," "four and a penny,"— "ten francs," "eight and three ha'pence." The amusement thus caused was increased by the excitement his losses threw him in-

to. He now ceased to play for several times, when at last, he made an offering of his usual stake.

"Perd," said the croupier, raking in the piece with a contemptuous air at the smallness of the bet, and in no way pleased that the interest Mr. O'Leary excited should prevent the other players from betting.

"Perd," said O'Leary, again. "Devil another song you sing than 'perd,' and I'm not quite clear you're not cheating all the while—only, God help you if you are!"

As he so said, the head of a huge blackthorn stick was half protruded across the table, causing renewed mirth; for, among other regulations, every cane, however trifling, is always demanded at the door; and thus a new subject of astonishment arose as to how he had succeeded in carrying it with him into the *salon*.

"Here's at you again," said O'Leary, regardless of the laughter, and covering three or four numbers with his *jetons*.

Round went the ball once more, and once more he lost.

"Look now, devil a lie in it, he makes them go wherever he pleases. I'll take a turn now at the tables; fair play's a jewel—and we'll see how you'll get on."

So saying, he proceeded to insinuate himself into the chair of the croupier, whom he proposed to supersede, by no very gentle means. This was of course resisted, and as the loud mirth of the bystanders grew more and more boisterous, the cries of "*A la porte! A la porte!*" from the friends of the bank, rang through the crowd.

"Go it, Pat—go it, Pat." said Guy, over my shoulder, who seemed to take a prodigious interest in the proceedings.

At this unexpected recognition of his nativity—for Mr. O'Leary never suspected he could be discovered by his accent—he looked across the table, and caught my eye at once.

"Oh, I'm safe now! stand by me, Mr. Lorrequer, and we'll clear the room."

So saying, and without any further provocation, he upset the croupier, chair and all, with one sudden jerk upon the floor, and giving a tremendous kick to the cassette, sent all the five-franc pieces flying over him; he then jumped upon the table, and brandishing his blackthorn through the ormolu lustre, scattered the wax-lights on all sides, accompanying the exploit by a yell that would have called up all Connemara at midnight, if it had only been heard there; in an instant, the gendarmes, always sufficiently near to be called in if required, came pouring into the room, and supposing the whole affair had been a preconcerted thing to obtain possession of the money in the bank, commenced capturing different members of the company who appeared by enjoying the confusion, to be favoring and assisting it. My cousin Guy was one of the first so treated—a proceeding to which he responded by an appeal rather in favor with most Englishmen, and at once knocked down the gendarme; this was the signal for a general engagement, and accordingly, before an explanation could possibly be attempted, a most terrific combat ensued. The Frenchmen in the room siding with the gendarmerie, and making common cause against the English; who, although greatly inferior in number, possessed considerable advantage, from long habit in street-rows and boxing encounters. As for myself, I had the good fortune to be pitted against a very pursy and unwieldy Frenchman, who *sacré'd* to admiration, but never put in a single blow at me; while, therefore, I amused myself practising what old Cribb called "the one, two," upon his fat carcass, I had abundant time and opportunity to watch all that was doing about me, and truly a more ludicrous affair I never beheld. Imagine about fifteen or sixteen young Englishmen, most of them powerful, athletic fellows, driving an indiscriminate mob of about five times their number before them, who, with courage enough to resist, were yet so totally ignorant of the boxing art, that they retreated pell-mell before the battering phalanx of their sturdy opponents—the most ludicrous figure of all being Mr. O'Leary himself, who, standing upon the table, laid about him with a brass lustre that he had unstrung, and did considerable mischief with this novel instrument of warfare, crying out the entire time, "Murder every mother's son of them!" "Give them another taste of Waterloo!" Just as he had uttered the last patriotic sentiment, he received a slight admonition from behind, by the point of a gendarme's sword, which made him leap from the table with the alacrity of a harlequin, and come plump down among the thickest of the fray. My attention was now directed elsewhere, for above all the din and *tapage* of the encounter I could plainly hear the row-dow-dow of the drums and the measured tread of troops approaching, and at once guessed that a reinforcement of the gendarmerie were coming up. Behind me there was a large window with a heavy scarlet curtain before it; my resolution was at once taken;

I floored my antagonist, whom I had till now treated with the most merciful forbearance, and immediately sprang behind the curtain. A second's consideration showed that in the search that must ensue this would afford no refuge, so I at once opened the sash, and endeavored to ascertain at what height I was above the ground beneath me; the night was so dark that I could see nothing, but judging from the leaves and twigs that reached to the window that it was a garden beneath, and auguring from the perfumed smell of the shrubs, that they could not be tall trees, I resolved to leap, a resolve I had little time to come to, for the step of the soldiers was already heard upon the stair. Fixing my hat, then, down upon my brows, and buttoning my coat tightly, I let myself down from the window-stool by my hands, and fell upon my legs in the soft earth of the garden, safe and unhurt. From the increased clamor and din overhead, I could learn the affray was at its height, and had little difficulty in detecting the sonorous accent and wild threats of my friend Mr. O'Leary high above all the other sounds around him. I did not wait long, however, to enjoy them, but at once set about securing my escape from my present bondage. In this I had little difficulty, for I was directed by a light to a small door, which, as I approached, found that it led into the den of the *concierge*, and also communicated by another door with the street. I opened it, therefore, at once, and was in the act of opening the second, when I felt myself seized by the collar by a strong hand; and on turning round, saw the sturdy figure of the *concierge* himself, with a drawn bayonet within a few inches of my throat. "Tenez, mon ami," said I, quietly; and placing half a dozen louis, some of my recent spoils, in his hand, at once satisfied him that, even if I were a robber, I was at least one that understood and respected the conveniences of society. He at once relinquished his hold and dropped his weapon, and pulling off his cap with one hand, to draw the cord which opened the *porte cochère* with the other, bowed me politely to the street. I had scarcely had time to insinuate myself into the dense mass of the people whom the noise and confusion within had assembled around the house, when the double door of the building opened, and a file of gendarmerie came forth, leading between them my friend Mr. O'Leary and some others of the rioters—among whom I rejoiced to find my cousin did not figure. If I were to judge from his disordered habiliments and scarred visage, Mr. O'Leary's resistance to the constituted authorities must have been a vigorous one, and the drollery of his appearance was certainly not decreased by his having lost the entire brim of his hat—the covering of his head bearing, under these distressing circumstances, a strong resemblance to a saucepan.

As I could not at that moment contribute in any way to his rescue, I determined on the following day to be present at his examination, and render him all the assistance in my power. Meanwhile I returned to Meurice's, thinking of every adventure of the evening much more than of my own changed condition and altered fortunes.

CHAPTER XXIX.

PARIS.

THE first thing which met my eye, when waking in the morning, after the affair at the *salon* was the *rouleau of billets de banque* which I had won at play; and it took several minutes before I could persuade myself that the entire recollection of the evening had any more solid foundation than a heated brain and fevered imagination. The sudden spring from being a subaltern in the 4—th, with a few hundreds per annum—*pour tout potage*, to becoming the veritable proprietor of several thousands, with a handsome house in Cumberland, was a consideration which I could scarcely admit into my mind, so fearful was I that the very first occurrence of the day should dispel the illusion, and throw me back into the dull reality which I was hoping to escape from.

There is no adage more true than the old Roman one—"that what we wish, we readily believe;" so I had little difficulty in convincing myself that all was as I desired—although, certainly, my confused memory of the past evening contributed little to that conviction. It was, then, amid a very whirl of anticipated pleasures, and new schemes for enjoying life, that I sat down to a breakfast, at which, that I might lose no time in commencing my race, I had ordered the most exquisite viands which even French cookery could accomplish for the occasion.

My plans were soon decided upon. I resolved to remain only long enough in Paris to provide myself with a comfortable traveling carriage, secure a good courier, and start for Baden; when I trusted that my pretensions, whatever favor they might

have been once received with, would certainly now, at least, be listened to with more prospect of being successful.

I opened the *Galignani's* paper of the day to direct me in my search, and had scarcely read a few lines before a paragraph caught my eye, which not a little amused me; it was headed—*Serious Riot at the Salon des Etrangers, and attempt to Rob the Bank:*

"Last evening, among the persons who presented themselves at the table of this fashionable resort, were certain individuals who, by their manners and dress, bespoke anything rather than the rank and condition of those who usually resort there, and whose admission is still unexplained, notwithstanding the efforts of the police to unravel the mystery. The proprietors of the bank did not fail to remark these persons, but scrupled, from fear of disturbing the propriety of the *salon*, to take the necessary steps for their exclusion, reserving their intention to the adoption of precautions against such intrusion in future — unfortunately, as it turned out, eventually — for, toward eleven o'clock, one of these individuals, having lost a considerable sum at play, proceeded in a very violent and outrageous manner to denounce the bank, and went so far as to accuse the croupier of cheating. This language, having failed to excite the disturbance it was evidently intended to promote, was soon followed up by a most dreadful personal attack upon the banker, in which he was thrown from his seat, and the *cassette*, containing several thousand francs in gold and notes, immediately laid hold of. The confusion now became considerable, and it was apparent that the whole had been a preconcerted scheme. Several persons, leaping upon the table, attempted to extinguish the great luster of the *salon*, in which bold attempt they were most spiritedly resisted by some of the other players and the gendarmes, who had by this time arrived in force. The riot was quelled after a prolonged and desperate resistance, and the rioters, with the exception of two, were captured, and conveyed to prison, where they await the result of a judicial investigation, of which we shall not fail to lay the particulars before our readers.

"Since our going to press, we have learned that one of the ringleaders in this vile scheme is a noted English *escroc*—a swindler, who was already arrested at C—— for traveling with a false passport, but who contrives, by some collusion with another of the gang, to evade the local authorities. If this be the case, we trust he will speedily be detected and brought to punishment."

Whatever amusement I had found in reading the commencing portion of this ridiculous misstatement, the allusion in the latter part by no means afforded me equal pleasure; and I saw in one rapid glance how much annoyance, and how many delays and impediments, a charge even of this ridiculous nature might give rise to in my present circumstances. "My passport, however, will settle all," thought I, as I thrust my hand toward my pocket, in which I had placed it along with some letters.

Guess my misery to discover that the whole of the pocket had been cut away, probably in the hope of obtaining the *billets de banque* I had won at play, but which I had changed from that pocket to a breast one on leaving the table. This at once led me to suspect that there might be some truth in the suspicion of the newspaper writer of a preconcerted scheme, and at once explained to me what had much puzzled me before—the extreme rapidity with which the elements of discord were propagated, for the whole affair was the work of a few seconds. While I continued to meditate on these matters, the waiter entered with a small note in an envelope, which a commissionnaire had just left at the hotel for me, and went away, saying there was no answer. I opened it hastily, and read:—

"Dear H.,—The confounded affair of last night has induced me to leave this for a few days; besides that, I have obtained a most excellent reason for absenting myself in the presence of a black eye, which will prevent my appearance in public for a week to come. As you are a stranger here, you need not fear being detected. With all its *désagrémens*, I can't help laughing at the adventure, and I am heartily glad to have had the opportunity of displaying old Jackson's science upon those wretched gendarmes.

"Yours truly,

"G. L."

"This certainly," thought I, "improves my position. Here is my cousin Guy—the only one to whom, in any doubt or difficulty here, I could refer—here he is—flown, without letting me know where to address him or find him out." I rang my bell hastily, and having written a line on my card, requesting Lord Kilkee to come to me as soon as he could, dispatched it to

the Rue de la Paix. The messenger soon returned with an answer that Lord Kilkee had been obliged to leave Paris late the evening before, having received some important letters from Baden. My anxiety now became greater. I did not know but that the moment I ventured to leave the hotel I should be recognized by some of the witnesses of the evening's fray; and all thoughts of succoring poor O'Leary were completely forgotten in my fear for the annoyances the whole of this ridiculous affair might involve me in. Without any decision as to my future steps, I dressed myself, and proceeded to pay my respects to Mrs. Bingham and her daughter, who were in the same hotel, and whom I had not seen since our arrival.

As I entered the drawing-room, I was surprised to find Miss Bingham alone. She appeared to have been weeping—at least the efforts she made to appear easy and in good spirits contrasted a good deal with the expression of her features as I came in. To my inquiries for Mrs. Bingham, I received for answer that the friends Mrs. Bingham had expected having left a few days before for Baden, she had resolved on following them, and had now merely driven out to make a few purchases before her departure, which was to take place in the morning.

There is something so sad in the thought of being deserted and left by one's friends under any circumstances, that I cannot express how much this intelligence affected me. It seemed, too, like the last drop of bad news filling up the measure, that I was to be suddenly deprived of the society of the very few friends about me, just as I stood most in need of them.

Whether or not Miss Bingham noticed my embarrassment, I cannot say; but certainly she seemed not displeased, and there was in the half-encouraging tone of her manner something which led me to suspect that she was not dissatisfied with the impression her news seemed to produce upon me.

Without at all alluding to my own improved fortune, or to the events of the preceding night, I began to talk over the coming journey, and expressed my sincere regret that, having lost my passport under circumstances which might create some delay, I could not join their party as I should otherwise have done.

Miss Bingham heard this speech with rather more emotion than so simple a declaration was calculated to produce; and, while she threw down her eyes beneath their long dark lashes, and colored slightly, asked,—

"And did you really wish to come with us?"

"Undoubtedly," said I.

"And is there no other objection than the passport?"

"None whatever," said I, warming as I spoke, for the interest she appeared to take in me completely upset all my calculations; besides that, I had never seen her looking so handsome, and *that*, as the French wisely remark, *vaut toujours quelque chose.*

"Oh, then, pray come with us, which you can do, for mamma has just got a passport for her nephew along with her own; and as we really don't want *him*, nor *he us*, we shall both be better pleased to be free of each other, and you can easily afterwards have your own forwarded to Baden by post."

"Ah, but," said I, "how shall I be certain, if I take so flattering an offer, that you will forgive me for filling up the place of the dear cousin, for, if I conjecture aright, it is *le cher Edouard* that purposes to be your companion."

"Yes, you have guessed quite correctly; but you must not tax me with inconsistency, but really I have grown quite tired of my poor cousin, since I saw him last night."

"And you used to admire him most prodigiously."

"Well, well, that is all true, but I do so no longer."

"Eh! *perche?*" said I, looking cunningly in her eye.

"For reasons that Mr. Lorrequer shall never know if he has to ask them," said the poor girl, covering her eyes with her hands, and sobbing bitterly.

What I thought, said, or did upon this occasion, with all my most sincere desire to make a "clean breast of it in these Confessions," I know not; but this I do know, that two hours after, I found myself still sitting upon the sofa beside Miss Bingham, whom I had been calling Emily all the while, and talking more of personal matters and my own circumstances than is ever safe or prudent for a young man to do with any lady under the age of his mother.

All that I can now remember of this interview is the fact of having arranged my departure in the manner proposed by Miss Bingham—a proposition to which I acceded with an affectation of satisfaction that I fear went very far to deceive my fair friend. Not that the pleasure I felt

in the prospect was altogether feigned; but certainly the habit of being led away by the whim and temper of the moment had so much become part of my nature, that I had long since despaired of ever guarding myself against the propensity I had acquired of following every lead which any one might throw out for me. And thus, as poor Harry Lorrequer was ever the first man to get into a row at the suggestion of a friend, so he only waited the least possible pressing on any occasion to involve himself in any scrape or misfortune that presented itself, provided there was only some one good enough to advise him to do so.

As I entered my own room, to make preparations for my departure, I could not help thinking over all the events thus crowded into the space of a few hours. My sudden possession of wealth—my prospects at Callonby still undecided—my scrape at the *salon*—my late interview with Miss Bingham, in which I had only stopped short of a proposal to marry, were almost sufficient to occupy any reasonable mind; and so I was beginning to suspect, when the waiter informed me that the commissaire of police was in waiting below and wished to speak to me. Affecting some surprise at the request, which I at once perceived the object of, I desired him to be introduced. I was quite correct in my guess. The information of my being concerned in the affair at the *salon* had been communicated to the authorities, and the commissaire had orders to obtain bail for my appearance at the Tribunal de Justice, on that day week, or commit me at once to prison. The commissaire politely gave me till evening to procure the required bail, satisfying himself that he could adopt measures to prevent my escape, and took his leave. He had scarcely gone when Mr. Edward Bingham was announced—the reason for this visit I could not so easily divine: but I had little time allowed for my conjectures, as the same instant a very smart, dapper little gentleman presented himself, dressed in all the extravagance of French mode. His hair, which was permitted to curl upon his shoulders, was divided along the middle of the head; his mustachios were slightly upturned and carefully waxed, and his small chin-tuft or Henri Quatre most gracefully pointed; he wore three most happily contrasting colored waistcoats, and spurs of glittering brass. His visit was of scarcely five minutes' duration; but was evidently the opening of a breaching battery by the Bingham family in all form—the object of which I could at least guess at.

My embarrassments were not destined to end here; for scarcely had I returned Mr. Bingham's eighth salutation at the end of the staircase, when another individual presented himself before me. This figure was in every respect the opposite of my last visitor. Although framed perfectly upon the late Parisian school of dandyism, his, however, was the *Ecole militaire*. Le Capitaine Eugène de Joncourt, for so he introduced himself, was a portly personage of about five-and-thirty or forty years of age, with that mixture of *bonhomie* and ferocity in his features which the soldiers of Napoleon's army either affected or possessed naturally. His features, which were handsome, and the expression of which was pleasing, were, as it seemed, perverted, by the warlike turn of a most terrific pair of whiskers and mustachios, from their naturally good-humored bent; and the practiced frown and quick turn of his dark eye were evidently only the acquired advantages of his military career; a handsome mouth, with singularly regular and good teeth, took much away from the stern look of the upper part of his face, and contributed, with the aid of a most pleasing voice, to impress you in his favor: his dress was a blue braided frock, decorated with the cordon of the Legion; but neither these, nor the clink of his long cavalry spurs, were necessary to convince you that the man was a soldier; besides that, there was that mixture of urbanity and *aplomb* in his manner, which showed him to be perfectly accustomed to the usages of the best society.

"May I beg to know," said he, as he seated himself slowly, "if this card contains your name and address?" handing me at the same moment one of my visiting cards. I immediately replied in the affirmative.

"You are in the English service?"

"Yes."

"Then, may I entreat your pardon for the trouble of these questions, and explain the reason of my visit? I am the friend of Le Baron d'Haulpenne, with whom you had the altercation last night at the *salon*, and in whose name I have come to request the address of a friend on your part."

"Ho, ho," thought I, "the baron is then the stout gentleman that I pummelled so unmercifully near the window; but how came he by my card? and besides, in a row of that kind, I am not aware how far the matter can be conceived to go farther than what happens at the moment." These were

the thoughts of a second of time, and before I could reply, the captain resumed,——

"You seem to have forgotten the circumstance, and so, indeed, should I like to do; but, unfortunately, D'Haulpenne says that you struck him with your walking-cane, so you know, under such a state of things, there is but one course."

"But gently," added I, "I had no cane whatever last evening."

"Oh! I beg pardon," interrupted he; "but my friend is most positive in his account, and describes the altercation as having continued from the *salon* to the street, when you struck him, and at the same time threw him your card. Two of your officers were also present; and although, as it appears from your present forgetfulness, that the thing took place in the heat and excitement of the moment, still——"

"But still," said I, catching up his last words, "I never did strike the gentleman as you describe, never had any altercation in the street—and——"

"Is that your address?" said the Frenchman, with a slight bow.

"Yes, certainly it is."

"Why, then," said he, with a mild curl of his upper lip, half smile, half derision——

"Why, then, make yourself perfectly easy," I replied. "If any one has by an accident made use of my name, it shall not suffer by such a mistake. I shall be quite at your service the moment I can find out a friend to refer you to."

I had much difficulty to utter these few words with a suitable degree of temper, so stung was I by the insolent demeanor of the Frenchman, whose coolness and urbanity seemed only to increase every moment.

"Then I have the honor to salute you," said he, rising with great mildness in his voice; "and shall take the liberty to leave my card for the information of your friend."

So saying, he placed his card upon the table, "Le Capitaine Eugène de Joncourt, Cuirassiers de la Garde."

"I need not press upon Monsieur the value of dispatch."

"I shall not lose a moment," said I, as he clattered down the stairs of the hotel, with that perfect swaggering *nonchalance* which your foreigner is always an adept in; and I returned to my room to meditate upon my numerous embarrassments, and think over the difficulties which every moment was contributing to increase the number of.

"The indictment has certainly many counts," thought I.

Imprimis: a half-implied, but fully comprehended promise to marry a young lady, with whom, I confess, I only intend to journey this life—as far as Baden.

Secondly: a charge of swindling—for such the imputation amounts to—at the *salon*.

Thirdly: another unaccountable delay in joining the Callonbys, with whom I am every hour in the risk of being *compromis;* and, lastly, a duel in perspective with some confounded Frenchman, who is at this very moment practicing at a pistol gallery.

Such were the heads of my reflections, and such the agreeable impressions my visit to Paris was destined to open with; how they were to be followed up remains to be told.

CHAPTER XXX.

CAPTAIN TREVANION'S ADVENTURE.

As the day was now waning apace, and I was still unprovided with any one who could act as my second, I set out upon a search through the various large hotels in the neighborhood, trusting that amid my numerous acquaintance I should be fortunate enough to find some of them at Paris. With a most anxious eye I scanned the lists of arrivals at the usual haunts of my countrymen, in the Rue Rivoli and the Place Vendôme, but without success; there were long catalogues of "Milors," with their "couriers," etc., but not one name known to me in the number.

I repaired to Galignani's Library, which, though crowded as ever with English, did not present to me one familiar face. From thence I turned into the Palais Royal, and at last, completely jaded by walking, and sick from disappointment, I sat down upon a bench in the Tuileries Gardens.

I had scarcely been there many minutes when a gentleman accosted me in English, saying, "May I ask if this be your property?" showing, at the same time, a pocket-book which I had inadvertently dropped in pulling out my handkerchief. As I thanked him for his attention, and was about to turn away, I perceived that he continued to look very steadily at me. At length he said:—

"I think I am not mistaken; I have the pleasure to see Mr. Lorrequer, who may, perhaps, recollect my name, Trevanion, of the 43d. The last time we met was at Malta."

"Oh, I remember perfectly. Indeed, I should be very ungrateful if I did not; for to your kind offices there I am indebted for my life. You must surely recollect the street row near the battery?"

"Yes; that was rather a brisk affair while it lasted; but, pray, how long have you been here?"

"Merely a few days; and most anxious am I to leave as soon as possible; for, independently of pressing reasons to wish myself elsewhere, I have had nothing but trouble and worry since my arrival, and at this instant am involved in a duel, without the slightest cause that I can discover, and, what is still worse, without the aid of a single friend to undertake the requisite negotiation for me."

"If my services can in any way assist——"

"Oh, my dear captain, this is really so great a favor that I cannot say how much I thank you."

"Say nothing whatever, but rest quite assured that I am completely at your disposal; for although we are not very old friends, yet I have heard so much of you from some of ours, that I feel as if we had been long acquainted."

This was an immense piece of good fortune to me; for, of all the persons I knew, he was the most suited to aid me at this moment. In addition to a thorough knowledge of the Continent and its habits, he spoke French fluently, and had been the most distinguished authority in the duello to a large military acquaintance; joining to a consummate tact and cleverness in his diplomacy a temper that never permitted itself to be ruffled, and a most unexceptionable reputation for courage. In a word to have had Trevanion for your second was not only to have secured odds in your favor, but, still better, to have obtained the certainty that, let the affair take what turn it might, you were sure of coming out of it with credit.

He was the only man I have ever met who had much mixed himself in transactions of this nature, and yet never, by any chance, had degenerated into the fire-eater; more quiet, unassuming manners it was impossible to meet with, and, in the various anecdotes I had heard of him, I had always traced a degree of forbearance that men of less known bravery might not have ventured to practice. At the same time, when once roused by anything like premeditated insult—or predetermined affront—he became almost ungovernable, and it would be safer to beard the lion in his den than cross his path. Among the many stories, and there were a great many current in his regiment concerning him, there was one so singularly characteristic of the man, that, as I have passingly mentioned his name here, I may as well relate it; at the same time premising that, as it is well known, I may only be repeating an often-heard tale to many of my readers.

When the regiment to which Trevanion belonged became part of the army of occupation in Paris, he was left at Versailles, seriously ill from the effects of a saber-wound he received at Waterloo, and from which his recovery at first was exceedingly doubtful. At the end of several weeks, however, he became out of danger, and was able to receive the visits of his brother officers, whenever they were fortunate enough to obtain a day's leave of absence to run down and see him. From them he learnt that one of his oldest friends in the regiment had fallen in a duel, during the time of his illness, and that two other officers were dangerously wounded—one of them was not expected to survive. When he inquired as to the reasons of these many disasters, he was informed that since the entrance of the allies into Paris, the French officers, boiling with rage and indignation at their recent defeat, and smarting under the hourly disgrace which the presence of their conquerors suggested, sought out, by every means in their power, opportunities of insult; but always so artfully contrived as to render the opposite party the challenger, thus reserving to themselves the choice of the weapons. When, therefore, it is borne in mind that the French are the most expert swordsmen in Europe, little doubt can exist as to the issue of these combats; and, in fact, scarcely a morning passed without three or four English or Prussian officers being carried through the Barrière de l'Etoile, if not dead, at least seriously wounded, and condemned to carry with them through life the inflictions of a sanguinary and savage spirit of vengeance.

While Trevanion listened to this sad recital—and scarcely did a day come without adding to the long catalogue of disasters—he at once perceived that the quiet deportment and unassuming demeanor which so strongly characterize the English officer were construed by their French opponents into evidences of want of courage, and saw that to so systematic a plan for slaughter no common remedy could be applied, and that some *coup d'état* was absolutely necessary to put it down once and for ever.

In the history of these sanguinary ren-

contres one name was continually recurring, generally as the principal, sometimes the instigator of the quarrel. This was an officer of a chasseur regiment, who had the reputation of being the best swordsman in the whole French army, and was no less distinguished for his "skill at fence" than his uncompromising hatred of the British, with whom alone, of all the allied forces, he was ever known to come in contact. So celebrated was the "Capitaine Auguste Gendemar" for his pursuits, that it was well known at that time in Paris that he was the president of a duelling club, associated for the express and avowed object of provoking to insult, and as certainly dooming to death, every English officer upon whom they could fasten a quarrel.

The Café Phillidor, at that period in the Rue Vivienne, was the rendezvous of this reputable faction, and here le Capitaine reigned supreme, receiving accounts of the various "affairs" which were transacting —counseling and plotting for the future. His ascendancy among his countrymen was perfectly undisputed, and being possessed of great muscular strength, and that peculiar *farouche* exterior, without which courage is nothing in France, he was in every way calculated for the infamous leadership he assumed.

It was, unfortunately, to this same café, being situated in what was called the English quarter, that the officers of the 43d regiment were in the habit of resorting, totally unaware of the plots by which they were surrounded, and quite unsuspecting the tangled web of deliberate and cold-blooded assassination in which they were involved, and here took place the quarrel, the result of which was the death of Trevanion's friend, a young officer of great promise, and universally beloved in his regiment.

As Trevanion listened to these accounts, his impatience became daily greater that his weak state should prevent his being among his brother officers, when his advice and assistance were so imperatively required, and where, amid all the solicitude for his perfect recovery, he could not but perceive they ardently wished for his presence.

The day at last arrived, and, restored to something like his former self, Trevanion once more appeared in the mess-room of his regiment. Amid the many sincere and hearty congratulations on his recovered looks were not a few half-expressed hints that he should not go much out into the world, for some little time to come. To these friendly admonitions Trevanion replied by a good-humored laugh, and a ready assurance that he understood the intended kindness, and felt in no wise disposed to be invalided again. "In fact," said he, "I have come up here to enjoy life a little, not to risk it; but among the sights of your gay capital, I must certainly have a peep at your famed captain, of whom I have heard too much not to feel an interest in him."

Nothwithstanding the many objections to this, made with a view to delay his visit to the Phillidor to a later period, it was at length agreed that they should all repair to the café that evening, but upon the express understanding that every cause of quarrel should be strictly avoided, and that their stay should be merely sufficient to satisfy Trevanion's curiosity as to the appearance of the renowned captain.

It was rather before the usual hour of the café's filling, that a number of English officers, among whom was Trevanion, entered the *salon* of the Phillidor; having determined not to attract any unusual attention, they broke into little knots and parties of threes and fours, and dispersed through the room, where they either sipped their coffee or played at dominoes, then, as now, the staple resource of a French café.

The clock over the *comptoir* struck eight, and, at the same instant, a waiter made his appearance, carrying a small table, which he placed beside the fire, and, having trimmed a lamp, and placed a large armchair before it, was about to withdraw, when Trevanion, whose curiosity was roused by the singularity of these arrangements, determined upon asking for whose comfort they were intended. The waiter stared for a moment at the question, with an air as if doubting the seriousness of him who put it, and at last replied, "*Pour Monsieur le Capitaine, je crois,*" with a certain tone of significance upon the latter words.

"Le Capitaine! but what captain?" said he, carelessly; "for I am a captain, and that gentleman there—and there, too, is another," at the same instant throwing himself listlessly into the well-cushioned chair, and stretching out his legs at full length upon the hearth.

The look of horror which this quiet proceeding on his part elicited from the poor waiter, so astonished Trevanion, that he could not help saying,—"Is there anything the matter with you, my friend? Are you ill?"

"No, monsieur, not ill; nothing the matter with *me;* but *you,* sir, oh, you, sir, pray come away."

"*Me!*" said Trevanion—"me! why, my good man, I was never better in my life; so now just bring me my coffee and the *Moniteur*, if you have it; there, don't stare that way, but do as I bid you."

"There was something in the assured tone of these few words that either overawed or repressed every rising feeling of the waiter for his interrogator; for, silently handing his coffee and the newspaper, he left the room; not, however, without bestowing a parting glance so full of terror and dismay that our friend was obliged to smile at it. All this was the work of a few minutes, and not until the noise of new arrivals had attracted the attention of his brother officers, did they perceive where he had installed himself, and to what danger he was thus, as they supposed, unwittingly exposed.

In perfect misery at what they conceived their own fault, in not apprising him of the sacred character of that place, they stood silently looking at him as he continued to sip his coffee, apparently unconscious of everything and person about him.

It was now, however, too late for remonstrance; for already several French officers had noticed the circumstance, and by their interchange of looks and signs, openly evinced their satisfaction at it, and their delight at the catastrophe which seemed inevitable to the luckless Englishman.

There was now a more than ordinary silence in the café, which at all times was remarkable for the quiet and noiseless demeanor of its frequenters, when the door was flung open by the ready waiter, and the Capitaine Auguste Gendemar entered. He was a large squarely-built man, with a most savage expression of countenance, which a bushy beard and shaggy overhanging moustache served successfully to assist; his eyes were shaded by deep, projecting brows, and long eyebrows slanting over them, and increasing their look of piercing sharpness; there was in his whole air and demeanor that certain French air of swaggering bullyism which ever remained in those who, having risen from the ranks, maintained the look of ruffianly defiance which gave their early character for courage its peculiar merit.

To the friendly salutations of his countrymen he returned the slightest and coldest acknowledgments, throwing a glance of disdain around him as he wended his way to his accustomed place beside the fire; this he did with as much of noise and swagger as he could well contrive; his saber and sabretasche clanking behind, his spurs jangling, and his heavy step, made purposely heavier to draw upon him the notice and attention he sought for. Trevanion alone testified no consciousness of his entrance, and appeared totally engrossed by the columns of his newspaper, from which he never lifted his eyes for an instant. Le Capitaine at length reached the fire-place, when, no sooner did he behold his accustomed seat in the possession of another, than he absolutely started back with surprise and anger.

What might have been his first impulse it is hard to say, for, as the blood rushed to his face and forehead, he clenched his hands firmly, and seemed for an instant, as he eyed the stranger, like a tiger about to spring upon its victim; this was but for a second, for turning rapidly round toward his friends, he gave them a look of peculiar meaning, showing two rows of white teeth, with a grin which seemed to say, "I have taken my line;" and he had done so. He now ordered the waiter, in a voice of thunder, to bring him a chair. This he took roughly from him and placed, with a crash, upon the floor, exactly opposite that of Trevanion, and still so near, as scarcely to permit of his sitting down upon it. The noisy vehemence of this action at last appeared to have roused Trevanion's attention, for he now, for the first time, looked up from his paper, and quietly regarded his *vis-à-vis*. There could not in the world be a stronger contrast to the bland look and courteous expression of Trevanion's handsome features, than the savage scowl of the enraged Frenchman, in whose face the strong and ill-repressed workings of passion were twitching and distorting every lineament and line; indeed no words could ever convey half so forcibly as did that look, insult—open, palpable, deep, determined insult!

Trevanion, whose eyes had been merely for a moment lifted from his paper, again fell, and he appeared to take no notice whatever of the extraordinary proximity of the Frenchman, still less of the savage and insulting character of his looks.

Le Capitaine, having thus failed to bring on the explanation he sought for, proceeded to accomplish it by other means; for, taking the lamp, by the light of which Trevanion was still reading, he placed it at his side of the table, and at the same instant stretching across his arm, he plucked the newspaper from his hand, giving at the same moment a glance of triumph toward the bystanders, as though he would say, "You see what he must submit to." Words cannot describe the

astonishment of the British officers, as they beheld Trevanion, under this gross and open insult, content himself by a slight smile and half bow, as if returning a courtesy, and then throw his eyes downward, as if engaged in deep thought, while the triumphant sneer of the French, at this unaccountable conduct, was absolutely maddening to them to endure.

But their patience was destined to submit to stronger proof, for at this instant le Capitaine stretched forth one enormous leg, cased in his massive jack-boot, and with a crash deposited the heel upon the foot of their friend Trevanion. At length he is roused, thought they, for a slight flush of crimson flitted across his cheek, and his upper lip trembled with a quick spasmodic twitching; but both these signs were over in a second, and his features were as calm and unmoved as before, and his only appearance of consciousness of the affront was given by his drawing back his chair and placing his legs beneath it, as if for protection.

This last insult, and the tame forbearance with which it was submitted to, produced all their opposite effects upon the bystanders, and looks of ungovernable rage and derisive contempt were every moment interchanging; indeed, were it not for the all-absorbing interest which the two great actors in the scene had concentrated upon themselves, the two parties must have come at once into open conflict.

The clock of the café struck nine, the hour at which Gendemar always retired, so calling to the waiter for his glass of brandy, he placed his newspaper upon the table, and putting both his elbows upon it, and his chin upon his hands, he stared full in Trevanion's face, with a look of the most derisive triumph, meant to crown the achievement of the evening. To this, as to all his former insults, Trevanion appeared still insensible, and merely regarded him with his never-changing half smile; the brandy arrived; Le Capitaine took it in his hand, and with a nod of most insulting familiarity, saluted Trevanion, adding with a loud voice, so as to be heard on every side—"A votre courage, Anglais." He had scarcely swallowed the liquor, when Trevanion rose slowly from his chair, displaying to the astonished gaze of the Frenchman the immense proportions and gigantic frame of a man well-known as the largest officer in the British army; with one stride he was beside the chair of the Frenchman, and with the speed of lightning he seized his nose by one hand, while with the other he grasped his lower jaw, and, wrenching open his mouth with the strength of an ogre, he spat down his throat.

So sudden was the movement, that before ten seconds had elapsed, all was over, and the Frenchman rushed from the room, holding the fragments of his jaw-bone (for it was fractured!), and followed by his countrymen, who, from that hour, deserted the Café Phillidor; nor was there ever any mention of the famous captain during the stay of the regiment in Paris.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DIFFICULTIES.

WHILE we walked together toward Meurice's, I explained to Trevanion the position in which I stood; and having detailed, at full length, the row at the *salon*, and the imprisonment of O'Leary, entreated his assistance in behalf of him, as well as to free me from some of my many embarrassments.

It was strange enough—though at first so pre-occupied was I with other thoughts, that I paid but little attention to it—that no part of my eventful evening seemed to make so strong an impression on him as my mention of having seen my cousin Guy, and heard from him of the death of my uncle. At this portion of my story he smiled, with so much significance of meaning, that I could not help asking his reason.

"It is always an unpleasant task, Mr. Lorrequer, to speak in any way however delicately, in a tone of disparagement of a man's relative; and therefore, as we are not long enough acquainted——"

"But pray," said I, "waive that consideration, and only remember the position in which I now am. If you know anything of this business, I entreat you to tell me—I promise to take whatever you may be disposed to communicate, in the same good part it is intended."

"Well, then, I believe you are right; but first, let me ask you, how do you know of your uncle's death; for I have reason to doubt it?"

"From Guy: he told me himself."

"When did you see him, and where?"

"Why, I have just told you; I saw him last night at the *salon*."

"And you could not be mistaken?"

"Impossible! Besides, he wrote to me a note which I received this morning—here it is."

"Hem—ha. Well, are you satisfied that it is his handwriting?" said Trevanion, as he perused the note slowly twice over.

"Why of course—but stop—you are right; it is not his hand, nor do I know the writing, now that you direct my attention to it. But what can that mean? You, surely, do not suppose that I have mistaken any one for him; for, independent of all else, his knowledge of my family, and my uncle's affairs, would quite disprove that."

"This is really a complex affair," said Trevanion, musingly. "How long may it be since you saw your cousin—before last night, I mean?"

"Several years; above six, certainly."

"Oh, it is quite possible, then," said Trevanion, musingly; "do you know, Mr. Lorrequer, this affair seems more puzzling to me than to you, and for this plain reason—I am disposed to think you never saw your cousin last night."

"Why, confound it, there is one circumstance that I think may satisfy you on that head. You will not deny that I saw some one, who very much resembled him; and, certainly, as he lent me above three thousand francs to play with at the table, it looks rather more like his act than that of a perfect stranger."

"Have you got the money?" asked Trevanion, dryly.

"Yes," said I; "but certainly you are the most unbelieving of mortals, and I am quite happy that I have yet in my possession two of the *billets de banque*, for, I suppose, without them, you would scarcely credit me." I here opened my pocket-book, and produced the notes.

He took them, examined them attentively for an instant, held them between him and the light, refolded them, and, having placed them in my pocket-book, said, "I thought as much—they are forgeries."

"Hold!" said I; "my cousin Guy, whatever wildness he may have committed, is yet totally incapable of——"

"I never said the contrary," replied Trevanion, in the same dry tone as before.

"Then what can you mean, for I see no alternative between that and totally discrediting the evidence of my senses?"

"Perhaps I can suggest a middle course," said Trevanion; "lend me, therefore, a patient hearing for a few moments, and I may be able to throw some light upon this difficult matter. You may never have heard that there is, in this same city of Paris, a person so extremely like your cousin Guy, that his most intimate friends have daily mistaken one for the other, and this mistake has the more often been made from the circumstances of their both being in the habit of frequenting the same class in society, where, knowing and walking with the same people, the difficulty of discriminating has been greatly increased. This individual, who has too many *aliases* for one to know which to particularize him by, is one of that numerous order of beings which a high state of civilization is always engendering and throwing up on the surface of society; he is a man of low birth and mean connections, but gifted with most taking manners and an unexceptional address and appearance. These advantages, and the possession of apparently independent means, have opened to him the access to a certain set of people, who are well known and well received in society, and obtained for him, what he prizes much more, the admission into several clubs where high play is carried on. In this mixed assemblage, which sporting habits and gambling (that grand leveler of all distinctions) have brought together, this man and your cousin Guy met frequently, and, from the constant allusion to the wonderful resemblance between them, your eccentric cousin, who, I must say, was never too select in his acquaintances, frequently amused himself by practical jokes upon his friends, which served still more to nurture the intimacy between them; and, from this habit, Mr. Dudley Morewood, for such is his latest patronymic, must have enjoyed frequent opportunities of hearing much of your family and relations, a species of information he never neglected, though at the moment it might appear not so immediately applicable to his purposes. Now, this man, who knows of every new English arrival in Paris, with as much certainty as the police itself, would at once be aware of your being here, and having learned from Guy how little intercourse there had been of late years between you, would not let slip an opportunity of availing himself of the likeness if anything could hereby turn to his profit."

"Stop!" cried I; "you have opened my eyes completely, for now I remember that, as I continued to win last night, this man, who was playing hazard at another table, constantly borrowed from me, but always in gold, invariably refusing the bank-notes as too high for his game."

"There his object was clear enough; for, besides obtaining *your* gold, he made you the means of disseminating his false *billets de banque*."

"So that I have been actually playing and winning upon this fellow's forgeries," said I; "and am perhaps at this very instant inscribed in the *Livre noir* of the police as a most accomplished swindler; but what could be the intention of his note this morning?"

"As to that," said Trevanion, "it is hard to say; one thing you may assuredly rely upon—it is not an unnecessary epistle, whatever be its object; he never wastes his powder when the game flies too high; so we must only wait patiently for the unravelment of his plans, satisfied that we, at least, know something. What most surprises me is, his venturing, at present, to appear in public; for it is not above two months since an *escapade* of his attracted so much attention in the play world here, that he was obliged to leave, and it was supposed that he would never return to Paris."

"One piece of good fortune there is at least," said I, "which, I can safely say, repays me for any and all the annoyance this unhappy affair may cause me; it is, that my poor old uncle is still alive and well. Not all my anticipated pleasures, in newly acquired wealth, could have afforded me the same gratification that this fact does, for, although never so much his favorite as my cousin, yet the sense of protection —the feeling of confidence, which is inseparable from the degree of relationship between us—standing, as he has ever done, in the light of a father to me, is infinitely more pleasurable than the possession of riches, which must ever suggest to me the recollection of a kind friend lost to me for ever. But so many thoughts press on me—so many effects of this affair are staring me in the face—I really know not which way to turn, nor can I even collect my ideas sufficiently to determine what is first to be done."

"Leave all that to me," said Trevanion; "it is a tangled web, but I think I can unravel it; meanwhile, where does the captain reside? for, among all your pressing engagements, this affair with the Frenchman must come off first; and for this reason, although you are not really obliged to give him satisfaction, by his merely producing your card, and insisting that you are to be responsible for the misdeeds of any one who might show it as his own address, yet I look upon it as a most fortunate thing, while charges so heavy may be at this moment hanging over your head, as the proceedings of last night involve, that you have a public opportunity of meeting an antagonist in the field—thereby evincing no fear of publicity, nor any intention of absconding; for be assured that the police are at this moment in possession of what has occurred, and from the *fracas* which followed, are well disposed to regard the whole as a concerted scheme to seize upon the property of the *banque*, a not uncommon wind-up here when luck fails. My advice is, therefore, meet the man at once; I shall take care that the Prefect is informed that you have been imposed upon by a person passing himself off as your relative, and enter bail for your appearance, whenever you are called upon; that being done, we shall have time for a moment's respite to look around us, and consider the other bearings of this difficult business."

"Here, then, is the card of address," said I; "Eugène de Joncourt, Capitaine de Cavalerie, No. 8, Chaussée d'Antin."

"De Joncourt! why, confound it, this is not so pleasant; he is about the best shot in Paris, and a very steady swordsman besides. I don't like this."

"But you forget he is the friend, not the principal here."

"The more good fortune yours," said Trevanion, drily; "for I acknowledge I should not give much for your chance at twenty paces opposite his pistol; then, who is the other?"

"Le Baron d'Haulpenne," said I, "and his name is all that I know of him; his very appearance is unknown to me."

"I believe I am acquainted with him," said Trevanion; "but here we are at Meurice's. Now I shall just write a few lines to a legal friend, who will manage to liberate Mr. O'Leary, whose services we shall need —two persons are usual on each side in this country—and then, 'to business.'"

The note written and dispatched, Trevanion jumped into a cab, and set out for the Chaussée d'Antin; leaving me to think over, as well as I could, the mass of trouble and confusion in which twenty-four hours of life in Paris had involved me.

CHAPTER XXXII.

EXPLANATION.

It was past seven o'clock when Trevanion made his appearance, accompanied by O'Leary; and having in a few words informed me that a meeting was fixed for the following morning near St. Cloud, proposed that we should at once go to dinner at Véry's, after which we should have plenty

of time to discuss the various steps to be taken. As we were leaving the hotel for this purpose, a waiter requested of me to permit Mr. Meurice to speak a few words to me; which, having agreed to, I entered the little bureau where this Czar of Hotels sits enthroned, and what was my surprise to learn the request he had to prefer was nothing less than that I would so far oblige him as to vacate the apartment I possessed in the hotel, adding that my compliance would confer upon him the power to accommodate a "Milord," who had written for apartments, and was coming with a large suite of servants. Suspecting that some rumor of the late affair at Frascati's might have influenced my friend Meurice in this unusual demand, I abruptly refused, and was about to turn away, when he, perhaps, guessing that I had not believed his statements, handed me an open letter, saying, "You see, sir, this is the letter; and, as I am so pressed for spare room, I must now refuse the writer."

As my eye glanced at the writing, I started back with amazement to perceive it was in my cousin Guy's hand, requesting that apartments might be retained for Sir Guy Lorrequer, my uncle, who was to arrive in Paris by the end of the week. If any doubt had remained on my mind as to the deception I had been duped by, this would completely have dispelled it, but I had long before been convinced of the trick, and only wondered how the false Guy—Mr. Dudley Morewood—had contrived to present himself to me so opportunely, and by what means, in so short a space of time, he had become acquainted with my personal appearance.

As I mentioned this circumstance of the letter to Trevanion, he could not conceal his satisfaction at his sagacity in unravelling the mystery, while this new intelligence confirmed the justness and accuracy of all his explanations.

As we walked along towards the Palais Royal, Trevanion endeavored, not very successfully, to explain to my friend O'Leary the nature of the trick which had been practised, promising, at another time, some revelations concerning the accomplished individual who had planned it, which in boldness and daring eclipsed even this.

Any one who in waking has had the confused memory of a dream in which events have been so mingled and mixed as to present no uniform narrative, but only a mass of strange and incongruous occurrences, without object or connection, may form some notion of the state of restless excitement my brain suffered from, as the many and conflicting ideas my late adventures suggested, presented themselves to my mind in rapid succession.

The glare, the noise, and the clatter of a French café are certainly not the agents most in request for restoring a man to the enjoyment of his erring faculties; and, if I felt addled and confused before, I had scarcely passed the threshold of Véry's when I became absolutely like one in a trance. The large *salon* was more than usually crowded, and it was with difficulty that we obtained a place at a table where some other English were seated, among whom I recognized my lately made acquaintance, Mr. Edward Bingham.

Excepting a cup of coffee, I had taken nothing the entire day, and so completely did my anxieties of different kinds subdue all appetite, that the most exquisite viands of this well-known *restaurant* did not in the least tempt me. The champagne alone had any attraction for me; and, seduced by the icy coldness of the wine, I drank copiously. This was all that was wanting to complete the maddening confusion of my brain, and the effect was instantaneous; the lights danced before my eyes; the lustres whirled round; and, as the scattered fragments of conversations on either side met my ear, I was able to form some not very inaccurate conception of what insanity might be. Politics and literature, Mexican bonds and Noblet's legs, *Pâtés de perdreaux* and the quarantine laws, the *extrême gauche* and the *Roulette*, Victor Hugo and *Rouge et Noir*, had formed a species of grand *ballet d'action* in my fevered brain, and I was perfectly beside myself; occasionally, too, I would revert to my own concerns, although I was scarcely able to follow up any train of thought for more than a few seconds together, and totally inadequate to distinguish the false from the true. I continued to confound the counterfeit with my cousin, and wonder how my poor uncle, for whom I was about to put on the deepest mourning, could possibly think of driving me out of my lodgings. Of my duel for the morning I had the most shadowy recollection, and could not perfectly comprehend whether it was O'Leary or myself was the principal, and, indeed, cared but little. In this happy state of independent existence I must have passed a considerable time, and as my total silence when spoken to, or my irrelevant answers, appeared to have tired out my companions, they left me to the uninterrupted enjoyment of my own pleasant imaginings.

"Do you hear, Lorrequer," at last said Trevanion; "are you asleep, my dear friend? This gentleman has been good enough to invite us to breakfast to-morrow at St. Cloud."

I looked up, and was just able to recognize the well-trimmed mustache of Mr. Edward Bingham, as he stood mumbling something before me. "St. Cloud—what of St. Cloud?" said I.

"We have something in that quarter to-morrow."

"What is it, O'Leary? Can we go?"

"Oh! certainly. Our engagement is an early one."

"We shall accept your polite invitation with pleasure——"

Here he stooped over, and whispered something in my ear; what, I cannot say; but I know that my reply, now equally lost to me, produced a hearty fit of laughing to my two friends.

My next recollection is, finding myself in a crowded box at the theatre. It seems that O'Leary had acceded to a proposal from some of the other party to accompany them to the Porte St. Martin, where Mrs. Bingham and her daughter had engaged a box. Amid all the confusion which troubled thoughts and wine produced in me, I could not help perceiving a studied politeness and attention on the part of Mr. Edward Bingham towards me; and my first sobering reflection came, on finding that a place was reserved for me besides Miss Bingham, into which, by some contrivance I can in no wise explain, I found myself almost immediately installed. To all the excitement of champagne and punch, let the attractions of a French ballet be added, and with a singular pretty companion at your side, to whom you have already made sufficient advances to be aware that you are no longer indifferent to her, and I venture to predict that it is much more likely your conversation will incline to flirting than political economy; and, moreover, that you make more progress during the performance of one single *pas de deux* upon the stage, than you have hitherto done in ten morning calls, with an unexceptionable whisker, and the best fitting gloves in Paris. Alas! alas! it is only the rich man that ever wins at *rouge et noir*. The well-insured Indiaman, with her cargo of millions, comes safe into port; while the whole venture of some hardy veteran of the wave founders within sight of his native shore. So is it ever; where success would be all and everything, it never comes; but only be indifferent or regardless, and fortune is at your feet, suing and imploring your acceptance of her favors. What would I not have given for one half of that solicitude now so kindly expressed in my favor by Miss Bingham, if syllabled by the lips of Lady Jane Callonby! How would my heart have throbbed for one light smile from one, while I ungratefully basked in the openly avowed preference of the other! These were my first thoughts—what were the succeeding ones?

"*Elle est très bien!*" said a Frenchwoman, turning round in the box next to us, and directing at the same moment the eyes of a mustachioed hero upon my fair companion.

What a turn to my thoughts did this unexpected ejaculation give rise to! I now began to consider her more attentively, and certainly concurred fully in the Frenchwoman's verdict. I had never seen her look half so well before. The great fault in her features, which were most classically regular, lay in the monotony and uniform character of their expression. Now this was quite changed. Her cheek was slightly flushed, and her eyes more brilliant than ever; while her slightly parted lips gave a degree of speaking earnestness to her expression, that made her perfectly beautiful.

Whether it was from this cause I cannot say, but I certainly never felt so suddenly decided in my life from one course to its very opposite, as I now did to pay attention to my lovely companion. And here, I fear, I must acknowledge, in the honesty of these confessional details, that vanity had also its share in the decision. To be the admitted and preferred suitor of the prettiest woman in company, is generally a strong inducement to fall desperately in love with her, independently of other temptations for so doing.

How far my successes tallied with my good intentions in this respect, I cannot now say. I only remember, that more than once O'Leary whispered to me something like a caution of some sort or other; but Emily's encouraging smiles and still more encouraging speeches, had far more effect upon me than all the eloquence of the united service, had it been engaged in my behalf, would have effected. Mrs. Bingham, too—who, to do her justice, seemed but little cognizant of our proceedings—from time to time evinced that species of motherly satisfaction which *very* young men rejoice much in, and older ones are considerably alarmed at.

The play over, O'Leary charged himself with the protection of madam, while I en-

veloped Emily in her shawl, and drew her arm within my own. What my hand had to do with hers I knew not; it remains one of the unexplained difficulties of that eventful evening. I have, it is true, a hazy recollection of pressing some very taper and delicately-formed finger; and remember, too, the pain I felt next morning on awaking, by the pressure of a too tight ring, which had, by some strange accident, found its way to my finger, for which its size was but ill adapted.

"You will join us at supper, I hope," said Mrs. Bingham, as Trevanion handed her to her carriage. "Mr. Lorrequer, Mr. O'Leary, we shall expect you."

I was about to promise to do so, when Trevanion suddenly interrupted me, saying that he had already accepted an invitation, which would, unfortunately, prevent us; and having hastily wished the ladies good night, hurried me away so abruptly, that I had not a moment given for even one parting look at the fair Emily.

"Why, Trevanion," said I, "what invitation are you dreaming of? I, for one, should have been delighted to have gone home with the Binghams."

"So I perceived," said Trevanion, gravely; "and it was for that precise reason I so firmly refused what, individually, I might have been most happy to accept."

"Then pray have the goodness to explain——"

"It is easily done. You have already, in recounting your manifold embarrassments, told me enough of these people, to let me see that they intend you should marry among them; and, indeed, you have gone quite far enough to encourage such an expectation. Your present excited state has led you sufficiently far this evening, and I could not answer for your not proposing in all form before the supper was over; therefore, I had no other course open to me than positively to refuse Mrs. Bingham's invitation. But here we are now at the 'Cadran Rouge;' we shall have our lobster and a glass of Moselle, and then to bed, for we must not forget that we are to be at St. Cloud by seven."

"Ah! that is a good thought of yours about the lobster," said O'Leary; "and now, as you understand these matters, just order supper, and let us enjoy ourselves."

With all the accustomed dispatch of a *restaurant*, a most appetizing little supper made its speedy appearance; and although now perfectly divested of the high excitement which had hitherto possessed me, my spirits were excellent, and I never more relished our good fare and good fellowship.

After a full bumper to the health of the fair Emily had been proposed and drained by all three, Trevanion again explained how much more serious difficulty would result from any false step in that quarter, than from all other scrapes collectively.

This he represented so strongly, that for the first time I began to perceive the train of ill consequences that must inevitably result, and promised most faithfully to be guided by any counsel he might feel disposed to give me.

"Ah! what a pity," said O'Leary, "it is not my case. It's very little trouble it would cost any one to break off a match for *me*. I had always a most peculiar talent for those things."

"Indeed!" said Trevanion. "Pray may we know your secret? for, perhaps, ere long we may have occasion for its employment."

"Tell it, by all means," said I.

"If I do," said O'Leary, "it will cost you a patient hearing; for my experiences are connected with two episodes in my early life, which, although not very amusing, are certainly instructive."

"Oh! by all means let us hear them," said Trevanion; "for we have yet two bottles of Chambertin left, and must finish them ere we part."

"Well, agreed," said O'Leary; "only, once for all, as what I am about to confide is strictly confidential, you must promise never even to allude to it hereafter in even the most remote manner, much less indulge in any unseemly mirth at what I shall relate."

Having pledged ourselves to secrecy and a becoming seriousness, O'Leary began his story as follows.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

MR. O'LEARY'S FIRST LOVE.

"It was during the viceroyalty of the Duke of Richmond that the incidents I am about to mention took place. That was a few years since, and I was rather younger, and a little more particular about my dress than at present." Here the little man threw a calm glance of satisfaction upon his uncouth habiliments, that nearly made us forget our compact, and laugh outright. "Well, in those wild and headstrong days of youthful ardor, I fell in love—desperately in love—and as always is, I believe, the case with our early experiments in that unfortunate passion, the

object of my affection was in every way unsuited to me. She was a tall, dark-haired, dark-eyed maiden, with a romantic imagination, and kind of a half-crazed poetic fervor, that often made me fear for her intellect. I'm a short, rather fat—I was always given this way"—here he patted a waistcoat that would fit Daniel Lambert—"happy-minded little fellow, that liked my supper of oysters at the Pigeon-house, and my other creature comforts, and hated everything that excited or put me out of my way, just as I would have hated a blister. Then, the devil would have it—for as certainly as marriages are made in heaven, flirtations have something to say to the other place that I should fall most irretrievably in love with Lady Agnes Moreton. Bless my soul, it absolutely puts me in a perspiration this hot day, just to think over all I went through on her account; for, strange to say, the more I appeared to prosper in her good graces, the more did she exact on my part; the pursuit was like Jacob's ladder—if it did lead to heaven it was certainly an awfully long journey, and very hard on one's legs. There was not an amusement she could think of, no matter how unsuited to my tastes or my abilities, that she did not immediately take a violent fancy to; and then there was no escaping, and I was at once obliged to go with the tide, and Heaven knows if it would not have carried me to my grave if it were not for the fortunate (I now called it) accident that broke off the affair for ever! One time she took a fancy for yachting, and all the danglers about her—and she always had a *cordon* of them—young aides-de-camp of her father the general, and idle hussars, in clanking sabretasches and most absurd mustachios—all approved of the taste, and so kept filling her mind with anecdotes of corsairs and smugglers, that at last nothing would satisfy her till I—*I*, who always would rather have waited for low water, and waded the Liffey in all its black mud, than cross over in the ferry-boat, for fear of sickness—*I* was obliged to put an advertisement in the newspaper for a pleasure-boat, and, before three weeks, saw myself owner of a clinker-built schooner, of forty-eight tons, that by some mockery of fortune was called *The Delight*. I wish you saw me, as you might have done every morning for about a month, as I stood on the Custom-house quay, giving orders for the outfit of the little craft. At first, as she bobbed and pitched with the flood-tide, I used to be a little giddy and rather qualmish, but at last I learned to look on without my head reeling. I began to fancy myself very much of a sailor, a delusion considerably encouraged by a huge blue jacket and a sou'-wester, both of which, though it was in the dog days, Agnes insisted upon my wearing, saying I looked more like Dirk Hatteraick, who, I understood, was one of her favorite heroes in Walter Scott. In fact, after she suggested this, she and all her friends called me nothing but 'Dirk.'

"Well, at last, after Heaven knows how many excuses on my part, and entreaties for delay, a day was appointed for our first excursion. I shall never forget that day—the entire night before it I did not close my eyes; the skipper had told me, in his confounded sea-jargon, that if the wind was in one quarter we should have a short tossing sea; and if in another, a long rolling swell; and if in a third, a happy union of both—in fact, he made it out that it could not possibly blow right, an opinion I most heartily coincided in, and most devoutly did I pray for a calm, that would not permit of our stirring from our moorings, and thus mar our projected party of pleasure. My prayer was unheard, but my hopes rose on the other hand, for it blew tremendously during the entire night, and although there was a lull towards morning, the sea, even in the river, was considerable.

"I had just come to the conclusion that I was safe for this time, when the mate poked his head into the room and said,—

"'Mr. Brail wishes to know, sir, if he'll bend the new mainsail to-day, as it's blowing rather fresh, and he thinks the spars light.'

"'Why, the devil take him, he would not have us go out in a hurricane; surely, Pipes, we could not take out ladies to-day?'

"'Oh, bless your heart, yes, sir; it blows a bit to be sure, but she's a good sea-boat, and we can run for Arklow or the Hook, if it comes fresher.'

"'Oh, nonsense, there's no pleasure in that; besides, I'm sure they won't like it—the ladies won't venture, you'll see.'

"'Ay, sir, but they're all on board a'ready: there's eight ladies in the cabin, and six on deck, and as many hampers of victuals and as much crockery as if we were goin' to Madeira. Captain Grantham, sir, the soldier officer, with the big beard, is a-mixing punch in the grog-tub.'

"'From the consequences of this day I proclaim myself innocent,' said I, with a solemn voice, as I drew on my duck trousers, and prepared to set out.

"'And the mainsail, sir,' said the mate, not understanding what I said.

"'I care not which,' said I, doggedly; 'act or part in this wilful proceeding I'll not take.'

"'Ay, ay, sir,' said the stupid wretch; 'then I'll say you're a coming, and he may stretch the large canvas; for the skipper says he likes a wet jacket when he has gentlemen out.'"

"Never did a victim put on a flame-colored garment, the emblem of fate, and set out on the march of death, with a heavier heart than did I put on my pilot-coat that morning to join my friends.

"My last hope deserted me as I saw the little vessel lying beside the quay; for I continued to trust that in getting out from the dock some accident or mischance might occur to spoil our sport. But, no; there she lay, rolling and pitching in such a way that, even at anchor, they could not stand on the deck without holding. Amid the torrent of compliments for the perfection of all my arrangements, and innumerable sweet things on my taste in the decoration and fitting up of my cabin, I scarcely felt myself afloat for some minutes, and we got under weigh amid a noise and uproar that absolutely prevented the possibility of reflection.

"Hitherto our destination had not been mentioned, and as all the party appealed to Lady Agnes, I could not be less gallant, and joined them in their request.

"'Well, then, what do you think of Lambay?' said she, looking at the same moment towards the skipper.

"'We can make it, my lady,' said the man; 'but we'll have a roughish sea of it, for there's a strong point of westward in the wind."

"'Then don't think of it,' said I. 'We have come out for pleasure, not to make our friends sick, or terrify them. It does very well for us men.'

"'There you are, Dirk, with your insolent sneers about women's nerves and female cowardice. Now, nothing but Lambay will content me—what say you, ladies?'

"A general reply of approval met this speech, and it was carried by acclamation.

"'Lambay then be it,' said I, with the voice of a man who, entreating to be shot, is informed that he cannot be afforded that pleasure, as his sentence is to be hanged. But I must hasten over these painful recollections. We dropped down the river, and soon left the lighthouse and its long pier behind us, the mast bending like a whip, and the sea boiling like barm over the lee gunwale. Still the spirit of our party only rose the lighter, and nothing but eulogies upon the trim and sailing of the craft resounded on all sides; the din and buzz of the conversation went on only more loudly and less restrictedly than if the party had been on shore, and all, even myself, seemed happy, for up to this moment I had not been sea-sick, yet certain treacherous sensations, that alternately evinced themselves in my stomach and my head, warned me of what was in store for me. The word was now given to tack; I was in the act of essaying a soft speech to Lady Agnes, when the confounded cry of 'Ready about, starboard there, let go sheets and tacks, stand by, haul.' The vessel plunged head-foremost into the boiling sea, which hissed on either bow; the heavy boom swung over, carrying my hat along with it—and almost my head too. The rest of the party, possibly better informed than myself, speedily changed their places to the opposite side of the boat, while I remained holding on, fast, by the gunwale, till the sea rushing over what was now become the lee side, carried me head over heels into the shingle ballast in the waist. Lord, how they did laugh! Agnes, too, who never before could get beyond a very faint smile, grew almost hysterical at my performance. As for me, I only wanted this to complete my long-threatened misfortune; sea-sickness, in all its most miserable forms, set in upon me, and, ere half an hour, I lay upon that heap of small stones, as indifferent to all around and about me as though I were dead. Oh, the long, dreary hours of that melancholy day; it seemed like a year. They tacked and tacked, they wore—beat—and tacked again, the sea washing over me, and the ruffianly sailors trampling upon me without the slightest remorse, whenever they had any occasion to pass back or forward. From my long trance of suffering I was partly roused by the steward shaking my shoulder, saying,—

"'The gentlemen wish to know, sir, if you'd like sum'at to eat, as they're a goin' to have a morsel; we are getting into slack water now.'

"'Where are we?' I replied, in a sepulchral voice.

"'Off the Hook, sir; we have had a most splendid run, but I fear we'll scatch it soon; there's some dirty weather to the westward.'

"'God grant it!' said I, piously, and in a low tone.

"'Did you say you'd have a bit to eat, sir?'

"'No!—eat!—am I a cannibal?—eat—go away—mark me, my good fellow, I'll pay you your wages, if ever we get ashore; you'll never set another foot aboard with me.'

"The man looked perfectly astounded as he moved away, and my thoughts were soon engrossed by the proceedings near me. the rattle of knives, and the jingling of plates and glasses, went on very briskly for some time, accompanied by various pleasant observations of my guests, for such I judged them, from the mirth which ever followed them. At last I thought I heard my name, or at least what they pleased to use as its substitute, mentioned; I strained my ears to listen, and learnt that they were pretending to plan a run over to Cowes, and see the regatta. This they discussed then, for about twenty minutes, in a very loud voice, purposely to see its effects upon me; but, as I was now aware of the trick, I gave no signs of any intelligence.

"'Poor Dirk,' said Grantham; 'I believe by this time he cares very little which way her head lies; but here comes something better than all our discussions. Lady Agnes, sit here—Miss Pelham, here's a dry cushion for you—did you say a wing, Lady Mary?'

"Now began the crash and clatter of dinner: champagne corks popping, glasses ringing, and all that peculiar admixture of fracas and fun which accompanies a scrambled meal. How they did laugh, and eat, ay, and drink too. G.'s punch seemed to have its success, for, sick as I was, I could perceive the voices of the men grow gradually louder, and discovered that two gentlemen who had been remarkably timid in the morning, and scarcely opened their lips, were now rather uproariously given, and one even proposed to sing.

"'If any man,' thought I, 'were to look for an instant at the little scene now enacting here, what a moral would he reap from it; talk of the base ingratitude of the world, you cannot say too much of it. Who would suppose that it was *my* boat these people were assembled in; that it was *my* champagne these people were drinking: that *my* venison and *my* pheasants were feeding those lips, which rarely spoke, except to raise a joke at my expense?' My chagrin increased my sickness, and my sickness redoubled my chagrin.

"'Mr. Brail,' said I, in a low whisper—'Mr. Brail.'

"'Did you speak, sir?' said he, with about as much surprise in his manner as though he had been addressed by a corpse.

"'Mr. Brail,' said I, 'is there any danger here?'

"'Lord love you, no, sir, she's walking Spanish, and the sea going down; we shall have lovely weather, and they're all enjoying it, sir,—the ladies.'

"'So I perceive,' said I, with a groan—'so I perceive; but, Mr. Brail, could you do nothing—just to—to—startle them a little, I mean for fun only? Just ship a heavy sea or two, I don't care for a little damage, Mr. Brail, and if it were to wash over the dinner service, and all the wine, I should not like it worse.'

"'Why, sir, you are getting quite funny; the sickness is going.'

"'No, Mr. Brail, worse than ever; my head is in two pieces, and my stomach in the back of my mouth; but I should like you to do this—so just manage it, will you; and there's twenty pounds in my pocket-book, you can have it; there now, won't you oblige me? And hark ye, Mr. Brail—if Captain Grantham were to be washed over by mere accident it cannot be helped; accidents are always occurring in boating parties. Go now; you know what I mean.'

"'But, sir,—' began he.

"'Well, then, Mr. Brail, you won't—very well: now all I have to say is this: that the moment I can find strength to do it, I'll stave out a plank; I'll scuttle the vessel, that's all; I have made up my mind, and look to yourselves now.'

"Saying these words, I again threw myself upon the ballast, and, as the gay chorus of a drinking song was wafted across me, prayed devoutly that we might all go down to the bottom. The song over, I heard a harsh, gruff voice mixing with the more civilized tones of the party, and soon perceived that Mr. Brail was recounting my proposal amid the most uproarious shouts of laughter I ever listened to. Then followed a number of pleasant suggestions for my future management; one proposing to have me tried for mutiny, and sentenced to a good ducking over the side; another, that I should be tarred on my back, to which latter most humane notion the fair Agnes subscribed, averring that she was resolved upon my deserving my sobriquet of Dirk Hatteraick. My wrath was now the master even of deadly sickness. I got upon my knees, and having in vain tried to reach my legs, I struggled aft. In this posture did I reach the quarter-deck. What my intention precisely was in this excursion, I have no notion of now, but I have some very vague idea, that I meant to react the curse of

Kehama upon the whole party. At last I mustered strength to rise; but, alas! I had scarcely reached the standing position, when a tremendous heel of the boat to one side threw me in the gunwhale, and before I was able to recover my balance, a second lurch pitched me headlong into the sea. I have, thank God, no further recollection of my misfortunes. When I again became conscious, I found myself wrapped up in a pilot-coat, while my clothes were drying. The vessel was at anchor in Wexford, my attached friends had started for town with post-horses, leaving me no less cured of love than aquatics.

"*The Delight* passed over in a few days to some more favored son of Neptune, and I hid my shame and my misfortunes by a year's tour on the Continent."

"Although I acknowledge," said Trevanion, "that hitherto I have reaped no aid from Mr. O'Leary's narrative, yet I think it is not without a moral."

"Well, but," said I, "he has got another adventure to tell us; we have quite time for it, so pray pass the wine and let us have it."

"I have just finished the Burgundy," said O'Leary, "and if you will ring for another flask, I have no objection to let you hear the story of my second love."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MR. O'LEARY'S SECOND LOVE.

"You may easily suppose," began Mr. O'Leary, "that the unhappy termination of my first passion served as a shield to me for a long time against my unfortunate tendencies towards the fair; and such was really the case. I never spoke to a young lady for three years after without a reeling in my head, so associated in my mind was love and sea-sickness. However, at last, what will not time do? It was about four years from the date of this adventure, when I became so oblivious of my former failure as again to tempt my fortune! My present choice, in every way unlike the last, was a gay, lively girl, of great animal spirits, and a considerable turn for raillery, that spared no one; the members of her own family were not even sacred in her eyes; and her father, a reverend dean, as frequently figured among the ludicrous as his neighbors.

"The Eversham had been very old friends of a rich aunt of mine, who never, by the bye, had condescended to notice me till I made their acquaintance; but no sooner had I done so, than she sent for me, and gave me to understand that, in the event of my succeeding to the hand of Fanny Eversham, I should be her heir, and the possessor of about sixty thousand pounds. She did not stop here; but by canvassing the dean in my favor, speedily put the matter on a most favorable footing, and in less than two months I was received as the accepted suitor of the fair Fanny, then one of the reigning *belles* of Dublin.

"They lived at this time about three miles from town, in a very pretty country, where I used to pass all my mornings, and many of my evenings too, in a state of happiness that I should have considered perfect, if it were not for two unhappy blots—one, the taste of my betrothed for laughing at her friends; another, the diabolical propensity to talk politics of my intended father-in-law. To the former I could submit; but with the latter, submission only made bad worse; for he invariably drew up as I receded, drily observing that with men who had no avowed opinions, it was ill agreeing; or that, with persons who kept their politics as a schoolboy does his pocket-money, never to spend, and always ready to change, it was unpleasant to dispute. Such taunts as these I submitted to as well as I might; secretly resolving, that as I never knew the meaning of Whig and Tory, I'd contrive to spend my life, after marriage, out of the worthy dean's diocese.

"Time wore on, and at length to my most pressing solicitations, it was conceded that a day for our marriage should be appointed. Not even the unlucky termination of this my second love affair can deprive me of the happy *souvenir* of the few weeks which were to intervene before our destined union.

"The mornings were passed in ransacking all the shops where wedding finery could be procured—laces, blondes, velvets, and satins littered every corner of the deanery—and there was scarcely a carriage in a coachmaker's yard in the city that I had not sat and jumped in, to try the springs, by the special directions of Mrs. Eversham, who never ceased to impress me with the awful responsibility I was about to take upon me in marrying so great a prize as her daughter—a feeling I found very general among many of my friends at the Kildare Street Club.

"Among the many indispensable purchases which I was to make, and about which Fanny expressed herself more than

commonly anxious, was a saddle-horse for me. She was a great horsewoman, and hated riding with only a servant, and had given me to understand as much about half a dozen times each day for the last five weeks. How shall I acknowledge it—equestrianism was never my *forte*. I had all my life considerable respect for the horse as an animal, pretty much as I regarded a lion or a tiger; but as to any intention of mounting upon the back of one, and taking a ride, I should as soon have dreamed of taking an airing upon a giraffe; and as to the thought of buying, feeding, and maintaining such a beast at my own proper cost, I should just as soon have determined to purchase a pillory or a ducking-stool, by way of amusing my leisure hours.

"However, Fanny was obstinate—whether she suspected anything or not I cannot say—but nothing seemed to turn her from her purpose; and although I pleaded a thousand things in delay, yet she each day grew more impatient, and at last I saw that there was nothing for it but to submit.

"When I arrived at this last and bold resolve, I could not help feeling that to possess a horse and not be able to mount him, was only deferring the ridicule; and as I had so often expressed the difficulty I felt in suiting myself as a cause of my delay, I could not possibly come forward with anything very objectionable, or I should be only the more laughed at. There was then but one course to take; a fortnight still intervened before the day which was to make me happy, and I resolved to take lessons in riding during the interval, and by every endeavor in my power become, if possible, able to pass muster on the saddle before my bride.

"Poor old Lalouette understood but little of the urgency of the case when I requested his leave to take my lessons each morning at six o'clock, for I dared not absent myself during the day without exciting suspicion; and never, I will venture to assert, did knight-errant of old strive harder for the hand of his lady-love than did I during that weary fortnight. If a hippogriff had been the animal I bestrode, instead of being, as it was, an old wall-eyed gray, I could not have felt more misgivings at my temerity, or more proud of my achievements. In the first three days, the unaccustomed exercise proved so severe, that when I reached the deanery I could hardly move, and crossed the floor very much as a pair of compasses might be supposed to do if performing that exploit. Nothing, however, could equal the kindness of my poor dear mother-in-law in embryo, and even the dean too. Fanny, indeed, said nothing; but I rather think she was disposed to giggle a little; but my rheumatism, as it was called, was daily inquired after, and I was compelled to take some infernal stuff in my port wine at dinner that nearly made me sick at table.

"'I am sure you walk too much,' said Fanny, with one of her knowing looks. 'Papa, don't you think he ought to ride? It would be much better for him.'

"'I do, my dear,' said the dean. 'But then, you see, he is so hard to be pleased in a horse. Your old hunting days have spoiled you; but you must forget Melton and Grantham, and condescend to keep a hack.'

"I must have looked confoundedly foolish here, for Fanny never took her eyes off me, and continued to laugh in her own wicked way.

"It was now about the ninth or tenth day of my purgatorial performances; and certainly if there be any merit in fleshly mortifications, these religious exercises of mine should stand my part hereafter. A review had been announced in the Phœnix Park, which Fanny had expressed herself most desirous to witness; and as the dean would not permit her to go without a chaperon, I had no means of escape, and promised to escort her. No sooner had I made this rash pledge, than I hastened to my confidential friend, Lalouette, and having imparted to him my entire secret, asked him in a solemn and imposing manner, 'Can I do it?' The old man shook his head dubiously, looked grave, and muttered at length, 'Mosch depend on de horse.' 'I know it—I know it—I feel it,' said I, eagerly; then, where are we to find an animal that will carry me peaceably through this awful day—I care not for its price?'

"'Votre affaire ne sera pas trop chère,' said he.

"'Why, how do you mean?' said I.

"He then proceeded to inform me that, by a singularly fortunate chance, there took place that day an auction of 'cast horses,' as they are termed, which had been used in the horse police force; and that, from long riding, and training to stand fire, nothing could be more suitable than one of these, being both easy to ride, and not given to start at noise.

"I could have almost hugged the old fellow for his happy suggestion, and waited with impatience for three o'clock to come, when we repaired together to Essex

Bridge, at that time the place selected for these sales.

"I was at first a little shocked at the look of the animals drawn up; they were mostly miserably thin, most of them swelled in the legs, few without sore backs, and not one eye, on an average, in every three; but still they were all high steppers, and carried a great tail. 'There's your "affaire,"' said the old Frenchman, as a long-legged, fiddle-headed beast was led out; turning out his fore-legs so as to endanger the man who walked beside him.

"'Yes, there's blood for you,' said Charley Dycer, seeing my eye fixed on the wretched beast; 'equal to fifteen stone with any fox-hounds; safe in all his paces, and warranted sound; except,' added he, in a whisper, 'a slight spavin in both hind-legs, ring bone, and a little touched in the wind.' Here the animal gave an approving cough. 'Will any gentleman say fifty pounds to begin?' But no gentleman did. A hackney coachman, however, said five, and the sale was opened; the beast trotting up and down nearly over the bidders, at every moment, and plunging on so, that it was impossible to know what was doing.

"'Five ten — fifteen — six pounds — thank you, sir, — guineas.' 'Seven pounds,' said I, bidding against myself, not perceiving that I had spoken last. 'Thank you, Mr. Moriarty,' said Dycer, turning towards an invisible purchaser supposed to be in the crowd,—'thank you, sir, you'll not let a good one go in that way.' Every one here turned to find out the very knowing gentleman; but he could nowhere be seen.

"'Dycer resumed, 'Seven ten for Mr. Moriarty. Going for seven ten—a cruel sacrifice—there's action for you—playful beast.' Here the devil had stumbled, and nearly killed a basket-woman with two children.

"'Eight,' said I, with a loud voice.

"'Eight pounds, quite absurd,' said Dycer, almost rudely, 'a charger like that for eight pounds—going for eight pounds—going—nothing above eight pounds—no reserve, gentlemen, you are aware of that. They are all, as it were, his Majesty's stud—no reserve whatever—last time—eight pounds—gone.'

"Amid a very hearty cheer from the mob—God knows why—but a Dublin mob always cheer,—I returned, accompanied by a ragged fellow, leading my new purchase after me with a hay halter. 'What is the meaning of those letters?' said I, pointing to a very conspicuous G. R., with sundry other enigmatical signs, burnt upon the animal's hind-quarter.

"'That's to show he was a po-lis,' said the fellow, with a grin; 'and whin ye ride with ladies, ye must turn the decoy side.'

"The auspicious morning at last arrived; and strange to say, that the first waking thought was of the unlucky day that ushered in my yachting excursion four years before. Why this was so, I cannot pretend to guess; there was but little analogy in the circumstances, at least so far as anything had then gone. 'How is Marius?' said I to my servant as he opened my shutters. Here let me mention that a friend of the Kildare Street Club had suggested this name from the remarkably classic character of my steed's countenance; his nose, he assured me, was perfectly Roman.

"'Marius is doing finely, sir, barring his cough, and the thrifle that ails his hind-legs.'

"'He'll carry me quietly, Simon, eh?'

"'Quietly. I'll warrant he'll carry you quietly, if that's all.'

"Here was comfort; for Simon had lived forty years as pantry boy with my mother, and knew a great deal about horses. I dressed myself, therefore, in high spirits; and if my pilot jacket and oil-skin cap in former days had half persuaded me that I was born for marine achievements, certainly my cords and tops, that morning, went far to convince me that I must have once been a very keen sportsman somewhere without knowing it. It was a delightful July day that I set out to join my friends, who having recruited a large party, were to rendezvous at the corner of Stephen's Green; thither I proceeded in a certain ambling trot, which I have often observed is a very favorite pace with timid horsemen, and gentlemen of the medical profession. I was hailed with a most hearty welcome by a large party as I turned out of Grafton Street, among whom I perceived several friends of Miss Eversham, and some young dragoon officers, not of my acquaintance, but who appeared to know Fanny intimately, and were laughing heartily with her as I rode up.

"I don't know if other men have experienced what I am about to mention or not; but certainly to me there is no more painful sensation than to find yourself among a number of well-mounted, well-equipped people, while the animal you yourself bestride seems only fit for the kennel. Every look that is cast at your un-

lucky steed—every whispered observation about you are so many thorns in your flesh, till at last you begin to feel that your appearance is for very little else than the amusement and mirth of the assembly; and every time you rise in your stirrups you excite a laugh.

"'Where, for mercy's sake, did you find that creature?' said Fanny, surveying Marius through a glass.

"'Oh, him, eh? Why, he is a handsome horse, if in condition—a charger, you know—that's his style.'

"'Indeed,' lisped a young lancer, 'I should be devilish sorry to charge or be charged with him.' And here they all chuckled at this puppy's silly joke, and I drew up to repress further liberties.

"'Is he anything of a fencer?' said a young country gentleman.

"'To judge from his near eye, I should say much more of a boxer,' said another.

"Here commenced a running fire of pleasantry at the expense of my poor steed; which, not content with attacking his physical, extended to his moral qualities. An old gentleman near me observing, 'that I ought not to have mounted him at all, seeing that he was so deuced groggy!' to which I replied by insinuating, that if others present were as free from the influence of ardent spirits, society would not be a sufferer; an observation that I flatter myself turned the mirth against the old fellow, for they all laughed for a quarter of an hour after.

"Well, at last we set out in a brisk trot, and, placed near Fanny, I speedily forgot all my annoyances in the prospect of figuring to advantage before her. When we reached College Green the leaders of the party suddenly drew up, and we soon found that the entire street opposite the Bank was filled with a dense mob of people, who appeared to be swayed hither and thither, like some mighty beast, as the individuals composing it were engaged in close conflict. It was nothing more nor less than one of those almost weekly rows, which then took place between the students of the University and the townspeople, and which rarely ended without serious consequences. The numbers of people pressing on to the scene of action soon blocked up our retreat, and we found ourselves most unwilling spectators of the conflict. Political watchwords were loudly shouted by each party; and at last the students, who appeared to be yielding to superior numbers, called out for the intervention of the police. The aid was nearer than they expected; for at the same instant a body of mounted policemen, whose high helmets rendered them sufficiently conspicuous, were seen trotting at a sharp pace down Dame Street. On they came with drawn sabres, led by a well-looking, gentleman-like personage in plain clothes, who dashed at once into the midst of the fray, issuing his orders, and pointing out to his followers to secure the ringleaders. Up to this moment I had been a most patient, and rather amused spectator, of what was doing. Now, however, my part was to commence, for at the word 'charge,' given in a harsh, deep voice by the sergeant of the party, Marius, remembering his ancient instinct, pricked up his ears, cocked his tail, flung up both his hind legs till they nearly broke the provost's windows, and plunged into the thickest of the fray like a devil incarnate.

"Self-preservation must be a strong instinct, for I well remember how little pain it cost me to see the people tumbling and rolling before and beneath me, while I continued to keep my seat. It was only the moment before and that immense mass were in man to man encounter; now, all the indignation of both parties seemed turned upon me; brick-bats were loudly implored, and paving-stones begged to throw at my devoted head; the wild huntsman of the German romance never created half the terror, nor one-tenth of the mischief that I did in less than fifteen minutes, for the ill-starred beast continued twining and twisting like a serpent, plunging and kicking the entire time, and occasionally biting too; all which accomplishments I afterwards learned, however little in request in civil life, are highly prized in the horse police.

"Every new order of the sergeant was followed in his own fashion by Marius; who very soon contrived to concentrate in my unhappy person all the interest of about fifteen hundred people.

"'Secure that scoundrel,' said the magistrate, pointing with his finger towards me, as I rode over a respectable-looking old lady, with a gray muff. 'Secure him. Cut him down.'

"Ah, devil's luck to him, if he do,' said a newsmonger with a broken shin.

"On I went, however; and now, as the Fates would have it, instead of bearing me out of further danger, the confounded brute dashed onwards to where the magistrate was standing, surrounded by policemen. I thought I saw him change color as I came on. I suppose my own looks were none of the pleasantest, for the worthy man evidently liked them not. Into

the midst of them we plunged, upsetting a corporal, horse and all, and appearing as if bent upon reaching the alderman.

"'Cut him down, for Heaven's sake. Will nobody shoot him?' said he, with a voice trembling with fear and anger.

"At these words a wretch lifted up his sabre, and made a cut at my head. I stooped suddenly, and throwing myself from the saddle, seized the poor alderman round the neck, and we both came rolling to the ground together. So completely was he possessed with the notion that I meant to assassinate him, that while I was endeavoring to extricate myself from his grasp, he continued to beg his life in the most heart-rending manner.

"My story is now soon told. So effectually did they rescue the alderman from his danger that they left me insensible; and I only came to myself some days after by finding myself in the dock in Green Street, charged with an indictment of nineteen counts; the only word of truth of which lay in the preamble, for the 'devil inciting' me only, would ever have made me the owner of that infernal beast, the cause of all my misfortunes. I was so stupefied with my beating, that I know little of the course of the proceedings. My friends told me afterward that I had a narrow escape from transportation; but for the greatest influence exerted in my behalf, I should certainly have passed the autumn in the agreeable recreation of pounding oyster shells or carding wool; and it certainly must have gone hard with me, for, stupefied as I was, I remember the sensation in court when the alderman made his appearance with a patch over his eye. The affecting admonition of the little judge—who, when passing sentence upon me, adverted to the former respectability of my life, and the rank of my relatives—actually made the galleries weep.

"Four months to Newgate, and a fine to the king, then rewarded my taste for horse-exercise; and it's no wonder if I prefer going on foot.

"As to Miss Eversham, the following short note from the dean concluded my hopes in that quarter.

"'Deanery, Wednesday morning.

"'SIR,—After the very distressing publicity to which your late conduct has exposed you—the so open avowal of political opinions, at variance with those (I will say) of every gentleman—and the recorded sentence of a judge on the verdict of twelve of your countrymen—I should hope that you will not feel my present admonition necessary to inform you that your visits at my house shall cease.

"'The presents you made my daughter, when under our unfortunate ignorance of your real character, have been addressed to your hotel, and I am your most obedient, humble servant,

"'OLIVER EVERSHAM.'

"Here ended my second affair *par amours;* and I freely confess to you that if I can only obtain a wife in a sea voyage, or a steeple chase, I am likely to fulfil one great condition in modern advertising—'as having no incumbrance, nor any objection to travel.'"

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE DUEL.

MR. O'LEARY had scarcely concluded the narrative of his second adventure, when the gray light of the breaking day was seen faintly struggling through the half-closed curtains, and apprising us of the lateness of the hour.

"I think we shall just have time for one finishing flask of Chambertin," said O'Leary, as he emptied the bottle into his glass.

"I forbid the banns, for one," cried Trevanion. "We have all had wine enough, considering what we have before us this morning; and besides, you are not aware it is now past four o'clock. So, garçon—garçon, there!—how soundly the poor fellow sleeps—let us have some coffee, and then inquire if a carriage is in waiting at the corner of the Rue Vivienne."

The coffee made its appearance, very much, as it seemed, to Mr. O'Leary's chagrin, who, however, solaced himself by sundry "small glasses" to correct the coldness of the wine he had drunk, and at length recovered his goodhumor.

"Do you know, now," said he, after a short pause, in which we had all kept silence, "I think what we are about to do is the very ugliest way of finishing a pleasant evening. For my own part, I like the wind-up we used to have in 'Old Trinity' formerly; when, after wringing off half a dozen knockers, breaking the lamps at the post-office, and getting out the fire engines of Werburgh's parish, we beat a few watchmen and went peaceably to bed."

"Well, not being an Irishman," said Trevanion, "I'm half disposed to think that even our present purpose is nearly as favorable to life and limb; but here comes

my servant. Well, John, is all arranged, and the carriage ready?"

Having ascertained that the carriage was in waiting, and that the small box—brass-bound and Bramah-locked—reposed within, we paid our bill and departed. A cold, raw, misty-looking morning, with masses of dark, louring clouds overhead, and channels of dark and murky water beneath, were the pleasant prospects which met us as we issued forth from the café. The lamps, which hung suspended midway across the street—we speak of some years since—creaked, with a low and plaintive sound, as they swung backwards and forwards in the wind. Not a footstep was heard in the street—nothing but the heavy patter of the rain as it fell ceaselessly upon the broad pavement. It was, indeed, a most depressing and dispiriting accompaniment to our intended excursion: and even O'Leary, who seemed to have but slight sympathy with external influences, felt it, for he spoke but little, and was scarcely ten minutes in the carriage till he was sound asleep. This was, I confess, a great relief to me; for, however impressed I was, and to this hour am, with the many sterling qualities of my poor friend, yet, I acknowledge, that this was not precisely the time I should have cared for their exercise, and would have much preferred the companionship of a different order of person, even though less long acquainted with him. Trevanion was, of all others, the most suitable for this purpose; and I felt no embarrassment in opening my mind freely to him upon subjects which, but twenty-four hours previous, I could not have imparted to a brother.

There is no such unlocker of the secrets of the heart as the possibly near approach of death. Indeed, I question if a great deal of the bitterness the thought of it inspires does not depend upon that very circumstance. The reflection that the long-treasured mystery of our lives (and who is there without some such?) is about to become known, and the secret of our inmost heart laid bare, is in itself depressing. Not one kind word, nor one embracing adieu, to those we are to leave for ever, can be spoken or written, without calling up its own story of half-forgotten griefs, or, still worse, at such a moment, of happiness never again to be partaken of.

"I cannot explain why," said I to Trevanion, "but although it has unfortunately been pretty often my lot to have gone out on occasions like this, both as principal and friend, yet never before did I feel so completely depressed and low-spirited—and never, in fact, did so many thoughts of regret arise before me for much of the past, and sorrow for the chance of abandoning the future——"

"I can understand," said Trevanion, interrupting—"I have heard of your prospect in the Callonby family, and certainly, with such hopes, I can well conceive how little one would be disposed to brook the slightest incident which could interfere with their accomplishment; but, now that your cousin Guy's pretentions in that quarter are at an end, I suppose, from all I have heard, that there can be no great obstacle to yours.

"Guy's pretentions at an end! For Heaven's sake tell me all you know of this affair—for up to this moment I am in utter ignorance of every thing regarding his position in the Callonby family."

"Unfortunately," replied Trevanion, "I know but little, but still that little is authentic—Guy himself having imparted the secret to a very intimate friend of mine. It appears, then, that your cousin, having heard that the Callonbys had been very civil to you in Ireland, and made all manner of advances to you—had done so under the impression that you with the *other* nephew of Sir Guy, and consequently the heir of a large fortune—that is, Guy himself—and that they had never discovered the mistake during the time they resided in Ireland, when they not only permitted, but even encouraged the closest intimacy between you and Lady Jane. Is so far true?"

"I have long suspected it. Indeed, in no other way I can account for the reception I met with from the Callonbys. But is it possible that Lady Jane could have lent herself to any thing so unworthy——"

"Pray hear me out," said Trevanion, who was evidently struck by the despondency of my voice and manner. "Guy having heard of their mistake, and augurring well to himself from this evidence of their disposition, no sooner heard of their arrival in Paris, than he came over here and got introduced to them. From that time he scarcely ever left their house, except to accompany them into society, or to the theatres. It is said that with Lady Jane he made no progress. Her manner, at the beginning cold and formal, became daily more so; until, at last, he was half disposed to abandon the pursuit—in which, by the bye, he has since confessed, ambitious views entered more than any affection for the lady—when the thought struck him to benefit by what he supposed at first to be the great bar to his success. He

suddenly pretended to be only desirous of intimacy with Lady Jane, from having heard so much of her from you—affected to be greatly in your confidence—and, in fact, assumed the character of a friend cognizant of all your feelings and hopes, and ardently desiring, by every means in his power, to advance your interests——"

"And was it thus he succeeded?" I broke in.

"'Twas thus he endeavored to succeed," said Trevanion.

"Ah, with what success I but too well know," said I. "My uncle himself showed me a letter from Guy, in which he absolutely speaks of the affair as settled, and talks of Lady Jane as about to be his wife."

"That may be all quite true; but a little consideration of Guy's tactics will show what he intended; for I find that he induced your uncle, by some representations of his, to make the most handsome proposals, with regard to the marriage, to the Callonbys; and that, to make the story short, nothing but the decided refusal of Lady Jane,—who at length saw through his entire game,—prevented the match."

"And then she did refuse him?" said I, with ill-repressed exultation.

"Of that there can be no doubt; for independently of all the gossip and quizzing upon the subject, to which Guy was exposed in the *coteries*, he made little secret of it himself—openly avowing that he did not consider a repulse a defeat, and that he resolved to sustain the siege as vigorously as ever.

However interested I felt in all Trevanion was telling me, I could not help falling into a train of thinking over my first acquaintance with the Callonbys. There are, perhaps, but few things more humiliating than the knowledge that any attention or consideration we have met with has been paid us in mistake for another; and in the very proportion that they were prized before, are they detested when the truth is known to us.

To all the depressing influences these thoughts suggested, came the healing balm that Lady Jane was true to me—that she, at least, however others might be biased by worldly considerations—that she cared for me—for myself alone. My reader (alas! for my character for judgment) knows upon how little I founded the conviction: but I have often, in these Confessions, avowed my especial failing to be a great taste for self-deception; and here was a capital occasion for its indulgence.

"We shall have abundant time to discuss this later on," said Trevanion, laying his hand upon my shoulder to rouse my wandering attention—"for now, I perceive, we have only eight minutes to spare."

As he spoke, a dragoon officer, in an undress, rode up to the window of the carriage, and looking steadily at our party for a few seconds, asked if we were "*Messieurs les Anglais;*" and, almost without waiting for reply, added, "You had better not go any farther in your carriage, for the next turn of the road will bring you in sight of the village."

We accordingly stopped the driver, and having with some difficulty aroused O'Leary, got out upon the road. The stranger here gave his horse to a groom, and proceeded to guide us through a cornfield by a narrow path, with whose windings and crossings, he appeared quite conversant. We at length reached the brow of a little hill, from which an extended view of the country lay before us, showing the Seine winding its tranquil course between the richly tilled fields, dotted with many a pretty cottage. Turning abruptly from this point, our guide led us, by a narrow and steep path, into a little glen, planted with poplars and willows. A small stream ran through this, and by the noise we soon detected that a mill was not far distant, which another turning brought us at once in front of.

And here I cannot help dwelling upon the scene which met our view. In the porch of the little rural mill sat two gentlemen, one of whom I immediately recognized as the person who had waited upon me, and the other I rightly conjectured to be my adversary. Before them stood a small table, covered with a spotless napkin, upon which a breakfast equipage was spread—a most inviting melon and a long, slender-necked bottle, reposing in a little ice-pail, forming part of the picture. My opponent was coolly enjoying his cigar—a half-finished cup of coffee lay beside him—his friend was occupied in examining the caps of the duelling pistols, which were placed upon a chair. No sooner had we turned the angle which brought us in view, than they both rose, and taking off their hats with much courtesy, bade us good morning.

"May I offer you a cup of coffee?" said Monsieur de Joncourt to me, as I came up, at the same time filling it out, and pushing over a little flask of Cognac toward me.

A look from Trevanion decided my acceptance of the proffered civility, and I

seated myself in the chair beside the baron. Trevanion meanwhile had engaged my adversary in conversation along with the stranger, who had been our guide, leaving O'Leary alone unoccupied, which, however, he did not long remain; for, although uninvited by the others, he seized a knife and fork, and commenced a vigorous attack upon a partridge pie near him; and, with equal absence of ceremony, uncorked the champagne and filled out a foaming goblet, nearly one-third of the whole bottle, adding,—

"I think, Mr. Lorrequer, there's nothing like showing them we are just as cool and unconcerned as themselves."

If I might judge from the looks of the party, a happier mode of convincing them of our "free and easy" feelings could not possibly have been discovered. From any mortification this proceeding might have caused me, I was speedily relieved by Trevanion calling O'Leary to one side, while he explained to him that he must nominally act as second on the ground, as Trevanion, being a resident in Paris, might become liable to a prosecution, should anything serious arise, while O'Leary, as a mere passer through, could cross the country into Germany, and avoid all trouble.

O'Leary at once acceded—perhaps the more readily because he expected to be allowed to return to his breakfast—but in this he soon found himself mistaken, for the whole party now rose, and, preceded by the baron, followed the course of the little stream.

After about five minutes' walking, we found ourselves at the outlet of the glen, which was formed by a large stone quarry, making a species of amphitheater, with lofty walls of rugged granite, rising thirty or forty feet on either side of us. The ground was smooth and level as a boarded floor, and certainly to amateurs in these sort of matters, presented a most perfect spot for a "meeting."

The stranger who had just joined us, could not help remarking our looks of satisfaction at the choice of the ground, and observed to me,—

"This is not the first affair that this little spot has witnessed; and the 'Mill of St. Cloud' is, I think, the very best '*meet*' about Paris."

Trevanion who, during these few minutes, had been engaged with De Joncourt, now drew me aside.

"Well, Lorrequer, have you any recollection now of having seen your opponent before? or can you make a guess at the source of all this?"

"Never till this instant," said I, "have I beheld him," as I looked toward the tall, stoutly-built figure of my adversary, who was very leisurely detaching a cordon from his tightly fitting frock, doubtless to prevent its attracting my aim.

"Well, never mind, I shall manage everything properly. What can you do with the small sword, for they have rapiers at the mill?"

"Nothing whatever; I have not fenced since I was a boy."

"No matter then, we'll fight at a *barrière*. I know they're not prepared for that from Englishmen; so just step on one side now, and leave me to talk it over."

As the limited nature of the ground did not permit me to retire to a distance, I became involuntarily aware of a dialogue, which even the seriousness of the moment could scarcely keep me from laughing at, outright.

It was necessary, for the sake of avoiding any possible legal difficulty in the result, that O'Leary should give his assent to every step of the arrangement; and being almost totally ignorant of French, Trevanion had not only to translate for him, but also to render in reply O'Leary's own comments or objections to the propositions of the others.

"Then it is agreed—we fight at a *barrière*," said Captain de Joncourt.

"What's that, Trevanion?"

"We have agreed to place them at a *barrière*," replied Trevanion.

"That's strange," muttered O'Leary to himself, who, knowing that the word meant a "turnpike," never supposed it had any other signification.

"Vingt-quatre pas, n'est-ce-pas?" said De Joncourt.

"Too far," interposed Trevanion.

"What does he say now?" asked O'Leary.

"Twenty-four paces for the distance."

"Twenty-four of my teeth he means," said O'Leary, snapping his fingers. "What does he think of the length of Sackville Street? Ask him that, will ye?"

"What says Monsieur?" said the Frenchman.

"He thinks the distance much too great."

"He may be mistaken," said the Captain, half sneeringly. "My friend is *de la première force*."

"That must be something impudent, from your looks, Mr. Trevanion. Isn't it a thousand pities I can't speak French?"

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I SAW MY FRIEND O'LEARY ABOUT TWELVE FEET FROM THE GROUND, HANGING ON BY SOME ASH TWIGS THAT GREW FROM THE CLEFTS OF THE GRANITE. (P. 163.)

"What say you, then, to twelve paces? Fire together, and two shots each, if the first fire be inconclusive," said Trevanion.

"And if necessary," added the Frenchman, carelessly, "conclude with these"—touching the swords with his foot as he spoke.

"The choice of the weapon lies with us, I opine," replied Trevanion. "We have already named pistols, and by them we shall decide this matter."

It was at length, after innumerable objections, agreed upon that we should be placed back to back, and, at a word given, each walk forward to a certain distance marked out by a stone, where we were to halt, and at the signal "*Un*," "*Deux*," turn round and fire.

This, which is essentially a French invention in dueling, was perfectly new to me, but by no means so to Trevanion, who was fully aware of the immense consequence of not giving even a momentary opportunity for aim to my antagonist; and in this mode of firing the most practiced and deadly shot is liable to err—particularly if the signal be given quickly.

While Trevanion and the Captain were measuring out the ground, a little circumstance which was enacted near me was certainly not over-calculated to strengthen my nerve. The stranger who had led us to the ground had begun to examine the pistols, and finding that one of them was loaded, turned toward my adversary, saying, "De Haulpenne, you have forgotten to draw the charge. Come, let us see what vein you are in." At the same time, drawing off his large cavalry glove, he handed the pistol to his friend.

"A double Napoleon you don't hit the thumb."

"Done," said the other, adjusting the weapon in his hand.

The action was scarcely performed, when the better flung the glove into the air with all his force. My opponent raised his pistol, waited for an instant, till the glove, having attained its greatest height, turned to fall again. Then click went the trigger—the glove turned round and round half a dozen times, and fell about twenty yards off, and the thumb was found cut clearly off at the juncture with the hand.

This—which did not occupy half as long as I have spent in recounting it—was certainly a pleasant introduction to standing at fifteen yards from the principal actor; and I should doubtless have felt it in all its force, had not my attention been drawn off by the ludicrous expression of grief in O'Leary's countenance, who evidently regarded me as already defunct.

"Now, Lorrequer, we are ready," said Trevanion, coming forward; and then, lowering his voice, added, "All is in your favor; I have won the 'word,' which I shall give the moment you halt. So turn and fire at once: be sure not to go too far round in the turn—that is the invariable error in this mode of firing: only, no hurry!—be calm."

"Now, messieurs," said De Joncourt, as he approached with his friend leaning upon his arm, and placed him in the spot allotted to him. Trevanion then took my arm, and placed me back to back to my antagonist. As I took up my ground, it so chanced that my adversary's spur slightly grazed me, upon which he immediately turned round, and with the most engaging smile, begged a "thousand pardons," and hoped I was not hurt.

O'Leary, who saw the incident, and guessed the action aright, called out,—

"Oh, the cold-blooded villain! the devil a chance for you, Mr. Lorrequer."

"Messieurs, your pistols," said De Joncourt, who, as he handed the weapons, and repeated once more the conditions of the combat, gave the word to march.

I now walked slowly forward to the place marked out by the stone; but it seemed that I must have been in advance of my opponent, for I remember some seconds elapsed before Trevanion coughed slightly, and then with a clear, full voice called out, "*Un*," "*Deux!*" I had scarcely turned myself half round, when my right arm was suddenly lifted up, as if by a galvanic shock. My pistol jerked upwards, and exploded the same moment, and then dropped powerlessly from my hand, which I now felt was covered with warm blood from a wound near the elbow. From the acute but momentary pang this gave me, my attention was soon called off; for scarcely had my arm been struck, when a loud clattering noise to the left induced me to turn, and then, to my astonishment, I saw my friend O'Leary about twelve feet from the ground, hanging on by some ash twigs that grew from the clefts of the granite. Fragments of broken rock were falling around him, and his own position momentarily threatened a downfall. He was screaming with all his might; but what he said was entirely lost in the shouts of laughter of Trevanion and the Frenchmen, who could scarcely stand with the immoderate exuberance of their mirth.

I had no time to run to his aid—which, although wounded, I should have done—

when the branch he clung to, slowly yielded with his weight, and the round, plump figure of my poor friend rolled over the little cleft of rock, and, after a few faint struggles, came tumbling heavily down, and at last lay peaceably in the deep heather at the bottom—his cries the whole time being loud enough to rise even above the vociferous laughter of the others.

I now ran forward, as did Trevanion, when O'Leary, turning his eyes toward me, said, in the most piteous manner,—

"Mr. Lorrequer, I forgive you—here is my hand—bad luck to their French way of fighting, that's all—it's only good for killing one's friend. I thought I was safe up there, come what might."

"My dear O'Leary," said I, in an agony, which prevented my minding the laughing faces around me, "surely you don't mean to say that I have wounded *you?*"

"No, dear, not wounded, only killed me outright—through the brain it must be, from the torture I'm suffering."

The shout with which this speech was received, sufficiently aroused me; while Trevanion, with a voice nearly choked with laughter, said,—

"Why, Lorrequer, did you not see that your pistol, on being struck, threw your ball high up on the quarry; fortunately, however, about a foot and a half above Mr. O'Leary's head, whose most serious wounds are his scratched hands and bruised bones from his tumble."

This explanation, which was perfectly satisfactory to me, was by no means so consoling to poor O'Leary, who lay quite unconscious to all around, moaning in the most melancholy manner. Some of the blood, which continued to flow fast from my wound, having dropped upon his face, roused him a little—but only to increase his lamentation for his own destiny, which he believed was fast accomplishing.

"Through the skull—clean through the skull—and preserving my senses to the last! Mr. Lorrequer, stoop down—it is a dying man asks you—don't refuse me a last request. There's neither luck nor grace, honor nor glory in such a way of fighting—so just promise me you'll shoot that grinning baboon there, when he's going off the ground, since it's the fashion to fire at a man with his back to you. Bring him down and I'll die easy."

And with these words he closed his eyes, and straightened out his legs—stretched his arms on either side, and arranged himself as much corpse fashion as the circumstances of the ground would permit—while I now freely participated in the mirth of the others, which, loud and boisterous as it was, never reached the ears of O'Leary.

My arm had now become so painful, that I was obliged to ask Trevanion to assist me in getting off my coat. The surprise of the Frenchmen on learning that I was wounded was very considerable—O'Leary's catastrophe having exclusively engaged all attention. My arm was now examined, when it was discovered that the ball had passed through from one side to the other, without apparently touching the bone: the bullet and the portion of my coat carried in by it both lay in my sleeve. The only serious consequence to be apprehended was the wound of the blood-vessel, which continued to pour for thblood unceasingly, and I was just surgeon enough to guess that an artery had been cut.

Trevanion bound his handkerchief tightly across the wound and assisted me to the high road, which, so sudden was the loss of blood, I reached with difficulty. During all these proceedings, nothing could be possibly more kind and considerate than the conduct of our opponents. All the bold and swaggering air which they had deemed the *essentiel* before, at once fled, and in its place we found the most gentlemanlike attention and true politeness.

As soon as I was enabled to speak upon the matter, I begged Trevanion to look to poor O'Leary, who still lay upon the ground in a state of perfect unconsciousness. Captain de Joncourt, on hearing my wish, at once returned to the quarry, and, with the greatest difficulty, persuaded my friend to rise and endeavor to walk, which at last he did attempt, calling him to bear witness that it perhaps was the only case on record where a man with a bullet in his brain had made such an exertion.

With a view to my comfort and quiet, they got him into d'Haultpenne's cab; and having undertaken to send Dupuytren to me immediately on my reaching Paris, took their leave, and Trevanion and I set out homeward.

Not all my exhaustion and debility—nor even the acute pain I was suffering, could prevent my laughing at O'Leary's adventure; and it required all Trevanion's prudence to prevent my indulging too far in my recollection of it.

When we reached Meurice's, I found Dupuytren in waiting, who immediately pronounced the main artery of the limb as wounded; and almost as instantaneously proceeded to pass a ligature round it. This painful business being concluded, I was

placed upon a sofa, and being plentifully supplied with lemonade, and enjoined to keep quiet, left to my own meditations, such as they were, till evening—Trevanion having taken upon him to apologize for our absence at Mrs. Bingham's *déjeûner*, and O'Leary being fast asleep in his own apartment.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS—A FIRST LOVE.

I KNOW of no sensations so very nearly alike, as those felt on awaking after very sudden and profuse loss of blood, and those resulting from a large dose of opium. The dizziness, the confusion, and the abstraction at first, gradually yielding, as the senses become clearer, to a vague and indistinct consciousness; then, the strange mistiness, in which fact and fiction are wrapped up—the confounding of persons, and places, and times, not so as to embarrass and annoy—for the very debility you feel subdues all irritation—but rather to present a panoramic picture of odd and incongruous events more pleasing than otherwise.

Of the circumstances by which I was thus brought to a sick couch, I had not even the most vague recollection—the faces and the dress of all those I had lately seen were vividly before me; but how, and for what purpose I knew not. Something in their kindness and attention had left an agreeable impression upon my mind, and without being able, or even attempting to trace it, I felt happy in the thought. While thus the "hour before" was dim and indistinct, the events of years past were vividly and brightly pictured before me; and strange too, the more remote the period, the more did it seem palpable and present to my imagination. For so it is, there is in memory a species of mental long-sightedness, which, though blind to the object close beside you, can reach the blue mountains and the starry skies, which lie full many a league away. Is this a malady? or is it rather a providential gift to alleviate the tedious hours of the sick-bed, and cheer the lonely sufferer, whose thoughts are his only realm?

My school-boy days, in all their holiday excitement; the bank where I had culled the earliest cowslips of the year; the clear but rapid stream, where days long I have watched the speckled trout, as they swam peacefully beneath, or shook their bright fins in the gay sunshine; the gorgeous dragon-fly that played above the water, and dipped his bright wings in its ripple—they were all before me. And then came the thought of school itself, with its little world of boyish cares and emulations; the early imbibed passion for success; the ardent longing for superiority; the high and swelling feeling of the heart, as home drew near, to think that I had gained the wished-for prize—the object of many an hour's toil—the thought of many a long night's dream; my father's smile; my mother's kiss! Oh! what a very world of tender memory that one thought suggests; for what are all our later successes in life—how bright soever our fortune be—compared with the early triumphs of our infancy? Where, among the jealous rivalry of some, the cold and half-wrung praise of others, the selfish and unsympathizing regard of all, shall we find anything to repay us for the swelling ecstasy of our young hearts, as those who have cradled and loved us grow proud in our successes? For myself, a life that has failed in every prestige of those that prophesied favorably, years that have followed on each other only to blight the promise that kind and well-wishing friends foretold, leave but little to dwell upon, that can be reckoned as success. And yet, some moments I have had, which half seemed to realize my early dream of ambition, and rouse my spirit within me; but what were they all compared to my boyish glories? what the passing excitement one's own heart inspires in its lonely and selfish solitude, when compared with that little world of sympathy and love our early home teemed with, as, proud in some trifling distinction, we fell into a mother's arms, and heard our father's "God bless you, boy?" No, no; the world has no requital for this. It is like the bright day-spring, which, as its glories gild the east, display before us a whole world of beauty and promise—blighted hopes have not withered, false friendships have not scathed, cold, selfish interest has not yet hardened our hearts, or dried up our affections, and we are indeed happy; but equally like the burst of morning is it fleeting and short-lived: and equally so, too, does it pass away, never, never to return.

From thoughts like these my mind wandered on to more advanced years, when, emerging from very boyhood, I half believed myself a man, and was fully convinced I was in love.

Perhaps, after all, for the time it lasted—ten days, I think—it was the most sincere passion I ever felt. I had been spend-

ing some weeks at a small watering-place in Wales with some relatives of my mother. There were, as might be supposed, but few "*distractions*" in such a place, save the scenery, and an occasional day's fishing in the little river of Dolgelly, which ran near. In all these little rambles which the younger portion of the family made together, frequent mention was ever being made of a visit from a very dear cousin, and to which all looked forward with the greatest eagerness—the elder ones of the party with a certain air of quiet pleasure, as though they knew more than they said, and the younger with all the childish exuberance of youthful delight. Clara Mourtray seemed to be, from all I was hourly hearing, the very paragon and pattern of everything. If any one was praised for beauty, Clara was immediately pronounced much prettier—did any one sing, Clara's voice and taste were far superior. In our homeward walk, should the shadows of the dark hills fall with a picturesque effect upon the blue lake, some one was sure to say, "Oh! how Clara would like to sketch that." In short there was no charm nor accomplishment ever the gift of woman, that Clara did not possess; or, what amounted pretty much to the same thing, that my relatives did not implicitly give her credit for. The constantly recurring praises of the same person affect us always differently as we go on in life. In youth the prevailing sentiment is an ardent desire to see the prodigy of whom we have heard so much—in after years, heartily to detest what hourly hurts our self-love by comparisons. We would take any steps to avoid meeting what we have inwardly decreed to be a "bore." The former was my course; and though my curiosity was certainly very great, I had made up my mind to as great a disappointment, and half wished for the long arrival as a means of criticizing what they could see no fault in.

The wished-for evening at length came, and we all set out upon a walk to meet the carriage which was to bring the long wished-for Clara among us. We had not walked above a mile when the eager eye of the foremost detected a cloud of dust upon the road at some distance; and, after a few minutes more, four posters were seen coming along at a tremendous rate. The next moment *she* was making the tour of about a dozen uncles, aunts, cousins, and *cousines*, none of whom, it appeared to me, felt any peculiar desire to surrender the hearty embrace to the next of kin in succession. At last she came to me, when, perhaps, in the confusion of the moment, not exactly remembering whether or not she had seen me before, she stood for a moment silent—a deep blush mantling her lovely cheek—masses of waving brown hair disordered and floating upon her shoulders—her large and liquid blue eyes beaming upon me. One look was enough. I was deeply—irretrievably in love.

"Our cousin Harry—Harry Lorrequer—wild Harry, as we used to call him, Clara," said one of the girls introducing me.

She held out her hand, and said something with a smile. What, I know not—nor can I tell how I replied; but something absurd it must have been, for they all laughed heartily, and the worthy papa himself tapped my shoulder jestingly, adding,—

"Never mind, Harry—you will do better one day, or I am much mistaken in you."

Whether I was conscious that I had behaved foolishly or not, I cannot well say; but the whole of that night I thought over plans innumerable how I should succeed in putting myself forward before "Cousin Clara," and vindicating myself against any imputation of schoolboy mannerism that my first appearance might have caused.

The next day we remained at home. Clara was too much fatigued to walk out, and none of us would leave her. What a day of happiness that was! I knew something of music, and could sing a second. Clara was delighted at this, for the others had not cultivated singing much. We therefore spent part of the morning in this way. Then, she produced her sketch-book, and I brought out mine, and we had a mutual interchange of prisoners. What cutting out of leaves and detaching of rice-paper landscapes! Then, she came out upon the lawn to see my pony leap, and promised to ride him the following day. She patted the greyhounds, and said Gipsy, which was mine, was the prettiest. In a word, before night fell Clara had won my heart in its every fiber, and I went to my room the very happiest of mortals.

I need not chronicle my next three days—to me the most glorious *trois jours* of my life. Clara had evidently singled me out and preferred me to all the rest. It was beside *me* she rode—upon *my* arm she leaned in walking—and, to fill me with delight unutterable, I overheard her say to my uncle, "Oh! I doat upon dear Harry! And it is so pleasant, for I'm sure Mortimer will be so jealous."

"And who is Mortimer?" thought I;

"he is a new character in the piece, of whom we have seen nothing."

I was not long in doubt upon this head, for that very day, at dinner, the identical Mortimer presented himself. He was a fine, dashing-looking, soldier-like fellow, of about thirty-five, with a heavy moustache, and a bronzed cheek—rather grave in his manner, but still perfectly good-natured, and when he smiled showing a most handsome set of regular teeth. Clara seemed less pleased (I thought) at his coming than the others, and took pleasure in tormenting him by a thousand pettish and frivolous ways, which I was sorry for, as I thought he did not like it; and used to look half chidingly at her from time to time, but without any effect, for she just went on as before, and generally ended by taking my arm and saying, "Come away, Harry; *you* always are kind, and never look sulky. I can agree with *you*." These were delightful words for me to listen to, but I could not hear them without feeling for him, who evidently was pained by Clara's avowed preference for me; and whose years—for I thought thirty-five at that time a little verging upon the patriarchal—entitled him to more respect.

"Well," thought I, one evening, as this game had been carried rather farther than usual, "I hope she is content now, for certainly Mortimer is jealous;" and the result proved it, for the whole of the following day he absented himself, and never came back till late in the evening. He had been, I found, from a chance observation I overheard, at the bishop's palace, and the bishop himself, I learned, was to breakfast with us in the morning.

"Harry, I have a commission for you," said Clara. "You must get up very early to-morrow, and climb the Cader mountain, and bring me a grand bouquet of the blue and purple heath that I liked so much the last time I was there. Mind very early, for I intend to surprise the bishop to-morrow with my taste in a nosegay."

The sun had scarcely risen as I sprang from my bed, and started upon my errand. Oh! the glorious beauty of that morning's walk. As I climbed the mountain, the deep mists lay upon all around, and except the path I was treading, nothing was visible: but before I reached the top, the heavy masses of vapor were yielding to the influence of the sun; and as they rolled from the valleys up the mountain sides, were every instant opening new glens and ravines beneath me—bright in all their verdure, and speckled with sheep, whose tinkling bells reached me even where I stood.

I counted above twenty lakes at different levels, below me; some, brilliant, and shining like polished mirrors; others, not less beautiful, dark and solemn with some mighty mountain shadow. As I looked landward, the mountains reared their huge crests, one above the other, to the farthest any eye could reach. Toward the opposite side, the calm and tranquil sea lay beneath me, bathed in the yellow gold of a rising sun; a few ships were peaceably lying at anchor in the bay; and the only thing in motion was a row-boat, the heavy monotonous stroke of whose oars rose in the stillness of the morning air. Not a single habitation of man could I descry, nor any vestige of a human being, except that mass of something upon a rock far down beneath were one, and I think it must have been, for I saw a sheep-dog ever returning again and again to the same spot.

My bouquet was gathered; the gentian of the Alps, which is found here, also contributing its evidence to show where I had been to seek it, and I turned home.

The family were at breakfast as I entered; at least so the servants said, for I only remembered then that the bishop was our guest, and that I could not present myself without some slight attention to my dress. I hastened to my room, and scarcely had I finished, when one of my cousins, a little girl of eight years, came to the door and said,—

"Harry, come down, Clara wants you."

I rushed downstairs, and as I entered the breakfast-parlor, stood still with surprise. The ladies were all dressed in white, and even my little cousin wore a gala costume that almost amazed me.

"My bouquet, Harry; I hope you have not forgotten it," said Clara as I approached.

I presented it at once, when she gaily and coquettishly held out her hand for me to kiss. This I did, my blood rushing to my face and temples the while, and almost depriving me of consciousness.

"Well, Clara, I *am* surprised at you." said Mortimer. "How can you treat the poor boy so?"

I grew deadly pale at these words, and turning round, looked at the speaker full in the face. "Poor fellow," thought I, "he is jealous, and I am really grieved for him;" and turned again to Clara.

"Here it is—oh; how handsome papa," said one of the younger children, running eagerly to the window, as a very pretty open carriage with four horses drew up before the house.

"The bishop has taste," I murmured to myself, scarcely deigning to give a second look at the equipage.

Clara now left the room, but speedily returned—her dress changed, and shawled as if for a walk. What could all this mean?—and the whispering, too, what is all that?—and why are they all so sad?—Clara has been weeping.

"God bless you, my child—good bye," said my aunt, as she folded her in her arms for the third time.

"Good bye, good bye," I heard on every side. At length, approaching me, Clara took my hand and said,—

"My poor Harry, so we are going to part. I am going to Italy."

"To Italy, Clara? Oh, no—say no. Italy! I shall never see you again."

"Won't you wear this ring for me, Harry? It is an old favorite of yours—and when we meet again——"

"Oh! dearest Clara," I said, "do not speak thus."

"Good bye, my poor boy, good bye," said Clara, hurriedly; and rushing out of the room, she was lifted by Mortimer into the carriage, who immediately jumping in after her, the whip cracked, the horses clattered, and all was out of sight in a second.

"Why is she gone with him?" said I, reproachfully, turning toward my aunt.

"Why, my dear, a very sufficient reason. She was married this morning."

This was my first love!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

WISE RESOLVES.

MUSING over this boyish adventure, I fell into a deep slumber, and on awakening it took me some minutes before I could recall my senses sufficiently to know where I was. The whole face of things in my room was completely changed. Flowers had been put in the china vases upon the tables—two handsome lamps, shaded with gauzes, stood upon the consoles—illustrated books, prints, and caricatures, were scattered about. A pianoforte had, also, by some witchcraft, insinuated itself into a recess near the sofa—a handsome little tea-service, of old Dresden china, graced a small marqueterie table—and a little piquet table stood most invitingly beside the fire. I had scarcely time to turn my eyes from one to the other of these new occupants when I heard the handle of my door gently turn, as if by some cautious hand, and immediately closed my eyes and feigned sleep. Through my half-shut lids I perceived the door opened. After a pause of about a second, the skirt of a white muslin dress appeared—then a pretty foot stole a little farther—and at last the slight and graceful figure of Emily Bingham advanced noiselessly into the room. Fear had rendered her deadly pale; but the effect of her rich brown hair, braided plainly on either side of her cheek, suited so well the character of her features, I thought her far handsomer than ever. She came forward towards the table, and I now could perceive that she had something in her hand resembling a letter. This she placed near my hand—so near as almost to touch it. She leaned over me—I felt her breath upon my brow, but never moved. At this instant, a tress of her hair, becoming unfastened, fell over upon my face. She started—the motion threw me off my guard, and I looked up. She gave a faint, scarcely audible shriek, and shrank into the chair beside me. Recovering, however, upon the instant, she grasped the letter she had just laid down, and having crushed it between her fingers, threw it into the fire. This done—as if the effort had been too much for her strength—she again fell back upon her seat, and looked so pale I almost thought she had fainted.

Before I had time to speak, she rose once more; and now her face was bathed in blushes, her eyes swam with rising tears, and her lips trembled with emotion as she spoke.

"Oh, Mr. Lorrequer, what will you—what can you think of this? If you but knew——;" and here she faltered and again grew pale, while I, with difficulty rising from the sofa, took her hand, and led her to the chair beside it.

"And may I not know?" said I; "may I not know, my dear"—I am not sure I did not say dearest—"Miss Bingham, when, perhaps, the knowledge might make me the happiest of mortals?"

This was a pretty plunge as a sequel to my late resolutions. She hid her face between her hands, and sobbed for some seconds.

"At least," said I, "as that letter was destined for me but a few moments since, I trust that you will let me hear its contents."

"Oh no—not now!" said she, entreatingly; and, rising at the same time, she turned to leave the room. I still held her hand, and pressed it within mine. I thought she returned the pressure. I

leaned forward to catch her eye, when the door was opened hastily, and a most extraordinary figure presented itself.

It was a short, fat man, with a pair of enormous mustachios, of a fiery red; huge bushy whiskers of the same color; a blue frock covered with braiding, and decorated with several crosses and ribbons; tight pantaloons and Hessian boots, with long brass spurs. He held a large gold-headed cane in his hand, and looked about with an expression of very equivocal drollery, mingled with fear.

"May I ask, sir," said I, as this individual closed the door behind him, "may I ask the reason for this intrusion?"

"Oh, upon my conscience, I'll do—I'm sure to pass muster, now," said the well-known voice of Mr. O'Leary, whose pleasant features began to dilate amid the forest of red hair he was disguised in. "But I see you are engaged," said he, with a sly look at Miss Bingham, whom he had not yet recognized; "so I must contrive to hide myself elsewhere, I suppose."

"It is Miss Bingham," said I, "who has been kind enough to come here with her maid to bring me some flowers. Pray present my compliments to Mrs. Bingham, and say how deeply I feel her kind attention."

Emily rose at the instant, and recovering her self-possession at once, said,—

"You forget, Mr. Lorrequer, it is a secret from whom the flowers came; at least mamma hoped to place them in your vases without your knowing. So pray don't speak of it—and I'm sure Mr. O'Leary will not tell."

If Mr. O'Leary heard one word of this artful speech I know not, but he certainly paid no attention to it, nor the speaker, who left the room without his appearing aware of it.

"Now that she is gone—for which Heaven be praised," said I to myself—"let me see what this fellow can mean."

As I turned from the door, I could scarcely avoid laughing aloud at the figure before me. He stood opposite a large mirror, his hat on one side of his head, one arm in his breast, and the other extended, leaning upon his stick; a look of as much ferocity as such features could accomplish had been assumed, and his whole attitude was a kind of caricature of a melo-dramatic hero in a German drama.

"Why, O'Leary, what is all this?"

"Hush, hush," said he, in a terrified whisper—"never mention that name again, till we are over the frontier."

"But, man, explain—what do you mean?"

"Can't you guess?" said he, drily.

"Impossible; unless the affair at the *salon* has induced you to take this disguise, I cannot conceive the reason."

"Nothing further from it, my dear friend; much worse than that."

"Out with it, then, at once."

"She's come—she's here—in this very house—No. 29, above the *entresol!*"

"Who is here, in No. 29, above the *entresol?*"

"Who, but Mrs. O'Leary herself. I was near saying, 'Bad luck to her.'"

"And does she know you are here?"

"That is what I can't exactly say," said he, "but she has had the *Livredes Voyageurs* brought up to her room, and has been making rather unpleasant inquiries for the proprietor of certain hieroglyphics beginning with O, which have given me great alarm—the more, as all the waiters have been sent for in turn, and subjected to long examination by her. So I have lost no time, but, under the auspices of your friend Trevanion, have become the fascinating figure you find me, and am now Count O'Linski, a Pole of noble family, banished by the Russian government, with a father in Siberia, and all that; and I hope, by the end of the week, to be able to cheat at *écarté*, and deceive the very police itself."

The idea of O'Leary's assuming such a metamorphosis was too absurd not to throw me into a hearty fit of laughing, in which the worthy *émigré* indulged also.

"But why not leave this at once," said I, "if you are so much in dread of recognition?"

"You forget the trial," added O'Leary. "I must be here on the 18th, or all my bail is forfeited."

"True—I have forgotten that. Well, now, your plans."

"Simply to keep very quiet here till the affair of the tribunal is over, and then quit France at once. Meanwhile, Trevanion thinks that we may, by a bold stratagem, send Mrs. O'Leary off on a wrong scent, and has requested Mrs. Bingham to contrive to make her acquaintance, and ask her to tea in her room, when she will see me, *en Polonais*, at a distance, you know—hear something of my melancholy destiny, from Trevanion—and leave the hotel quite sure she has no claim on me. Meanwhile, some others of the party are to mention incidentally having met Mr. O'Leary somewhere, or heard of his decease, or any

pleasant little incident that may occur to them."

"The plan is excellent," said I, "for in all probability she may never come in your way again, if sent off on a good errand this time."

"That's what I'm thinking," said O'Leary; "and I am greatly disposed to let her hear that I'm with Belzoni in Egypt, with an engagement to spend the Christmas with the Dey of Algiers. That would give her a very pretty tour for the remainder of the year, and show her the Pyramids. But, tell me fairly, am I a good Pole?"

"Rather short," said I, "and a little too fat, perhaps."

"That comes from the dash of the Tartar blood, nothing more; and my mother was a Fin," said he, "she'll never ask whether from the Blackwater or the Baltic. How I revel in the thought, that I may smoke in company without a breach of the unities. But I must go: there is a gentleman with a quinsy in No. 8, that gives me a lesson in Polish this morning. So good bye, and don't forget to be well enough to-night, for you must be present at my *début*."

O'Leary had scarcely gone, when my thoughts reverted to Emily Bingham. I was not such a coxcomb as to fancy her in love with me; yet certainly there was something in the affair which looked not unlike it; and though, by such a circumstance, every embarrassment which pressed upon me had become infinitely greater, I could not dissemble from myself a sense of pleasure at the thought. She was really a very pretty girl, and improved vastly upon acquaintance. *Les absents ont toujours tort* is the truest proverb in any language, and I felt it, in its fullest force, when Trevanion entered my room.

"Well, Lorrequer," said he, "your time is not likely to hang heavily on your hands in Paris, if occupation will prevent it, for I find you are just now booked for a new scrape."

"What can you mean?" said I, starting up.

"Why, O'Leary, who has been, since your illness, the constant visitor at the Binghams—dining there every day, and spending his evenings—has just told me that the mamma is only waiting for the arrival of Sir Guy Lorrequer in Paris to open the trenches in all form; and from what she has heard of Sir Guy, she deems it most likely he will give her every aid and support to making you the husband of the fair Emily."

"And with good reason, too," said I; "for if my uncle were only given to understand that I had once gone far in my attentions, nothing would induce him to break off the match. He was crossed in love himself when young, and has made a score of people miserable since, in the benevolent idea of marrying them against every obstacle."

"How very smart you have become," said Trevanion, taking a look round my room, and surveying in turn each of the new occupants; "you must certainly reckon upon seeing your fair friend here, or all this elegance is sadly wasted."

This was the time to explain all about Miss Bingham's visit; and I did so, of course omitting any details which might seem to me needless, or involving myself in inconsistency.

Trevanion listened patiently to the end—was silent for some moments—then added:

"And you never saw the letter?"

"Of course not. It was burned before my eyes."

"I think the affair looks very serious, Lorrequer. You may have won this girl's affections. It matters little whether the mamma be a hackneyed match-maker, or the cousin a bullying duelist. If the girl have a heart, and that you have gained it ——"

"Then I must marry, you would say."

"Exactly so—without the prompting of your worthy uncle; I see no other course open to you without dishonor. My advice, therefore, is, ascertain—and that speedily—how far your attentions have been attended with the success you dread—and then decide at once. Are you able to get as far as Mrs. Bingham's room this morning? If so, come along. I shall take all the *frais* of la chère mamma off your hands, while you talk to the daughter; and half an hour's courage and resolution will do it all."

Having made the most effective toilet my means would permit, my right arm in a sling, and my step trembling from weakness, I sallied forth with Trevanion to make love with as many fears for the result as the most bashful admirer ever experienced, when pressing his suit upon some haughty belle—but for a far different reason.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE PROPOSAL.

On reaching Mrs. Bingham's apartment, we found that she had just left home to

wait upon Mrs. O'Leary, and consequently, that Miss Bingham was alone. Trevanion, therefore, having wished me a safe deliverance through my trying mission, shook my hand warmly, and departed.

I stood for some minutes irresolutely, with my hand upon the lock of the door. To think that the next few moments may decide the fortune of one's after-life is a sufficiently anxious thought; but that your fate may be so decided, by compelling you to finish in sorrow what you have begun in folly, is still more insupportable. Such, then, was my condition. I had resolved within myself, if the result of this meeting should prove that I had won Miss Bingham's affections, to propose for her at once in all form, and make her my wife. If, on the other hand, I only found that she too had amused herself with a little passing flirtation, why then, I was a free man once more: but, on catechizing myself a little closer, I discovered that I was not indisposed to make love *de novo*.

With the speed of lightning, my mind ran over every passage of our acquaintance —our first meeting—our solitary walks—our daily, hourly associations—our traveling intimacy—the adventure at Chantraine; there was, it is true, nothing in all this which could establish the fact of wooing, but everything which should convince an old offender like myself that the young lady was *en prise*, and that I myself—despite my really strong attachment elsewhere—was not entirely scathless.

"Yes," said I, half aloud, as I once more reviewed the past, "it is but another chapter in my history in keeping with all the rest—one step has ever led me to a second, and so on to a third; what with other men have passed for mere trifles, have ever with me become serious difficulties, and the false enthusiasm with which I ever follow any object in life, blinds me for the time, and mistaking zeal for inclination, I never feel how little my heart is interested in success, till the fever of pursuit is over."

These were pleasant thoughts for one about to throw himself at a pretty girl's feet, and pour out his "soul of love before her;" but that with me was the least part of it. Curran, they say, usually picked up his facts in a case from the opposite counsel's statements. I always relied for my conduct in carrying on anything to the chance circumstances of the moment, and trusted to my animal spirits to give me an interest in whatever, for the time being, engaged me.

I opened the door. Miss Bingham was sitting at a table, her head leaning upon her hands—some open letters which lay before her evidently so occupying her attention that my approach was unheard. On my addressing her, she turned round suddenly, and became at first deep scarlet, then pale as death; while, turning to the table, she hurriedly threw her letters into a drawer, and motioned me to a place beside her.

After the first brief and commonplace inquiry for my health, and hopes for my speedy recovery, she became silent; and I too, primed with topics innumerable to discuss—knowing how short my time might prove before Mrs. Bingham's return —could not say a word.

"I hope, Mr. Lorrequer," said she, at length, "that you have incurred no risk by leaving your room so early."

"I have not," I replied; "but even were there a certainty of it, the anxiety I labored under to see and speak with you alone, would have overcome all fears on that account. Since this unfortunate business has confined me to my chamber, I have done nothing but think over circumstances which have at length so entirely taken possession of me, that I must, at any sacrifice, have sought an opportunity to explain to you"—here Emily looked down, and I continued—"I need scarcely say what my feelings must long since have betrayed, that to have enjoyed the daily happiness of living in your society, of estimating your worth, of feeling your fascinations, were not the means most in request for him, who knew, too well, how little he deserved, either by fortune or desert, to hope to make you his; and yet, how little has prudence or caution to do with situations like this." She did not guess the animus of this speech. "I felt all I have described; and yet, and yet, I lingered on, prizing too dearly the happiness of the present hour, to risk it by any avowal of sentiments, which might have banished me from your presence for ever. If the alternation of these hopes and fears has proved too strong for my reason at last, I cannot help it; and this it is which now leads me to make this avowal to you." Emily turned her head away from me; but her agitated manner showed how deeply my words had affected her; and I too, now that I had finished, felt that I had been "coming it rather strong"—though perhaps not very intelligibly.

"I had hoped, Mr. Lorrequer," said she, at length—"I had hoped, I confess, to have had an opportunity of speaking with you."—Then, thought I, the game is over, and Bishop Luscombe is richer by ten

pounds than I wish him.—"Something, I know not what, in your manner, led me to suspect that your affections might lean towards me: hints you have dropped, and, now and then, your chance allusions strengthened the belief, and I determined, at length, that no feeling of maidenly shame on my part should endanger the happiness of either of us, and I resolved to see you: this was so difficult, that I wrote a letter, and that letter, which might have saved me all distressing explanation, I burned before you this morning."

"But, why, dearest girl,"—here was a plunge—"why, if the letter could remove any misconstruction, or could be the means of dispelling any doubt—why not have let me see it?"

"Hear me out," cried she, eagerly and evidently not heeding my interruption; "I determined, if your affections were indeed ——" A flood of tears here broke forth, and drowned her words; her head sank between her hands, and she sobbed bitterly.

"Corpo di Baccho!" said I to myself, "it is all over with me; the poor girl is evidently jealous, and her heart will break."

"Dearest, dearest Emily," said I, passing my arm round her, and approaching my head close to hers, "if you think that any other love than yours could ever beat within this heart—that I could see you hourly before me—live beneath your smile, and gaze upon your beauty—and, still more than all—pardon the boldness of the thought—feel that I was not indifferent to you——"

"Oh! spare me this at least," said she, turning round her tearful eyes upon me, and looking most bewitchingly beautiful. "Have I then shown you this plainly?"

"Yes, dearest girl! That instinct which tells us we are loved has spoken within me. And here in this beating heart——"

"Oh! say no more," said she; "if I have *indeed*, gained your affections——"

"*If*—*if* you have," said I, clasping her to my heart, while she continued to sob still violently, and I felt half disposed to blow my brains out for my success. However, there is something in love-making, as in fox-hunting, which carries you along in spite of yourself; and I continued to pour forth whole rhapsodies of love that the Pastor Fido could not equal.

"Enough," said she—"it is enough that you love me and that I have encouraged your so doing. But, oh! tell me once more, and think how much of future happiness may rest upon your answer—tell me, may not this be some passing attachment, which circumstances have created, and others may dispel? Say, might not absence, time, or another more worthy——"

This was certainly a very rigid cross-examination when I thought the trial was over! and, not being exactly prepared for it, I felt no other mode of reply than pressing her taper fingers alternately to my lips, and muttering something that might pass for a declaration of love unalterable, but, to my own ears, resembled a lament on my folly.

"She is mine now," thought I, "so we must e'en make the best of it; and truly she is a very handsome girl, though not a Lady Jane Callonby. The next step is the mamma; but I do not anticipate much difficulty in that quarter."

"Leave me now," said she, in a low and broken voice; "but promise not to speak of this meeting to any one before we meet again. I have my reasons; believe me they are sufficient ones, so promise me this before we part."

Having readily given the pledge required, I again kissed her hand and bade farewell, not a little puzzled the whole time at perceiving that ever since my declaration and acceptance Emily seemed anything but happy, and evidently struggling against some secret feeling of which I knew nothing. "Yes," thought I, as I wended my way along the corridor, "the poor little girl is tremendously jealous, and I must have said many a thing during our intimacy to hurt her. However, that is all past and gone; and now comes a new character for me: my next appearance will be in the part of the 'happy husband.'"

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THOUGHTS UPON MATRIMONY IN GENERAL, AND IN THE ARMY IN PARTICULAR—THE KNIGHT OF KERRY AND BILLY M'CABE.

"So," thought I, as I closed the door of my room behind me, "I am accepted—the die is cast which makes me a Benedict: yet Heaven knows that never was a man less disposed to be over joyous at his good fortune!" What a happy invention it were, if when adopting any road in life, we could only manage to forget that we had ever contemplated any other! It is the eternal looking back in this world that forms the staple of all our misery; and we are but ill-requited for such unhappiness by the brightest anticipations we can conjure up for the future. How much of all

that "past" was now to become a source of painful recollection, and to how little of the future could I look forward with even hope!

Our weaknesses are much more constantly the spring of all our annoyances and troubles than even our vices. The one we hold in some sort of subjection: we are perfectly slaves to the others. This thought came home most forcibly to my bosom, as I reflected upon the step which led me on imperceptibly to my present embarrassment. "Well, *c'est fini*, now," said I, drawing upon that bountiful source of consolation ever open to the man who mars his fortune—that "what is past can't be amended;" which piece of philosophy, as well as its twin brother, that "all will be the same a hundred years hence," have been golden rules to me from my childhood.

The transition from one mode of life to another perfectly different has ever seemed to me a great trial of a man's moral courage; besides that the fact of quitting forever anything, no matter how insignificant or valueless, is always attended with painful misgivings. My bachelor life had its share of annoyances and disappointments, it is true; but upon the whole, it was a most happy one—and now I was about to surrender it forever, not yielding to the impulse of affection and love for one without whom life were valueless to me, but merely a recompense for the indulgence of that fatal habit I had contracted of pursuing with eagerness every shadow that crossed my path. All my early friends—all my vagrant fancies—all my day-dreams of the future I was now to surrender—for, what becomes of any man's bachelor friends when he is once married? Where are his rambles in high and by-ways when he has a wife? and what is left for anticipation after his wedding, except, perhaps, to speculate upon the arrangement of his funeral? To a military man more than to any other these are serious thoughts. All the fascinations of an army life, in war, or peace, lie in the daily, hourly associations with your brother officers—the morning cigar, the barrack-square lounge—the afternoon ride—the game of billiards before dinner—the mess (that perfection of dinner society)—the plans for the evening—the deviled kidney at twelve—forming so many points of departure whence you sail out upon your daily voyage through life. *Versus* these, you have that awful perversion of all that is natural—an officer's wife. She has been a beauty when young, had black eyes and high complexion, a good figure, rather inclined to *embonpoint*, and a certain springiness in her walk, and a jauntiness in her air, that are ever sure attractions to a sub. in a marching regiment. She can play backgammon, and sing "Di tanti palpiti," and, if an Irishwoman, is certain to be able to ride a steeple-chase, and has an uncle a lord, who (*en parenthèse*) always turns out to be a creation made by King James after his abdication. In conclusion, she breakfasts *en papillotes*—wears her shoes down at heel—calls every officer of the regiment by his name—has a great taste for increasing his majesty's lieges, and delights in London porter. To this genus of Vrow I have never ceased to entertain the most thrilling abhorrence; and yet how often have I seen what appeared to be pretty and interesting girls fall into something of this sort! and how often have I vowed any fate to myself rather than become the husband of a baggage-waggon wife!

Had all my most sanguine hopes promised realizing—had my suit with Lady Jane been favorable, I could scarcely have bade adieu to my bachelor life without a sigh. No prospect of future happiness can ever perfectly exclude all regret at quitting our present state forever. I am sure if I had been a caterpillar, it would have been with a heavy heart that I would have donned my wings as a butterfly. Now the metamorphosis was reversed: need it be wondered if I were sad?

So completely was I absorbed in my thoughts upon this matter, that I had not perceived the entrance of O'Leary and Trevanion, who, unaware of my being in the apartment, as I was stretched upon a sofa in a dark corner, drew their chairs toward the fire and began chatting.

"Do you know, Mr. Trevanion," said O'Leary, "I am half afraid of this disguise of mine. I sometimes think I am not like a Pole; and if she should discover me——"

"No fear of that in the world; your costume is perfect, your beard unexceptionable. I could, perhaps, have desired a little less paunch; but then——"

"That comes of fretting, as Falstaff says; and you must not forget that I am banished from my country."

"Now, as to your conversation, I should advise you saying very little—not one word of English. You may, if you like, call in the assistance of Irish when hard pressed."

"I have my fears on that score. There is no knowing where that might lead to discovery. You know the story of the Knight of Kerry and Billy M'Cabe?"

"I fear I must confess my ignorance—I have never heard of it."

"Then maybe you never knew Giles Dackson?"

"I have not that pleasure either."

"Lord bless me, how strange that is! I thought he was better known than the Duke of Wellington or the traveling piper. Well, I must tell you the story, for it has a moral, too—indeed, several morals; but you'll find that out for yourself. Well, it seems that one day the Knight of Kerry was walking along the Strand in London, killing an hour's time, till the House was done prayers, and Hume tired of hearing himself speaking; his eye was caught by an enormous picture displayed upon the wall of a house, representing a human figure covered with long dark hair, with huge nails upon his hands, and a most fearful expression of face. At first the Knight thought it was Dr. Bowring; but on coming nearer he heard a man with a scarlet livery and a cocked hat call out, 'Walk in, ladies and gentlemen—the most vonderful curiosity ever exhibited—only one shilling—the vild man from Chippoowango, in Africay—eats raw wittles without being cooked, and many other surprising and pleasing performances.'

"The Knight paid his money, and was admitted. At first the crowd prevented his seeing anything—for the place was full to suffocation, and the noise awful—for, besides the exclamations and applause of the audience, there were three barrel-organs, playing 'Home, sweet Home!' and 'Cherry Ripe,' and the wild man himself contributed his share to the uproar. At last, the Knight obtained, by dint of squeezing and some pushing, a place in the front, when, to his very great horror, he beheld a figure that far eclipsed the portrait without doors.

"It was a man nearly naked, covered with long, shaggy hair, that grew even over his nose and cheek bones. He sprang about, sometimes on his feet, sometimes all-fours, but always uttering the most fearful yells, and glaring upon the crowd in a manner that was really dangerous. The Knight did not feel exactly happy at the whole proceeding, and began heartily to wish himself back in the 'House,' even upon a committee of privileges, when, suddenly, the savage gave a more frantic scream than before, and seized upon a morsel of raw beef, which a keeper extended to him upon a long fork, like a tandem whip—he was not safe, it appears, at close quarters;—this he tore to pieces eagerly, and devoured in the most voracious manner, amid great clapping of hands, and other evidences of satisfaction from the audience. 'I'll go, now,' thought the Knight, 'for God knows whether, in his hungry moods, he might not fancy to conclude his dinner by a member of Parliament.' Just at this instant, some sounds struck upon his ear that surprised him not a little. He listened more attentively, and conceive, if you can, his amazement to find that, amid his most fearful cries and wild yells, the savage was talking Irish. Laugh if you like, but it's truth I am telling you—nothing less than Irish. There he was, jumping four feet high in the air, eating his raw meat, pulling out his hair by handfuls, and amid all this, cursing the whole company to his heart's content, in as good Irish as ever was heard in Tralee. Now, though the Knight had heard of red Jews and white Negroes, he had never happened to read any account of an African Irishman; so he listened very closely, and by degrees, not only the words were known to him, but the very voice was familiar. At length, something he heard left no further doubt upon his mind, and, turning to the savage, he addressed him in Irish, at the same time fixing a look of most scrutinizing import upon him.

"'Who are you, you scoundrel?' said the Knight.

"'Billy M'Cabe, your honor.'

"'And what do you mean by playing off these tricks here, instead of earning your bread like an honest man?'

"'Whisht!' said Billy, 'and keep the secret. I'm earning the rent for your honor. One must do many a queer thing that pays two pound ten an acre for bad land.'

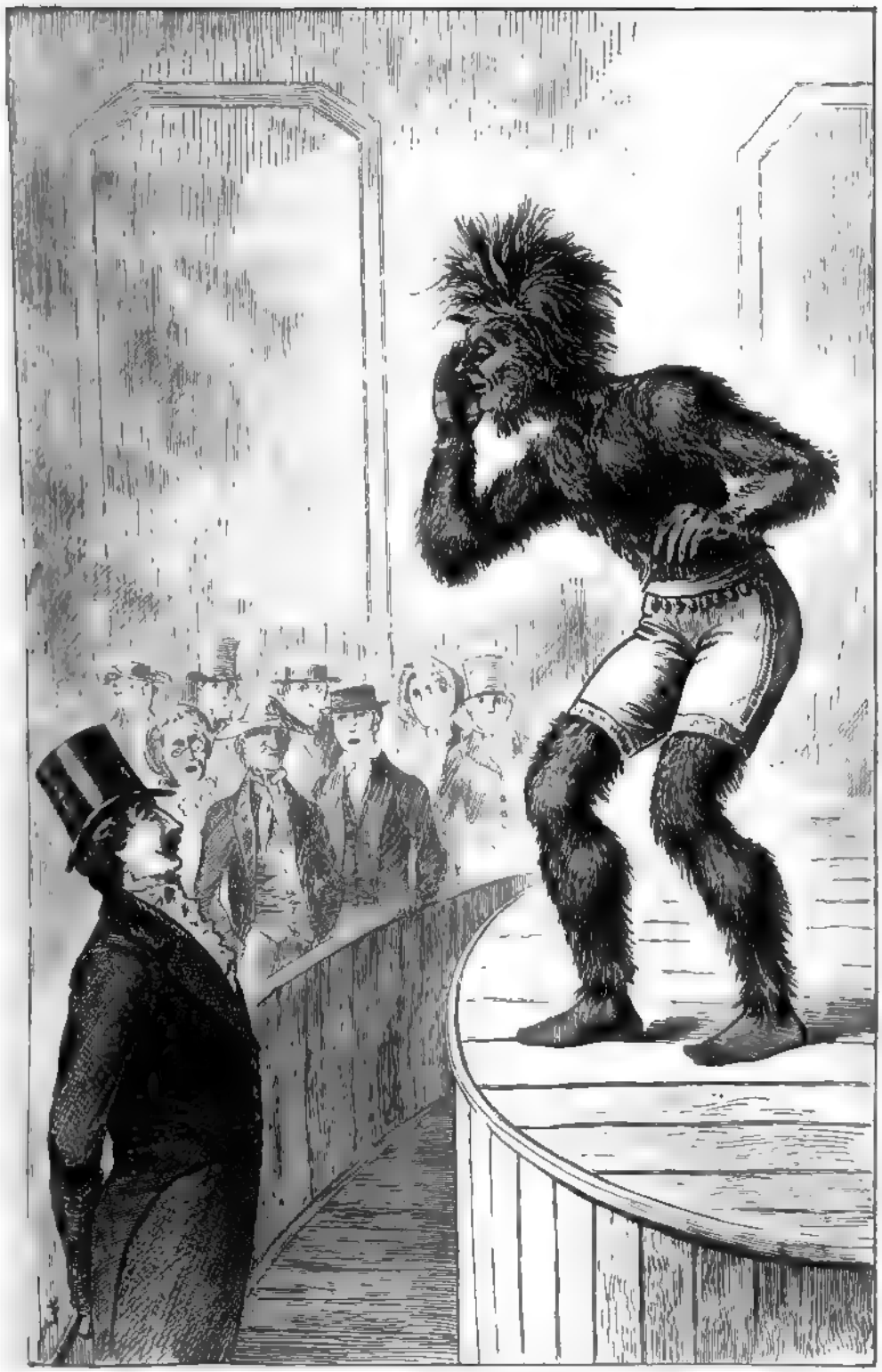
"This was enough: the Knight wished Billy every success, and left him amid the vociferous applause of a well-satisfied audience. This adventure, it seems, has made the worthy Knight a great friend to the introduction of poor laws; for, he remarks very truly, 'more of Billy's countrymen might take a fancy to a savage life if the secret was found out.'"

It was impossible for me to preserve my *incognito*, as Mr. O'Leary concluded his story, and I was obliged to join in the mirth of Trevanion, who laughed loud and long as he finished it.

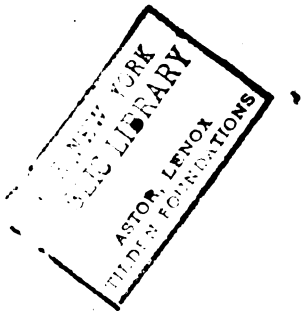
CHAPTER XL.

A REMINISCENCE.

O'Leary and Trevanion had scarcely left the room, when the waiter entered



"WHISHT!" SAID BILLY, "AND KEEP THE SECRET. I'M EARNING THE RENT FOR YOUR HONOR. ONE MUST DO MANY A QUEER THING THAT PAYS TWO POUND TEN AN ACRE FOR BAD LAND." (P. 176.)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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

with two letters—the one bore a German post-mark, and was in the well-known hand of Lady Callonby—the other in a writing with which I was no less familiar—that of Emily Bingham.

Let any one who has been patient enough to follow me through these "Confessions," conceive my agitation at this moment. There lay my fate before me, coupled, in all likelihood, with a view of what it might have been under happier auspices—at least so in anticipation did I read the two unopened epistles. My late interview with Miss Bingham left no doubt upon my mind that I had secured her affections; and acting in accordance with the counsel of Trevanion, no less than my own sense of right, I resolved upon marrying her, with what prospect of happiness I dared not to think of!

Alas! and alas! there is no infatuation like the taste for flirtation—mere empty, valueless, heartless flirtation. You hide the dice-box and the billiard *queue*, lest your son become a gambler—you put aside the Racing Calendar, lest he imbibe a jockey predilection—but you never tremble at his fondness for white muslin and a satin slipper, far more dangerous tastes though they be, and infinitely more perilous to a man's peace and prosperity than all the "Queens of trumps" that ever figured, whether on pasteboard or the Doncaster! "Woman's my wakeness, yer honor," said an honest Patlander, on being charged before the lord mayor with having four wives living; and without having any such "Algerine act" upon my conscience, I must, I fear, enter a somewhat similar plea for my downfallings, and avow in humble gratitude, that I have scarcely had a misfortune through life unattributable to them in one way or another. And this I say without any reference to country, class, or complexion, "black, brown, or fair;" from my first step forth into life, a raw sub. in the gallant 4—th, to this same hour, I have no other avowal, no other confession to make. "Be always ready with the pistol," was the dying advice of an Irish statesman to his sons: mine, in a similar circumstance, would rather be "*Gardez-vous des femmes*," and more especially if they be Irish.

There is something almost treacherous in the facility with which an Irish girl receives your early attentions and appears to like them, that invariably turns a young fellow's head very long before he has any prospect of touching *her* heart. She thinks it so natural to be made love to, that there is neither any affected coyness nor any agitated surprise. She listens to your declaration of love as quietly as the chief justice would to one of law, and refers the decision to a packed jury of her relatives, who rarely recommend you to mercy. Love and fighting, too, are so intimately united in Ireland, that a courtship rarely progresses without at least one exchange of shots between some of the parties concerned. My first twenty-four hours in Dublin is so pleasantly characteristic of this, that I may as well relate it here, while the subject is before us; besides, as these "Confessions" are intended as warnings and guides to youth, I may convey a useful lesson, showing why a man should not "make love in the dark."

It was upon a raw, cold, drizzling morning in February, 18—, that our regiment landed on the North-wall from Liverpool, whence we had been been hurriedly ordered to repress some riots and disturbances then agitating Dublin.

We marched to the Royal Barracks, our band playing "Patrick's Day," to the very considerable admiration of as naked a population as ever loved music. The —th Dragoons were at the same time quartered there—right pleasant, jovial fellows, who soon gave us to understand that the troubles were over before we arrived, and that the great city authorities were now returning thanks for their preservation from fire and sword by a series of entertainments of the most costly, but somewhat incongruous, kind—the company being scarce less mixed than the dishes. Peers and play-actors, judges and gaolers, archbishops, tailors, attorneys, rope-makers and apothecaries, all uniting in the festive delight of good feeding, and drinking the "glorious memory"—but of whom half the company knew not, only surmising "it was something agin the papists." You may smile, but these were pleasant times, and I scarcely care to go back there since they were changed. But to return. The —th had just received an invitation to a ball, to be given by the high sheriff, and to which they most considerately said we should also be invited. This negotiation was so well managed, that before noon we all received our cards from a green-liveried youth, mounted upon a very emaciated pony—the whole turn-out not auguring flatteringly of the high sheriff's taste in equipage.

We dined with the —th, and, as customary before going to an evening party, took the "other bottle" of claret that lies beyond the frontier of prudence. In fact, from the lieutenant-colonel down to the

newly-joined ensign, there was not a face in the party that did not betray "signs of the times" that promised most favorably for the mirth of the sheriff's ball. We were so perfectly up to the mark, that our major, a Connemara man, said, as we left the mess-room, "a liqueur glass would spoil us."

In this acme of our intellectual wealth, we started about eleven o'clock upon every species of conveyance that chance could press into the service. Of hackney-coaches there were few, but in jingles, noddies, and jaunting-cars, with three on a side and "one in the well," we mustered strong. Down Barrack Street we galloped, the mob cheering us, we laughing, and I'm afraid shouting a little, too — the watchmen springing their rattles, as if instinctively at noise, and the whole population up and awake, evidently entertaining a high opinion of our convivial qualities. Our voices became gradually more decorous, however, as we approached the more civilized quarter of the town; and with only the slight stoppage of the procession to pick up an occasional dropper-off, as he lapsed from the seat of a jaunting-car, we arrived at length at our host's residence, somewhere in Sackville Street.

Had our advent conferred the order of knighthood upon the host, he could not have received us with more delight. He shook us all in turn by the hand, to the number of eight-and-thirty, and then presented us *seriatim* to his spouse, a very bejeweled lady of some forty years—who, what between bugles, feathers, and her turban, looked excessively like a Chinese pagoda upon a saucer. The rooms were crowded to suffocation—the noise awful—and the company crushing and elbowing rather a little more than you expect where the moiety are of the softer sex. However, we all so perfectly fell in with the habits of the place, that ere half an hour, we squeezed, ogled, leered, and drank champagne like the rest of the corporation.

"Devilish hot work, this," said the colonel, as he passed me with two rosy-cheeked, smiling ladies on either arm; "the mayor — that little fellow in the punch-colored shorts—has very nearly put me *hors de combat* with strong negus; take care of him, I advise you."

Tipsy as I felt myself, I was yet sufficiently clear to be fully alive to the drollery of the scene before me. Flirtations, that, under other circumstances, would demand the secresy and solitude of a country green lane, or some garden bower, were here conducted in all the open effrontery of wax-lights and lusters; looks were interchanged, hands were squeezed, and soft things whispered, and smiles returned; till the intoxication of "punch negus" and spiced port gave way to the far greater one of bright looks and tender glances. Quadrilles and country dances—waltzing there was none (perhaps all for the best)—whist, backgammon, loo—unlimited for uproar—sandwiches, and warm liquors, employed us pretty briskly till supper was announced, when a grand squeeze took place on the stairs—the population tending thitherward with an eagerness that a previous starvation of twenty-four hours could alone justify. Among this dense mass of moving muslin, velvet and broadcloth, I found myself chaperoning an extremely tempting little damsel, with a pair of laughing blue eyes and dark eyelashes, who had been committed to my care and guidance for the passage.

"Miss Moriarty, Mr. Lorrequer," said an old lady in green and spangles, who I afterwards found was the lady mayoress.

"The nicest girl in the room," said a gentleman with a Tipperary accent, "and has a mighty sweet place near Athlone."

The hint was not lost upon me, and I speedily began to "make up" to my charge; and before we reached the supper-room, learned certain particulars of her history, which I have not yet forgotten. She was, it seems, sister to a lady then in the room, the wife of an attorney, who rejoiced in the pleasing and classical appellation of Mr. Mark Anthony Fitzpatrick; the aforesaid Mark Anthony being a tall, raw-boned, black-whiskered, ill-looking dog, that from time to time contrived to throw very uncomfortable-looking glances at me and Mary Anne, for she was so named, the whole time of supper. After a few minutes, however, I totally forgot him, and, indeed, everything else, in the fascination of my fair companion. She shared her chair with me, upon which I supported her by my arm passed round the back; we eat our pickled salmon, jelly, blanc-mange, cold chicken, ham, and custard off the same plate, with an occasional squeeze of the finger, as our hands met—her eyes making sad havoc with me all the while, as I poured my tale of love—love, lasting, burning, all-consuming—into her not unwilling ear.

"Ah! now, ye'r not in earnest?"

"Yes, Mary Anne, by all that's——"

"Well, there now, don't swear, and take care—sure Mark Anthony is looking."

"Mark Anthony be——"

"Oh! how passionate you are; I'm sure

I never could live easy with you. There, now, give me some sponge-cake, and don't be squeezing me or they'll see you."

"Yes, to my heart, dearest girl."

"Och, it's cheese you're giving me, said she, with a grimace that nearly cured my passion.

"A cottage, a hut, with you — with you!" said I, in a cadence that I defy Macready to rival. "What is worldly splendor, or the empty glitter of rank?"

I here glanced at my epaulets, upon which I saw her eyes riveted.

"Isn't the ginger-beer beautiful!" said she, emptying a glass of champagne.

Still I was not to be roused from my trance, and continued my courtship as warmly as ever.

"I suppose you will come home *now*;" said a gruff voice behind Mary Anne.

I turned and perceived Mark Anthony with a grim look of peculiar import.

"Oh, Mark, dear, I'm engaged to dance another set with this gentleman."

"Ye are, are ye?" replied Mark, eyeing me askance. "Troth and I think the gentleman would be better if he went off to his flea-bag himself."

In my then mystified intellect this west-country synonym for a bed a little puzzled me.

"Yes, sir, the lady is engaged to *me:* have you anything to say to that?"

"Nothing at present, at all," said Mark, almost timidly.

"Oh dear, oh dear," sobbed Mary Anne: "they're going to fight, and he'll be killed—I know he will."

For which of us this fate was destined, I stopped not to consider, but taking the lady under my arm, elbowed my way to the drawing-room, amid a very sufficient patting upon the back, and thumping between the shoulders, bestowed by members of the company who approved of my proceedings. The three fiddles, the flute, and bassoon, that formed our band, being by this time sufficiently drunk, played after a fashion of their own, which by one of those strange sympathies of our nature, imparted its influence to our legs, and a country dance was performed in a style of free and easy gesticulation that defies description. At the end of eighteen couple, tired of my exertions—and they were not slight—I leaned my back against the wall of the room, which I now, for the first time, perceived was covered with a very peculiar and novel species of hanging—no less than a kind of rough, green baize cloth, that moved and floated at every motion of the air. I paid little attention to this, till suddenly turning my head, something gave way behind it. I felt myself struck upon the back of the neck, and fell forward into the room, covered by a perfect avalanche of fenders, fire-irons, frying-pans, and copper-kettles, mingled with the lesser artillery of small nails, door-keys, and hold-fasts. There I lay amid the most vociferous mirth I ever listened to, under the confounded torrent of ironmongery that half stunned me. The laughter over, I was assisted to rise, and having drunk about a pint of vinegar, and had my face and temples washed in strong whiskey punch—the allocation of the fluids being mistaken—I learned that our host, the high sheriff, was a celebrated tin and iron man, and that his ball-room was no other than his magazine of metals, and that to conceal the well-filled shelves from the gaze of his aristocratic guests, they were clothed in the manner related; which my unhappy head, by some misfortune, displaced, and thus brought on a calamity scarcely less afflicting to him than to myself. I should scarcely have stopped to mention this here, were it not that Mary Anne's gentle nursing of me in my misery went far to complete what her fascination had begun; and although she could not help laughing at the occurrence, I forgave her readily for her kindness.

"Remember," said I, trying to ogle through a black eye, painted by the angle of a register grate—"remember, Mary Anne, I am to see you home."

"Oh! dear, sir, sure I don't know how you can manage it——"

Here Mark Anthony's entrance cut short her speech, for he came to declare that some of the officers had taken his coach, and was, as might be supposed, in a towering passion.

"If, sir," said I, with an air of the most balmy courtesy—"if I can be of any use in assisting you to see your friends home——"

"Ah! then, ye'r a nice looking article to see ladies home. I wish you seen yourself this minute," said he.

As I felt it would be no breach of the unities—time, place, and everything considered—to smash his skull, I should certainly have proceeded to do so, had not a look of the most imploring kind from Mary Anne restrained me. By this time, he had taken her under the arm, and was leading her away. I stood irresolute, till a glance from my charmer caught me; when I rallied at once, and followed them down stairs. Here the scene was to the full as the above; the cloaking, shawling,

shoeing, etc., of the ladies being certainly as mirth-moving a process as I should wish to see. Here were mothers trying to collect their daughters, as a hen her chickens, and as in that case, the pursuit of one usually lost all the others; testy papas swearing, lovers leering, as they twisted the boas round the fair throats of their sweethearts; vows of love, mingling with lamentations for a lost slipper or a stray mantle. Sometimes the candles were extinguished, and the *mêlée* became greater, till the order and light were restored together. Meanwhile, each of our fellows had secured his fair one, save myself, and I was exposed to no small ridicule for my want of tact. Nettled by this, I made a plunge to the corner of the room, where Mary Anne was shawling; I recognized her pink sash, threw her cloak over her shoulders, and at the very moment that Mark Anthony drew his wife's arm within his, I performed the same by *my* friend, and followed them to the door. Here the grim brother-in-law turned round to take Mary Anne's arm, and seeing her with me, merely gave a kind of hoarse chuckle, and muttered, "Very well, sir: upon my conscience, you *will* have it, I see." During this brief interval, so occupied was I in watching him, that I never once looked in my fair friend's face; but the gentle squeeze of her arm, as she leaned upon me, assured me that I had her approval of what I was doing.

What were the precise train of my thoughts, and what the subjects of conversation between us, I am unfortunately now unable to recollect. It is sufficient to remember, that I could not believe five minutes had elapsed, when we arrived at York Street.

"Then you confess you love me," said I, as I squeezed her arm to my side. "Then, by this kiss, I swear never to relinquish ——"

What I was about to add I am sure I know not; but true it is that a certain smacking noise here attracted Mr. Mark Anthony's attention, who started round, looked us full in the face, and then gravely added, "Enough is as good as a feast. I wish you pleasant drames, Mr. Larry Kar, if that's your name; and you'll hear from me in the morning."

"I intend it," said I. "Good night, dearest; think of——" The slam of the street door in my face spoiled the peroration, and I turned towards home.

By the time I reached the barracks, the united effects of champagne, sherry, and Sheffield iron, had in a good measure subsided, and my head had become sufficiently clear to permit a slight retrospect of the evening's amusement.

From two illusions I was at last awakened:—First, the high-sheriff's ball was *not* the most accurate representation of high society; secondly, I was *not* deeply enamored of Mary Anne Moriarty. Strange as it may seem, and how little soever the apparent connection between those two facts, the truth of one had a considerable influence in deciding the other. "*N'importe*," said I, "the thing is over; it was rather good fun, too, upon the whole—saving the *chute des casseroles;* and as to the lady, she must have seen it was a joke as well as myself. At least, so I am decided it shall be; and as there was no witness to our conversation, the thing is easily got out of."

The following day, as I was dressing to ride out, my servant announced no less a person than Mr. Mark Anthony Fitzpatrick, who said "that he came upon a little business, and must see me immediately."

Mr. Fitzpatrick, upon being announced, speedily opened his negotiation by asking, in very terse and unequivocal phrase, my intentions regarding his sister-in-law. After professing the most perfect astonishment at the question, and its possible import, I replied, that she was a most charming person, with whom I intended to have nothing whatever to do.

"And maybe you never proposed for her at the ball last night?"

"Propose for a lady at a ball the first time I ever met her!"

"Just so. Can you carry your memory so far back? or, perhaps, I had better refresh it." And he here repeated the whole substance of my conversation on my way homeward, sometimes in the very words I used.

"But, my dear sir, the young lady could never have supposed I used such language as this you have repeated?"

"So, then, you intend to break off? Well, then, it's right to tell you that you're in a very ugly scrape, for it was my wife you took home last night—not Miss Moriarty; and I leave you to choose at your leisure whether you'd rather be defendant in a suit for breach of promise or seduction; and, upon my conscience, I think it's civil in me to give you a choice."

What a pretty disclosure was here! So that while I was imagining myself squeezing the hand and winning the heart of the fair Mary Anne, I was merely making a case of strong evidence for a jury, that might expose me to the world, and half

ruin me in damages. There was but one course open—to make a fight for it; and, from what I saw of my friend Mark Anthony, this did not seem difficult.

I accordingly assumed a high tone—laughed at the entire affair—said it was a "way that we had in the army"—that "we never meant anything by it," etc., etc.

In a few minutes I perceived the bait was taking. Mr. Fitzpatrick's west country blood was up: all thought of the legal resource was abandoned; and he flung out of the room to find a friend. I having given him the name of "one of ours" as mine upon the occasion.

Very little time was lost, for before three o'clock that afternoon a meeting was fixed for the following morning at the North Bull: and I had the satisfaction of hearing that I only escaped the malignant eloquence of Holmes in the King's Bench, to be "blazed" at by the best shot on the western circuit. The thought was not agreeable, and I indemnified myself for the scrape by a very satisfactory anathema upon the high sheriff, and his ball, and his confounded saucepans; for to the lady's sympathy for my sufferings I attributed much of my folly.

At eight the next morning I found myself standing with Curzon and the doctor upon the bleak portion of her Majesty's dominions they term the North Bull, waiting, in a chilly rain, and a raw fog, till it pleased Mark Anthony Fitzpatrick to come and shoot me—such being the precise terms of our combat, in the opinion of all parties.

The time, however, passed on, and half-past eight, three-quarters, and at last nine o'clock, without his appearing; when, just as Curzon had resolved upon our leaving the ground, a hack-jaunting car was seen driving at full speed along the road near us. It came nearer, and at length drew up; two men leaped off and came toward us, one of whom, as he came forward, took off his hat politely, and introduced himself as Mr. O'Gorman, the fighting friend of Mark Anthony.

"It's a mighty unpleasant business I'm come upon, gentlemen," said he. "Mr. Fitzpatrick has been unavoidably prevented from having the happiness to meet you this morning——"

"Then you can't expect us, sir, to dance attendance upon him here to-morrow," said Curzon, interrupting.

"By no manner of means," replied the other, placidly, "for it would be equally inconvenient for him to be here then. But I have only to say, that as I'm here for my friend, and know all the particulars of the case, maybe you'd have the kindness to waive all etiquette, and let me stand in his place."

"Certainly and most decidedly not," said Curzon. "Waive etiquette!—why, sir, we have no quarrel with you; never saw you before."

"Well, now, isn't this hard?" said Mr. O'Gorman, addressing his friend, who stood by with a pistol-case under his arm; "but I told Mark that I was sure they'd be standing upon punctilio, for they were English. Well, sir," said he, turning toward Curzon, "there's but one way to arrange it now, that I see. Mr. Fitzpatrick, you must know, was arrested this morning for a trifle of £140. If you, or your friend there, will join us in the bail, we can get him out, and he'll fight you in the morning to your satisfaction."

When the astonishment this proposal had created subsided, we assured Mr. O'Gorman that we were noways disposed to pay such a price for our amusement—a fact that seemed considerably to surprise both him and his friend—and adding, that to Mr. Fitzpatrick personally we should feel bound to hold ourselves pledged at a future period, we left the ground, Curzon laughing heartily at the original expedient thus suggested, while I inwardly pronounced a most glowing eulogy on the law of imprisonment for debt.

Before Mr. Fitzpatrick obtained the benefit of the act, we were ordered abroad, and I have never since heard of him.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE TWO LETTERS.

From the digression of the last chapter I was recalled by the sight of the two letters which lay, during my reverie, unopened before me. I first broke the seal of Lady Callonby's epistle, which ran thus:—

"Munich, La Croix Blanche.

"My dear Mr. Lorrequer,—I have just heard from Kilkee that you are at length about to pay us your long-promised visit, and write these few lines to beg that before leaving Paris you will kindly execute for me the commissions of which I inclose a formidable list, or at least as many of them as you can conveniently accomplish. Our stay here now will be so short, that it will require all your dispatch to overtake us before reaching Milan, Lady

Jane's health requiring an immediate change of climate. Our pleasant plans are, to winter in Italy, although such will interfere considerably with Lord Callonby, who is pressed much by his friends to accept office. However, all this and other gossip I reserve for our meeting. Meanwhile adieu! and if any of my commissions bore you, omit them at once, except the white roses and the Brussels veil, which Lady Jane is most anxious for.

"Sincerely yours,
"CHARLOTTE CALLONBY."

How much did these few and apparently commonplace lines convey to *me?* First, my visit was not only expected, but actually looked forward to, canvassed—perhaps I might almost whisper to myself the flattery—wished for. Again, Lady Jane's health was spoken of as precarious; less actual illness—I said to myself—than mere delicacy requiring the bluer sky and warmer air of Italy. Perhaps her spirits were affected—some mental malady—some ill-placed passion—*que sais-je?* In fact, my brain ran on so fast in its devisings, that by a quick process, less logical than pleasing, I satisfied myself that the lovely Lady Jane Callonby was actually in love, with whom let the reader guess at. And Lord Callonby too, about to join the Ministry—well, all the better to have one's father-in-law in power—promotion *is* so cursed slow nowadays. And lastly, the sly allusions to the commissions—the malice of introducing *her* name to interest me. With such materials as these to build upon, frail as they may seem to others, I found no difficulty in regarding myself as the dear friend of the family, and the acknowledged suitor of Lady Jane.

In the midst, however, of all my self-gratulation, my eye fell upon the letter of Emily Bingham, and I suddenly remembered how fatal to all such happy anticipations it might prove. I tore it open in passionate haste and read:—

"MY DEAR MR. LORREQUER,—As from the interview we have had this morning I am inclined to believe that I have gained your affections, I think that I should ill requite such a state of your feeling for me, were I to conceal that I cannot return you mine—in fact, that they are not mine to bestow. This frank avowal, whatever pain it may have cost me, I think I owe to you to make. You will perhaps say, the confession should have been earlier; to which I reply, it should have been so, had I known, or even guessed at the nature of your feelings for me. For—and I write it in all truth, and perfect respect for you—I only saw in your attentions the flirting habits of a man of the world, with a very unformed and ignorant girl of eighteen, with whom, as it was his amusement to travel, he deemed it worth his while to talk. I now see, and bitterly regret, my error, yet deem it better to make this painful confession than suffer you to remain in a delusion which may involve your happiness in the wreck of mine. I am most faithfully your friend,

"EMILY BINGHAM."

"What a charming girl she is!" I cried, as I finished the letter; "how full of true feeling, how honorable, how straightforward! and yet it is devilish strange how cunningly she played her part—and it seems now that I never did touch her affections; Master Harry, I begin to fear you are not altogether the awful lady-killer you have been thinking." Thus did I meditate upon this singular note—my delight at being once more "free" mingling with some chagrin that I was jockeyed, and by a young miss of eighteen too. "Confoundedly disagreeable if the mess knew it," thought I. "Per Bacco! how they would quiz upon my difficulty to break off a match, when the lady was only anxious to get rid of *me.*

"This affair must never come to their ears, or I am ruined; and now, the sooner all negotiations are concluded the better. I must obtain a meeting with Emily, acknowledge the truth and justice of all her views, express my deep regret at the issue of the affair, slily hint that I have been merely playing her own game back upon her; for it would be the devil to let her go off with the idea that she had singed me, yet never caught fire herself; so that we both shall draw stakes, and part friends."

This valiant resolution taken, I wrote a very short note, begging an interview, and proceeded to make as formidable a toilet as I could for the forthcoming meeting; before I had concluded which, a verbal answer by her maid informed me, that "Miss Bingham was alone and ready to receive me."

As I took my way along the corridor, I could not help feeling that among all my singular scrapes and embarrassing situations through life, my present mission was certainly not the least—the difficulty, such as it was, being considerably increased by my own confounded *amour propre,* that would not leave me satisfied with obtain-

ing my liberty, if I could not insist upon coming off scathless also. In fact, I was not content to evacuate the fortress, if I were not to march out with all the honors of war. This feeling I neither attempt to palliate nor defend, I merely chronicle it as are too many of these Confessions, a matter of truth, yet not the less a subject for sorrow.

My hand was upon the lock of the door. I stopped, hesitated, and listened. I certainly heard something. Yes, it is too true —she is sobbing. What a total overthrow of all my selfish resolves, all my egotistical plans, did that slight cadence give. She was crying—her tears for the bitter pain she concluded I was suffering mingling doubtless with sorrow for her own sources of grief—for it was clear to me that whoever may have been my favored rival, the attachment was either unknown to or unsanctioned by the mother. I wished I had not listened; all my determinations were completely routed, and as I opened the door I felt my heart beating almost audibly against my side.

In a subdued half-light — tempered through the rose-colored curtains, with a small china cup of newly-plucked moss-roses upon the table—sat, or rather leaned, Emily Bingham, her face buried in her hands as I entered. She did not hear my approach, so that I had above a minute to admire the graceful character of her head, and the fine undulating curve of her neck and shoulders, before I spoke.

"Miss Bingham," said I——

She started—looked up—her dark blue eyes, brilliant though tearful, were fixed upon me for a second, as if searching my very inmost thoughts. She held out her hand, and turning her head aside, made room for me on the sofa beside her. "Strange girl," thought I, "that in the very moment of breaking with a man for ever, puts on her most fascinating toilet, arrays herself in her most bewitching manner, and gives him a reception only calculated to turn his head, and render him ten times more in love than ever." Her hand, which remained still in mine, was burning as if in fever, and the heaving movement of her neck and shoulders showed me how much this meeting cost her. We were both silent, till at length, feeling that any chance interruption might leave us as far as ever from understanding each other, I resolved to begin.

"My dear, dear Emily," I said, "do not, I entreat of you, add to the misery I am this moment enduring by letting me see you thus. Whatever your wrongs toward me, this is far too heavy a retribution. My object was never to make you wretched; if I am not to obtain the bliss to strive and make you happy——"

"Oh! Harry"—this was the first time she had ever so called me—"how like you, to think of me—of *me*, at such a time, as if I was not the cause of all our present unhappiness—but not wilfully, not intentionally. Oh, no, no—your attentions—the flattery of your notice, took me at once, and, in the gratification of my self-esteem, I forgot all else. I heard, too, that you were engaged to another, and believing, as I did, that you were trifling with my affections, I spared no effort to win yours. I confess it, I wished this with all my soul."

"And now," said I, "that you have gained them"—here was a pretty sequel to my well matured plans!—"and now, Emily——"

"But have I really done so?" said she, hurriedly turning round and fixing her large full eyes upon me, while one of her hands played carelessly through my hair—"have I your heart? your whole heart?"

"Can you doubt it, dearest?" said I, passionately pressing her to my bosom, and at the same time muttering, "What the devil's in the wind now; we are surely not going to patch up our separation, and make love in earnest?"

There she lay, her head upon my shoulder, her long, brown, waving ringlets falling loosely across my face and on my bosom, her hand in mine. What were her thoughts I cannot guess; mine—God forgive me!—were a fervent wish either for her mother's appearance, or that the hotel would suddenly take fire, or some other extensive calamity arise to put the finishing stroke to this embarrassing situation.

None of these, however, were destined to occur; and Emily lay still and motionless as she was, scarce seeming to breathe, and pale as death. "What can this mean?" said I; "surely this is not the usual way to part with a rejected suitor? if it be, why then, by Jupiter, the successful one must have rather the worst of it—and I fervently hope that Lady Jane be not at this moment giving her *congé* to some disappointed swain." She slowly raised her large, black-fringed eyelids, and looked into my face with an expression at once so tender and so plaintive, that I felt a struggle within myself whether to press her to my heart, or——what the deuce was the alternative?—I hope my reader knows, for I really do not! "And after

all," thought I, "if we are to marry, I am only anticipating a little; and if not, why then a '*chaste salute*,' as Winifred Jenkins calls it, she'll be none the worse for." Acting at once upon this resolve, I leaned downwards, and was passing back her ringlets from her now flushed cheek, when I was startled by my name, which I heard called several times in the corridor. The door at the same instant was burst suddenly open, and Trevanion appeared.

"Harry, Harry Lorrequer," cried he, as he entered; then suddenly checking himself, added, "a thousand, ten thousand pardons, but——"

"But what," cried I, passionately, forgetting all save the situation of poor Emily at the moment—"What can justify——"

"Nothing certainly can justify such an intrusion," said Trevanion, finishing my sentence for me, "except the very near danger you run this moment in being arrested. O'Leary's imprudence has compromised your safety, and you must leave Paris within an hour."

"Oh, Mr. Trevanion," said Emily, who by this time had regained a more befitting attitude, "pray speak out; what is it? is Harry—is Mr. Lorrequer, I mean—in any danger?"

"Nothing of consequence, Miss Bingham, if he only act with prudence and be guided by his friends. Lorrequer, you will find me in your apartments in half an hour—till then adieu."

While Emily poured forth question after question as to the nature and extent of my present difficulty, I could not help thinking of the tact by which Trevanion escaped, leaving me to make my adieux to Emily as best I might—for I saw in a glance that I must leave Paris at once. I, therefore, briefly gave her to understand the affair at the *salon*—which I suspected to be the cause of the threatened arrest—and was about to profess my unaltered and unalterable attachment, when she suddenly stopped me.

"No, Mr. Lorrequer, no. All is over between us. We must never meet again—never. We have been both playing a part. Good-by—good-by: do not altogether forget me—and once more, Harry, good-by."

What I might have said, thought, or done, I know not; but the arrival of Mrs. Bingham's carriage at the door left no time for anything but escape. So, once more pressing her hand firmly to my lips, I said—"*Au revoir*, Emily, *au revoir*, not good-by," and rushing from the regained my room just as Mrs. Bi reached the corridor.

CHAPTER XLII.

MR. O'LEARY'S CAPTURE.

"Does she really care for me?" first question to myself as I left the "Is this story about pre-engaged aff merely a got-up thing, to try the f my attachment for her? for, if n conduct is most inexplicable; and g my experience has been in such aff avow myself out-maneuvered." W thought over this difficulty, Tre came up, and in a few words inform more fully upon what he hinted at It appeared that O'Leary, much mo to the imperative necessity of avoid tection by his wife, than of involvin self with the police, had thrown ou dark and mysterious hints in the l to the reason of his residence at fully impressed with the idea that, good Pole, he need only talk "revo ary;" devote to the powers below all czars, and kaisers; weep over the of his nation; wear rather seedy ments, and smoke profusely. The were with him easy conditions, and completely acted the former to t that he had been that morning arre the Tuileries gardens, under severa sonable charges—among others, th spiracy, with some of his compatr murder the minister of war.

However laughable such an accu against poor O'Leary, one circum rendered the matter anything but erous. Although he must come o of this grave offense, yet as the transaction would necessarily now l known, I should be immediately in and my departure from Paris prever

"So," said Trevanion, as he brief before me the difficulty of my po "you may perceive that however s your affections may be engaged in a quarter, it is quite as well to th leaving Paris without delay. O' arrest will be followed by yours, upon it, and once under the surve of the police, escape is impossible."

"But, seriously, Trevanion," said tled at the tone of raillery he sp "you must see that there is nothing over in that business. I was merely my farewell of the fair Emily. Her

tions have been long since engaged, and I—"

"Only endeavoring to support her in her attachment to the more favored rival. Is it not so?"

"Come, no quizzing. Faith, I began to feel very uncomfortable about parting with her, the moment that I discovered that I must do so."

"So, I guessed," said Trevanion, with a dry look, "from the interesting scene I so abruptly trespassed upon. But you are right; a little bit of tenderness is never misplaced, so long as the object is young, pretty, and still more than all, disposed for it."

"Quite out; perfectly mistaken, believe me. Emily not only never cared for me, but she has gone far enough to tell me so."

"Then, from all I know of such matters," replied he, "you were both in a very fair way to repair that mistake on her part. But hark! what is this?" A tremendous noise in the street here interrupted our colloquy, and on opening the window, a strange scene presented itself to our eyes. In the middle of a dense mass of moving rabble, shouting, yelling, and screaming with all their might, were two gendarmes with a prisoner between them. The unhappy man was followed by a rather overdressed, middle-aged looking woman, who appeared to be desirous of bestowing the most *coram publico* endearments upon the culprit, whom a second glance showed us was O'Leary.

"I tell you, my dear madam, you are mistaken," said O'Leary, addressing her with great sternness of manner and voice.

"Mistaken! never, never. How could I ever be mistaken in that dear voice, those lovely eyes, that sweet little nose?"

"Take her away; she's deranged," said O'Leary to the gendarmes. "Sure, if I'm a Pole, that's enough of misfortune."

"I'll follow him to the end of the earth, I will."

"I'm going to the galleys, God be praised!" said O'Leary.

"To the galleys—to the guillotine—anywhere," responded she, throwing herself upon his neck, much less, as it seemed, to his gratification, than that of the mob, who laughed and shouted most uproariously.

"Mrs. Ram, ain't you ashamed?"

"He calls me by my name," said she, "and he attempts to disown me. Ha! ha! ha! ha!" and immediately fell off into a strong paroxysm of kicking, and pinching, and punching the bystanders, a malady well-known under the name of hysterics; but being little more than a privileged mode, among certain ladies, of paying off some scores, which it is not thought decent to do in their more sober moments.

"Lead me away—anywhere—convict me of what you like," said he, "but don't let her follow me."

The gendarmes, who little comprehended the nature of the scene before them, were not sorry to anticipate a renewal of it on Mrs. Ram's recovery, and accordingly seized the opportunity to march on with O'Leary, who turned the corner of the Rue Rivoli, under a shower of execrations from the mob, that fell fortunately most unconsciously upon his ears.

The possibility of figuring in such a procession contributed much to the force of Trevanion's reasonings, and I resolved to leave Paris at once.

"Promise me, then, to involve yourself in no more scrapes for half-an-hour. Pack everything you may want with you, and, by seven o'clock, I will be here with your passport and all ready for a start."

With a beating brain, and in a whirlwind of conflicting thoughts, I threw my clothes hither and thither into my trunk; Lady Jane and Emily both flitting every instant before my imagination, and frequently an irresolution to proceed stopping all my preparations for departure, I sat down musing upon a chair, and half determined to stay where I was, come what might of it. Finally, the possibility of exposure in a trial had its weight. I continued my occupation till the last coat was folded, and the lock turned, when I seated myself opposite my luggage, and waited impatiently for my friend's return.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE JOURNEY.

Trevanion came at last. He had obtained my passport, and engaged a carriage to convey me about eight miles, where I should overtake the diligence—such a mode of traveling being judged more likely to favor my escape, by attracting less attention than posting. It was past ten when I left the Rue St. Honoré, having shaken hands with Trevanion for the last time, and charged him with ten thousand soft messages for the "friends" I left behind me.

When I arrived at the village of St. Jacques, the diligence had not come up. To

pass away the time, I ordered a little supper and a bottle of St. Julien. Scarcely had I seated myself to my cutlet, when the rapid whirl of wheels was heard without, and a cab drew up suddenly at the door. So naturally does the fugitive suspect pursuit, that my immediate impression was, that I was followed. In this notion I was strengthened by the tones of a cracked, discordant voice, asking in very peculiar French if the "diligence had passed?" Being answered in the negative, he walked into the room where I was, and speedily, by his appearance, removed any apprehensions I had felt as to my safety. Nothing could less resemble the tall port and sturdy bearing of a gendarme, than the diminutive and dwarfish individual before me. His height could scarcely have reached five feet, of which the head formed fully a fourth part; and even this was rendered in appearance still greater by a mass of loosely floating black hair that fell upon his neck and shoulders, and gave him much the air of a "black lion" on a sign-board. His black frock—fur-collared and braided — his ill-made boots, his meerschaum projecting from his breast-pocket, above all, his unwashed hands, and a heavy gold ring upon his thumb—all made an *ensemble* of evidences that showed he could be nothing but a German. His manner was bustling, impatient, and had it not been ludicrous, would certainly be considered as insolent to every one about him, for he stared each person abruptly in the face, and mumbled some broken expressions of his opinion of them half-aloud in German. His comments ran on:—"Bon soir, Monsieur," to the host; "ein Bosewicht, ganz sicher"—"a scoundrel without doubt;" and then added, still lower, "Rob you here as soon as look at you." "Ah, postillon! comment va?"—"much more like a brigand after all—I know which I'd take you for." "Verfluchte Frau"—"how ugly the woman is." This compliment was intended for the hostess, who curtseyed down to the ground in her ignorance. At last, approaching me, he stopped, and having steadily surveyed me, muttered, "Ein echter Englander"—"a thorough Englishman, always eating." I could not resist the temptation to assure him that I was perfectly aware of his flattering impression in my behalf, though I had speedily to regret my precipitancy, for, less mindful of the rebuke than pleased at finding some one who understood German, he drew his chair beside me and entered into conversation.

Every one has surely felt, some time or other in life, the insufferable annoya having his thoughts and reflections fered with, and broken in upon by th gar impertinence and egotism of "bore," who, mistaking your abstr for attention, and your despair for d inflicts upon you his whole life and tures, when your own immediate de are perhaps vacillating in the scale.

Such a doom was now mine! Oc as I was by the hope of the future, a fears lest any impediment to my should blast my prospects for ever, ferred appearing to pay attention t confounded fellow's "personal narr lest his questions, turning on my o fairs, might excite suspicions as reasons of my journey.

I longed most ardently for the ar the diligence, trusting that with tru man thrift, my friend might pref cheapness of the *intérieur* to the m icence of the *coupé*, and that thus I see no more of him. But in this pl hope I was destined to be disappoint I was scarcely seated in my place w found him beside me. The third oc of this "privileged den," as well lamp-light survey of him permitted, ed nothing to build on as a compen for the German. He was a tall, lantern-jawed man, with a hook no projecting chin; his hair, which ha been permitted to grow very lately, that curve upon his forehead we see tain old-fashioned horse-shoe wig compressed lip and hard features ga expression of one who had seen a goo of the world, and didn't think the be it in consequence. I observed that tened to the few words we spoke whi ting in with some attention, and the a person who did not comprehend th guage, turned his shoulder toward soon fell asleep. I was now left "tender mercies" of my talkative co ion, who certainly spared me not. withstanding my vigorous resolves t a deaf ear to his narratives, I coul avoid learning that he was the dire music to some German prince—that been to Paris to bring out an opera having, as he said, an "immense suc he was about to repeat in Strasbourg further informed me that a *deput* Alsace had obtained for him a gover permission to travel with the courie that he, being "social" withal, an ways proud, preferred the democracy diligence to the solitary grandeur caleche (for which Heaven confound and thus became my present compan

Music in all its shapes and forms made up the staple of the little man's talk. There was scarcely an opera or an overture, from Mozart to Donizetti, that he did not insist upon singing a scene from; and wound up all by a very pathetic lamentation over English insensibility to music, which he in great part attributed to our having only one opera, which he kindly informed me was "Bob et Joan." However indisposed to check the current of his loquacity by any effort of mine, I could not avoid the temptation to translate for him a story which Sir Walter Scott once related to me, and was so far *à propos*, as conveying my own sense of the merits of our national music, such as we have it, by its associations with scenes, and persons, and places we are all familiar with, however unintelligible to the ear of a stranger.

A young French vicomte was fortunate enough to obtain in marriage the hand of a singularly pretty Scotch heiress of an ancient family and good fortune, who, amongst her other endowments, possessed a large old-fashioned house in a remote district of the Highlands, where her ancestors had resided for centuries. Thither the young couple repaired to pass the honeymoon; the enamoured bridegroom gladly availing himself of the opportunity to ingratiate himself with his new connection, by adopting the seclusion he saw practiced by the English on such occasions. However consonant to our notions of happiness, and however conducive to our enjoyment this custom be—and I have strong doubts upon the subject—it certainly prospered ill with the volatile Frenchman, who pined for Paris, its cafés, its boulevards, its maisons de jeu, and its soirées. His days were passed in looking from the deep and narrow windows of some oak-framed room upon the bare and heath-clad moors, or watching the cloud shadows as they passed across the dark pine-trees that closed the distance.

Bored to death, and convinced that he had sacrificed enough and more than enough, to the barbarism which demanded such a *séjour*, he was sitting one evening listlessly upon the terrace in front of the house, plotting a speedy escape from his gloomy abode, and meditating upon the life of pleasure that awaited him, when the discordant twang of some savage music broke upon his ear, and roused him from his reverie. The wild scream and fitful burst of a Highland pibroch is certainly not the most likely thing in nature to allay the irritable and ruffled feelings of an irascible person—unless, perhaps, the hearer eschew breeches. So thought the vicomte. He started hurriedly up, and straight before him, up the gravel walk, beheld the stalwart figure and bony frame of an old Highlander, blowing, with all his lungs, the "Gathering of the Clans." With all the speed he could muster, he rushed into the house, and, calling his servants, ordered them to expel the intruder, and drive him at once outside the demesne. When the mandate was made known to the old piper, it was with the greatest difficulty he could be brought to comprehend it—for, time out of mind, his approach had been hailed with every demonstration of rejoicing; and now——but no; the thing was impossible—there must be a mistake somewhere. He was accordingly about to recommence, when a second and stronger hint suggested to him that it were safer to depart. "Maybe the 'carl' didna like the pipes," said the Highlander, musingly, as he packed them up for his march. "Maybe he didna like *me;* perhaps, too, he was na in the humor for music," he paused for an instant as if reflecting—not satisfied, probably, that he had hit upon the true solution—when suddenly his eye brightened, his lips curled, and fixing a look upon the angry Frenchman, he said—"Maybe ye are right enow—ye heard them ower muckle in Waterloo to like the skirl o' them ever since;" with which satisfactory explanation, made in no spirit of bitterness or raillery, but in the simple belief that he had hit the mark of the vicomte's antipathy, the old man gathered up his plaid and departed.

However disposed I might have felt toward sleep, the little German resolved I should not obtain any, for when half an hour together I would preserve a rigid silence, he, nowise daunted, had recourse to some German "Lied," which he gave forth with an energy of voice and manner that must have aroused every sleeper in the diligence; so that, fain to avoid this, I did my best to keep him on the subject of his adventures, which, as a man of successful gallantry, were manifold indeed. Wearying at last, even of this subordinate part, I fell into a kind of half doze, the words of a student song he continued to sing without ceasing for above an hour being the last waking thought on my memory.

Less as a *souvenir* of the singer than a specimen of its class I give here a rough translation of the well-known Burschen melody called:—

THE POPE.

I.

The Pope he leads a happy life,
He fears not married care, nor strife,
He drinks the best of Rhenish wine—
I would the Pope's gay lot were mine.

CHORUS.

He drinks the best of Rhenish wine—
I would the Pope's gay lot were mine.

II.

But then all happy's not his life,
He has not maid, nor blooming wife;
Nor child has he to raise his hope—
I would not wish to be the Pope.

III.

The Sultan better pleases me,
His is a life of jollity;
His wives are many as he will—
I would the Sultan's throne then fill.

IV.

But even he's a wretched man,
He must obey his Alcoran;
And dares not drink one drop of wine—
I would not change his lot for mine.

V.

So then I'll hold my lowly stand,
And live in German Vaterland;
I'll kiss my maiden fair and fine,
And drink the best of Rhenish wine.

VI.

Whene'er my maiden kisses me,
I'll think that I the Sultan be;
And when my cheery glass I tope,
I'll fancy then I am the Pope.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE JOURNEY.

It was with a feeling of pleasure I cannot explain that I awoke in the morning and found myself upon the road. The turmoil, the bustle, the never-ending difficulties of my late life in Paris, had so overexcited and worried me, that I could neither think nor reflect. Now, all these cares and troubles were behind me, and I felt like a liberated prisoner as I looked upon the gray dawn of the coming day, as it gradually melted from its dull and leaden tint to the pink and yellow hue of the rising sun. The broad and richly-colored plains of *la belle France* were before me—and it is *la belle France*, however inferior to parts of England in rural beauty—the large tracts of waving yellow corn, undulating like a sea in the morning breeze—the interminable reaches of forest, upon which the shadows played and flitted, deepening the effect and mellowing the mass, as we see them in Ruysdael's pictures—while now and then some tall-gabled, antiquated chateau with its mutilated terrace and dowager-like air of bygone grandeur, would peep forth at the end of some long avenue of lime-trees, all having their own features of beauty—and a beauty with which every object around harmonizes well. The sluggish peasant, in his blouse and striped nightcap—the heavily caparisoned horse, shaking his head amidst a Babel-tower of gaudy worsted tassels and brass bells—the deeply laden wagon, creeping slowly along—are all in keeping with a scene, where the very mist that rises from the valley seems indolent and lazy, and unwilling to impart the rich perfume of verdure with which it is loaded. Every land has its own peculiar character of beauty. The glaciered mountain, the Alpine peak, the dashing cataracts of Switzerland and the Tyrol, are not finer in their way than the long flat moorlands of a Flemish landscape, with its clump of stunted willows clustering over some limpid brook, in which the oxen are standing for shelter from the noon-day heat, while, lower down, some rude water-wheel is mingling its sounds with the summer bees and the merry voices of the miller and his companions. So strayed my thoughts as the German shook me by the arm, and asked if "I were not ready for my breakfast?" Luckily to this question there is rarely but the one answer. Who is not ready for his breakfast when on the road? How delightful, if on the Continent, to escape from the narrow limits of the dungeon-like diligence, where you sit with your knees next your collar-bone, fainting with heat and suffocated by dust, and finding yourself suddenly beside the tempting *plats* of a little French *déjeûner*, with its cutlets, its fried fish, its *poulet*, its salad, and its little *entrée* of fruit, tempered with a not despicable bottle of Beaune. If in England, the exchange is nearly as grateful; for though our traveling be better, and our position less irksome, still it is no small alternative from the stage-coach to the inn parlor, redolent of aromatic black tea, eggs, and hot toast, with an hospitable sideboard of lordly sirloins, and York hams that would make a Jew's mouth water. While, in America, the change is greatest of all, as anyone can vouch for who has been suddenly emancipated from the stove-heat of a "nine-inside" leathern "conveniency," bumping ten miles an hour

over a corduroy road, the company smoking, if not worse; to the ample display of luxurious viands displayed upon the breakfast-table, where, what with buffalo steaks, pumpkin pie, "chicken fixings," and other aristocratically called temptations, he must be indeed fastidious who cannot employ his half-hour. Pity it is, when there is so much good to eat, that people will not partake of it like civilized beings, and with that air of cheerful thankfulness that all other nations more or less express when enjoying the earth's bounties. But true it is, that there is a spirit of discontent in the Yankee, that seems to accept of benefits with a tone of dissatisfaction, if not distrust. I once made this remark to an excellent friend of mine, now no more, who, however, would not permit of my attributing this feature to the Americans exclusively, adding, "Where have you more of this than in Ireland? and surely you would not cal lthe Irish ungrateful?" He illustrated his first remark by the following short anecdote:—

The rector of the parish my friend lived in was a man who added to the income he derived from his living a very handsome private fortune, which he devoted entirely to the benefit of the poor around him. Among the objects of his bounty one old woman—a childless widow—was remarkably distinguished. Whether commiserating her utter helplessness or her complete isolation, he went farther to relieve her than to many, if not all, the other poor. She frequently was in the habit of pleading her poverty as a reason for not appearing in church among her neighbors; and he gladly seized an opportunity of so improving her condition, that, on this score, at least, no expediment existed. When all his little plans for her comfort had been carried into execution, he took the opportunity one day of dropping in, as if accidentally, to speak to her. By degrees he led the subject to her changed condition in life—the alteration from a cold, damp, smoky hovel, to a warm, clean, slated house—the cheerful garden before the door that replaced the mud-heap and the duck-pool—and all the other happy changes which a few weeks had effected. And he then asked, did she not feel grateful to a bountiful Providence that had showered down so many blessings upon her head?

"Ah, troth, it's thrue for yer honor, I am grateful," she replied, in a whining, discordant tone, which astonished the worthy parson.

"Of course you are, my good woman, of course you are; but I mean to say, don't you feel that every moment you live is too short to express your thankfulness to this kind Providence for what He has done?"

"Ah, darlin', it's all thrue; He's very good, He's mighty kind, so He is."

"Why, then, not acknowledge it in a different manner?" said the parson, with some heat—"has He not housed you, and fed you, and clothed you?"

"Yes, alanah, He done it all."

"Well, where is your gratitude for all those mercies?"

"Ah, sure, if He did," said the old crone, roused at length by the importunity of the questioner—"sure, if He did, *doesn't He take it out o' me in the corns?*"

CHAPTER XLV.

A REMINISCENCE OF THE EAST.

THE breakfast-table assembled around it the three generations of men who issued from the three subdivisions of the diligence, and presented that motley and mixed assemblage of ranks, ages, and countries, which forms so very amusing a part of a traveler's experience.

First came the *haute aristocratie* of the coupé, then the middle class of the *intérieur*, and lastly, the *tiers-état* of the *rotonde*, with its *melange* of Jew money-lenders, under-officers and their wives, a Norman nurse with a high cap and a red jupe; while, to close the procession, a German student descended from the roof, with a beard, a blouse, and a meerschaum. Of such materials was our party made up; and yet, differing in all our objects and interests, we speedily amalgamated into a very social state of intimacy, and chatted away over our breakfast with much good humor and gaiety, each person of the number seeming pleased at the momentary opportunity of finding a new listener, save my tall companion of the coupé. He preserved a dogged silence, unbroken by even a chance expression to the waiter, who observed his wants and supplied them by a species of quick instinct, evidently acquired by practice. As I could not help feeling somewhat interested about the hermit-like attachment he evinced for solitude, I watched him narrowly for some time, and at length as the *rôti* made its appearance before him, after he had helped himself and tasted it, he caught my eye fixed upon him, and looking at me intently for a few seconds, he seemed to be satisfied in some passing doubt he labored

under, as he said, with a most peculiar shake of the head—"*No mangez, no mangez cela.*"

"Ah," said I, detecting in my friend's French his English origin, "you are an Englishman, I find."

"The devil a doubt of it, darling," said he, half testily.

"An Irishman, too—still better," said I.

"Why, then, isn't it strange that my French always shows me to be English, and my English proves me Irish? It's lucky for me there's no going farther anyhow."

Delighted to have thus fallen upon a "character," as the Irishman evidently appeared, I moved my chair toward his; finding, however, he was not half pleased at the manner in which my acquaintance had been made with him, and knowing his country's susceptibility of being taken by a story, I resolved to make my advances by narrating a circumstance which had once befallen me in my early life.

Our countrymen, English and Irish, travel so much now-a-days, that one ought never to feel surprised at finding them anywhere. The instance I am about to relate will verify to a certain extent the fact, by showing that no situation is too odd or too unlikely to be within the verge of calculation.

When the 10th Foot, to which I then belonged, were at Corfu, I obtained, with three other officers, a short leave of absence, to make a hurried tour of the Morea, and take a passing glance at Constantinople—in those days much less frequently visited by travelers than at present.

After rambling pleasantly about for some weeks, we were about to return, when we determined that before sailing we should accept an invitation some officers of the *Blazer* frigate, then stationed here, had given us, to pass a day at Pera, and pic-nic on the mountain.

One fine bright morning was therefore selected—and a most appetizing little dinner being carefully packed up—and we set out, a party of fourteen, upon our excursion.

The weather was glorious, and the scene far finer than any of us had anticipated—the view from the mountain extending over the entire city, gorgeous in the rich coloring of its domes and minarets; while, at one side, the Golden Horn was visible, crowded with ships of every nation, and at the other, a glimpse might be had of the Sea of Marmora, blue and tranquil as it lay beneath. The broad bosom of the Bosphorus was sheeted out like a map before us—peaceful, yet bustling with life and animation. Here lay the union-jack of old England, floating beside the lilies of France—we speak of times when lilies were and barricades were not—the tall and taper spars of a Yankee frigate towering above the low timbers and heavy hull of a Dutch schooner—the gilded poop and carved galleries of a Turkish three-decker, anchored beside the raking mast and curved deck of a suspicious looking craft, whose red-capped dark-visaged crew needed not the naked creese at their sides to bespeak them Malays. The whole was redolent of life, and teeming with food for one's fancy to conjure from.

While we were debating upon the choice of a spot for our luncheon, which should command the chief points of view within our reach, one of the party came to inform us that he had just discovered the very thing we were in search of. It was a small kiosk, built upon a projecting rock that looked down upon the Bosphorus and the city, and had evidently, from the extended views it presented, been selected as the spot to build upon. The building itself was a small octagon, open on every side, and presenting a series of prospects, land and seaward, of the most varied and magnificent kind.

Seeing no one near, nor any trace of habitation, we resolved to avail ourselves of the good taste of the founder; and spreading out the contents of our hampers, proceeded to discuss a most excellent cold dinner. When the good things had disappeared, and the wine began to circulate, one of the party observed that we should not think of enjoying ourselves before we had filled a bumper to the brim, to the health of our good king, whose birthday it chanced to be. Our homeward thoughts and loyalty uniting, we filled our glasses, and gave so hearty a "hip, hip, hurrah," to our toast, that I doubt if the echoes of those old rocks ever heard the equal of it.

Scarcely was the last cheer dying away in the distance, when the door of the kiosk opened, and a negro dressed in white muslin appeared, his arms and ankles bearing those huge rings of massive gold, which only persons of rank distinguish their servants by.

After a most profound obeisance to the party, he explained, in very tolerable French, that his master the Effendi, Ben Mustapha Al Halak, at whose charge (in house rent) we were then feasting, sent us greeting, and begged that if not considered as contrary to our usage, etc., we should permit him and his suite to approach the kiosk and observe us at our meal.

Independent of his politeness in the

mode of conveying the request, as *he* would prove fully as entertaining a sight to us as we could possibly be to him, we immediately expressed our great willingness to receive his visit, coupled with a half-hint that perhaps he might honor us by joining the party.

After a half-hour's delay, the door was once more thrown open, and a venerable old Turk entered: he salaamed three times most reverently, and motioned to us to be seated, declining, at the same time, by a gentle gesture of his hand, our invitation. He was followed by a train of six persons, all splendidly attired, and attesting, by their costume and manner, the rank and importance of their chief. Conceiving that his visit had but one object—to observe our convivial customs—we immediately re-seated ourselves, and filled our glasses.

As one after another the officers of the Effendi's household passed round the apartments, we offered them a goblet of champagne, which they severally declined with a polite but solemn smile—all except one, a large, savage-looking Turk, with a most ferocious scowl, and the largest black beard I ever beheld. He did not content himself with a mute refusal of our offer, but stopping suddenly, he raised up his hands above his head, and muttered some words in Turkish, which one of the party informed us was a very satisfactory recommendation of the whole company to Satan for their heretic abomination.

The procession moved slowly round the room, and when it reached the door again retired, each member of it salaaming three times as he had done on entering. Scarcely had they gone, when we burst into a loud fit of laughter at the savage-looking fellow who thought proper to excommunicate us, and were about to discuss his more than common appearance of disgust at our proceedings, when again the door opened, and a turbaned head peeped in, but so altered were the features, that although seen but the moment before, we could hardly believe them the same. The dark complexion—the long and bushy beard were there—but instead of the sleepy and solemn character of the Oriental, with heavy eye and closed lip, there was a droll half devilry in the look, and partly open mouth, that made a most laughable contrast with the head-dress. He looked stealthily around him for an instant, as if to see that all was right, and then, with an accent and expression I shall never forget, said, "*I'll taste your wine, gintlemen, av it be pleasing to ye.*"

CHAPTER XLVI.

A DAY IN THE PHŒNIX.

When we were once more in the coupé of the diligence, I directed my entire attention toward my Irish acquaintance, as well because of his apparent singularity, as to avoid the little German in the opposite corner.

"You have not been long in France, then, sir," said I, as we resumed our conversation.

"Three weeks, and it seems like three years to me—nothing to eat—nothing to drink—and nobody to speak to. But I'll go back soon—I only came abroad for a month."

"You'll scarcely see much of the Continent in so short a time."

"Devil a much *that* will grieve me—I didn't come to see it."

"Indeed!"

"Nothing of the kind; I only came—to be away from home."

"Oh! I perceive."

"You're quite out there," said my companion, misinterpreting my meaning. "It wasn't anything of that kind. I don't owe sixpence. I was laughed out of Ireland—that's all, though that same is bad enough."

"Laughed out of it!"

"Just so—and little you know of Ireland if that surprises you."

After acknowledging that such an event was perfectly possible, from what I myself had seen of that country, I obtained the following very brief account of my companion's reasons for foreign travel:—

"Well, sir," began he, "it is about four months since I brought up to Dublin from Galway a little chestnut mare, with cropped ears and a short tail, square-jointed, and rather low—just what you'd call a smart hack for going to cover with—a lively thing on the road with a light weight. Nobody ever suspected that she was a clean-bred thing—own sister to Jenny, that won the Corinthians, and ran second to Giles for the Riddlesworth—but so she was, and a better bred mare never leaped the pound in Ballinasloe. Well, I brought her to Dublin, and used to ride her out two or three times a week, making little matches sometimes to trot—and, for a thoroughbred, she was a clipper at trotting—to trot a mile or so on the grass—another day to gallop the length of the Nine Acres opposite the Lodge—and then sometimes back her for a ten-pound note, to jump the biggest furze-bush that could be found—all of

which she could do with ease, nobody thinking, all the while, that the cock-tailed pony was by Scroggins, out of a 'Lamplighter mare.' As every fellow that was beat to-day was sure to come back to-morrow, with something better, either of his own or a friend's, I had matches booked for every day in the week—for I always made my little boy that rode, win by half a neck, or a nostril, and so we kept on day after day pocketing from ten to thirty pounds, or thereabouts. It was mighty pleasant while it lasted, for besides winning the money, I had my own fun laughing at the spoonies that never could book my bets fast enough. Young infantry officers and the junior bar—they were for the most part mighty nice to look at, but very raw about racing. How long I might have gone on in this way I cannot say; but one morning I fell in with a fat, elderly gentleman, in shorts and gaiters, mounted on a dun cob pony, that was very fidgety and hot-tempered, and appeared to give the rider a great deal of uneasiness.

"'He's a spicy hack you're on, sir,' said I, 'and has a go in him, I'll be bound.'

"'I rayther think he has,' said the old gentleman, half testily.

"'And can trot a bit, too.'

"'Twelve Irish miles in fifty minutes, with my weight.' Here he looked down at a paunch like a sugar hogshead.

"'Maybe he's not bad across a country,' said I, rather to humor the old fellow, who, I saw, was proud of his pony.

"'I'd like to see his match, that's all.' Here he gave a rather contemptuous glance at my hack.

"Well, one word led to another, and it ended at last in our booking a match, with which one party was no less pleased than the other. It was this: each was to ride his own horse, starting from the school in the Park, round the Fifteen Acres, outside the Monument, and back to the start—just one heat, about a mile and a half—the ground good, and only soft enough. In consideration, however, of his greater weight, I was to give odds in the start; and as we could not well agree on how much, it was at length decided that he was to get away first, and I to follow as fast as I could, after drinking a pewter quart full of Guinness's double stout—droll odds, you'll say, but it was the old fellow's own thought, and as the match was a *soft* one, I let him have his way.

"The next morning the Phœnix was crowded as if for a review. There were all the Dublin notorieties, swarming in barouches, and tilburies, and outside jaunting-cars—smart clerks in the Post-office, mounted upon kicking devils from Dycer's and Lalouette's stables—attorneys' wives and daughters from York Street, and a stray doctor or so on a hack that looked as if it had been lectured on for the six winter months at the College of Surgeons. My antagonist was half an hour late, which time I occupied in booking bets on every side of me—offering odds of ten, fifteen, and at last, to tempt the people, twenty-five to one against the dun. At last the fat gentleman came up on a jaunting-car, followed by a groom leading the cob. I wish you heard the cheer that greeted him on his arrival, for it appeared he was a well-known character in town, and much in favor with the mob. When he got off the car, he bundled into a tent, followed by a few of his friends, where they remained for about five minutes, at the end of which he came out in full racing costume—blue and yellow-striped jacket, blue cap and leathers—looking as funny a figure as ever you set eyes upon. I now thought it time to throw off my white surtout, and show out in pink and orange, the colors I had been winning in for two months past. While some of the party were sent on to station themselves at different places round the Fifteen Acres, to mark out the course, my fat friend was assisted into his saddle, and gave a short preliminary gallop of a hundred yards or so, that set us all a-laughing. The odds were now fifty to one in my favor, and I gave them wherever I could find takers. 'With you, sir, if you please, in pounds, and the gentleman in the red whiskers, too, if he likes; very well, in half-sovereigns, if you prefer it.' So I went on, betting on every side, till the bell rang to mount. As I knew I had plenty of time to spare, I took little notice, and merely giving a look to my girths, I continued leisurely booking my bets. At last the time came, and at the word 'Away!' off went the fat gentleman on the dun, at a spluttering gallop, that flung the mud on every side of us, and once more threw us all a-laughing. I waited patiently till he got near the upper end of the park, taking bets every minute; now that he was away, every one offered to wager. At last, when I had let him get nearly half round, and found no more money could be had, I called out to his friends for the porter, and, throwing myself into the saddle, gathered up the reins in my hand. The crowd fell back on each side, while from the tent I have already mentioned out came a thin fellow with

one eye, with a pewter quart in his hand: he lifted it up toward me, and I took it; but what was my fright to find that the porter was boiling, and the vessel so hot I could barely hold it. I endeavored to drink, however: the first mouthful took all the skin off my lips and tongue, the second half choked, and the third nearly threw me into an apoplectic fit, the mob cheering all the time like devils. Meantime, the old fellow had reached the furze, and was going along like fun. Again I tried the porter, and a fit of coughing came on which lasted five minutes. The pewter was so hot that the edge of the quart took away a piece of my mouth at every effort. I ventured once more, and with the desperation of a madman I threw down the hot liquid to its last drop. My head reeled, my eyes glared, and my brain was on fire. I thought I beheld fifty fat gentlemen, riding on every side of me, and all the sky raining jackets in blue and yellow. Half mechanically I took the reins, and put spurs to my horse; but before I got well away, a loud cheer from the crowd assailed me. I turned, and saw the dun coming in at a floundering gallop, covered with foam, and so dead blown that neither himself nor the rider could have got twenty yards farther. The race was, however, won. My odds were lost to every man on the field, and, worse than all, I was so laughed at, that I could not venture out in the streets, without hearing allusions to my misfortune; for a certain friend of mine, one Tom O'Flaherty——"

"Tom of the 11th Light Dragoons?"

"The same; you know Tom, then? Maybe you have heard him mention me—Maurice Malone?"

"Not Mr. Malone, of Fort Peak?"

"Bad luck to him. I am as well known in connection with Fort Peak, as the Duke is with Waterloo. There is not a part of the globe where he has not told that confounded story."

As my readers may not possibly be all numbered in Mr. O'Flaherty's acquaintance, I shall venture to give the anecdote which Mr. Malone accounted to be so widely circulated.

CHAPTER XLVII.

AN ADVENTURE IN CANADA.

Toward the close of the last war with America, a small detachment of military occupied the little block-house of Fort Peak, which, about eight miles from the Falls of Niagara, formed the last outpost on the frontier. The Fort, in itself inconsiderable, was only of importance as commanding a part of the river where it was practicable to ford, and where the easy ascent of the bank offered a safe situation for the enemy to cross over, whenever they felt disposed to carry the war into our territory.

There having been, however, no threat of invasion in this quarter, and the natural strength of the position being considerable, a mere handful of men, with two subaltern officers, were allotted for this duty—such being conceived ample to maintain it till the arrival of succor from headquarters, then at Little York, on the opposite side of the lake. The officers of this party were our old acquaintance Tom O'Flaherty, and our newly-made one Maurice Malone.

Whatever may be the merits of commanding officers, one virtue they certainly can lay small claim to, viz., any insight into character, or at least any regard for the knowledge. Seldom are two men sent off on detachment duty to some remote quarter, to associate daily and hourly for months together, that they are not, by some happy chance, the very people who never, as the phrase is, "took to each other" in their lives. The gray-headed, weather-beaten, disappointed "Peninsular" is coupled with the essenced and dandified Adonis of the corps; the man of literary tastes and cultivated pursuits with the empty-headed, ill-formed youth, fresh from Harrow or Westminster. This case offered no exception to the rule; for though there were few men possessed of more assimilating powers than O'Flaherty, yet certainly his companion did put the faculty to the test, for anything more unlike him there never existed. Tom, all good humor and high spirits—making the best of everything—never nonplussed—never taken aback—perfectly at home, whether flirting with a Lady Charlotte in her drawing-room, or crossing a grouse mountain in the Highlands—sufficiently well read to talk on any ordinary topic—and always ready-witted enough to seem more so. A thorough sportsman, whether showing forth in his "pink" at Melton, whipping a trout-stream in Wales, or filling a country-house with black cock and moorfowl; an unexceptionable judge of all the good things in life, from a pretty ankle to a well-hung tilbury—from the odds at hazard to the "Comet vintage." Such, in brief, was Tom. Now his *confrère* was none of these; he had been drafted from

the Galway militia to the line, for some election services rendered by his family to the government candidate; was of a saturnine and discontented habit, always miserable about some trifle or other, and never at rest till he had drowned his sorrows in Jamaica rum, which, since the regiment was abroad, he had copiously used as a substitute for whisky. To such an extent had this passion gained upon him, that a corporal's guard was always in attendance whenever he dined out, to convey him home to the barracks.

The wearisome monotony of a close garrison, with so ungenial a companion, would have damped any man's spirits but O'Flaherty's. He, however, upon this, as other occasions in life, rallied himself to make the best of it; and, by short excursions within certain prescribed limits along the river side contrived to shoot and fish enough to get through the day, and improve the meagre fare of his mess-table. Malone never appeared before dinner—his late sittings at night requiring all the following day to recruit him from a new attack upon the rum bottle.

Now, although his seeing so little of his brother officer was anything but unpleasant to O'Flaherty, yet the ennui of such a life was gradually wearing him, and all his wits were put in requisition to furnish occupation for his time. Never a day passed without his praying ardently for an attack from the enemy; any alternative, any reverse, had been a blessing compared with his present life. No such spirit, however, seemed to animate the Yankee troops; not a soldier was to be seen for miles around, and every straggler that passed the Fort concurred in saying that the Americans were not within four days' march of the frontier.

Weeks passed over, and the same state of things remaining unchanged, O'Flaherty gradually relaxed some of his strictness as to duty; small foraging parties of three and four being daily permitted to leave the Fort for a few hours, to which they usually returned laden with wild turkeys and fish—both being found in great abundance near them.

Such was the life of the little garrison for two or three long summer months—each day so resembling its fellow, that no difference could be found.

As to how the war was faring, or what the aspect of affairs might be, they absolutely knew nothing. Newspapers never reached them; and whether from having so much occupation at headquarters, or that the difficulty of sending letters prevented, their friends never wrote a line; and thus they jogged on a very vegetable existence, till thought at last was stagnating in their brains, and O'Flaherty half envied his companion's resource in the spirit flask.

Such was the state of affairs at the Fort, when one evening O'Flaherty appeared to pace the little rampart that looked toward Lake Ontario, with an appearance of anxiety and impatience strangely at variance with his daily phlegmatic look. It seemed that the corporal's party he had despatched that morning to forage near the "Falls" had not returned, and already were four hours later than their time away.

Every imaginable mode of accounting for their absence suggested itself to his mind. Sometimes he feared that they had been attacked by the Indian hunters, who were far from favorably disposed toward their poaching neighbors. Then, again, it might be merely that they had missed their track in the forest; or could it be that they had ventured to reach Goat Island in a canoe, and had been carried down the rapids. Such were the torturing doubts that passed, as some shrill squirrel or hoarse night owl pierced the air with a cry, and then all was silent again. While thus the hours went slowly by, his attention was attracted by a bright light in the sky. It appeared as if part of the heavens were reflecting some strong glare from beneath, for, as he looked, the light, at first pale and colorless, gradually deepened into a rich mellow hue, and at length, through the murky blackness of the night, a strong clear current of flame rose steadily upward from the earth, and pointed toward the sky. From the direction, it must have been either at the Falls or immediately near them; and now the horrible conviction flashed upon his mind that the party had been waylaid by the Indians, who were, as is their custom, making a war-feast over their victims.

Not an instant was to be lost. The little garrison beat to arms; and, as the men fell in, O'Flaherty cast his eyes around, while he selected a few brave fellows to accompany him. Scarcely had the men fallen out from the ranks, when the sentinel at the gate was challenged by a well-known voice, and in a moment more the corporal of the foraging party was among them. Fatigue and exhaustion had so overcome him, that for some minutes he was speechless. At length he recovered sufficiently to give the following brief account:—

The little party having obtained their supply of venison above Queenston, were returning to the Fort, when they suddenly came upon a track of feet, and little experience in forest life soon proved that some new arrivals had reached the hunting grounds, for on examining them closely, they proved neither to be Indian tracks, nor yet those made by the shoes of the Fort party. Proceeding with caution to track them backward for three or four miles, they reached the bank of the Niagara river, above the whirlpools, where the crossing is most easily effected from the American side. The mystery was at once explained: it was a surprise party of the Yankees, sent to attack Fort Peak; and now the only thing to be done was to hasten back immediately to their friends, and prepare for their reception.

With this intent they took the river path as the shortest, but had not proceeded far when their fears were confirmed; for in a little embayment of the bank they perceived a party of twenty blue coats, who, with their arms piled, were lying around as if waiting for the hour of attack. The sight of this party added greatly to their alarm, for they now perceived that the Americans had divided their force—the foot-tracks first seen being evidently those of another division. As the corporal and his few men continued, from the low and thick brushwood, to make their reconnaissance of the enemy, they observed with delight that they were not regulars, but a militia force. With this one animating thought, they again, with noiseless step, regained the forest, and proceeded upon their way. Scarcely, however, had they marched a mile, when the sound of voices and loud laughter apprised them that another party was near, which, as well as they could observe in the increasing gloom, was still larger than the former. They were now obliged to make a considerable circuit, and advance still deeper into the forest—their anxiety hourly increasing, lest the enemy should reach the Fort before themselves. In this dilemma it was resolved that the party should separate—the corporal determining to proceed alone by the river bank, while the others, by a *détour* of some miles, should endeavor to learn the force of the Yankees, and, as far as they could, their mode of attack. From that instant the corporal knew no more; for, after two hours' weary exertion, he reached the Fort, which, had it been but another mile distant, his strength had not held out for him to attain.

However gladly poor O'Flaherty might have hailed such information under other circumstances, now it came like a thunderbolt upon him. Six of his small force were away, perhaps ere this made prisoners by the enemy; the Yankees, as well as he could judge, were a numerous party; and he himself totally without a single adviser—for Malone had dined, and was, therefore, by this time in that pleasing state of indifference, in which he could only recognize an enemy in the man that did not send round the decanter.

In the half-indulged hope that his state might permit some faint exercise of the reasoning faculty, O'Flaherty walked toward the small den they had designated as the mess-room, in search of his brother-officer.

As he entered the apartment, little disposed as he felt to mirth at such a moment, the tableau before him was too ridiculous not to laugh at. At one side of the fireplace sat Malone, his face florid with drinking, and his eyeballs projecting. Upon his head was a small Indian skull-cap, with two peacock's feathers, and a piece of scarlet cloth which hung down behind. In one hand he held a smoking goblet of rum punch, and in the other a long Indian Chibook pipe. Opposite to him, but squatted upon the floor, reposed a red Indian, that lived in the Fort as a guide, equally drunk, but preserving, even in his liquor, an impassive, grave aspect, strangely contrasting with the high excitement of Malone's face. The red man wore Malone's uniform coat, which he had put on back foremost—his head-dress having, in all probability, been exchanged for it, as an amicable courtesy between the parties. There they sat, looking fixedly at each other; neither spoke, nor even smiled—the rum bottle, which at brief intervals passed from one to the other, maintained a friendly intercourse that each was content with.

To the hearty fit of laughing of O'Flaherty, Malone replied by a look of drunken defiance, and then nodded to his red friend, who returned the courtesy. As poor Tom left the room, he saw that nothing was to be hoped for in this quarter, and determined to beat the garrison to arms without any further delay. Scarcely had he closed the door behind him, when a sudden thought flashed through his brain. He hesitated, walked forward a few paces, stopped again, and calling out to the corporal, said,—

"You are certain they were militia?"

"Yes, sir; quite sure."

"Then, by Jove, I have it," cried

O'Flaherty. "If they should turn out to be the Buffalo Fencibles, we may get through this scrape better than I hoped for."

"I believe you are right, sir; for I heard one of the men as I passed observe, 'What will they say in Buffalo when it's over?'"

"Send Mathers here, corporal; and do you order four rank and file, with side-arms, to be in readiness immediately."

"Mathers, you have heard the news," said O'Flaherty, as the sergeant entered. "Can the Fort hold out against such a force as Jackson reports? You doubt; well, so do I; so let's see what's to be done. Can you remember, was it not the Buffalo militia that were so tremendously thrashed by the Delawares last autumn?"

"Yes, sir, they chased them for two days and nights, and had they not reached the town of Buffalo, the Delawares would not have left a scalp in the regiment."

"Can you recollect the chief's name—it was Carran—something, eh?"

"Caudan-dacwagae."

"Exactly. Where is he supposed to be now?"

"Up in Detroit, sir, they say, but no one knows. Those fellows are here to-day, and there to-morrow."

"Well then, sergeant, here's my plan." Saying these words, O'Flaherty proceeded to walk toward his quarters, accompanied by the sergeant, with whom he conversed for some time eagerly; occasionally replying, as it appeared, to objections, and offering explanations as the other seemed to require them. The colloquy lasted half an hour; and although the veteran sergeant seemed difficult of conviction, it ended by his saying, as he left the room,—

"Well, sir, as you say, it can only come to hard knocks at worst. Here goes. I'll send off the scout party to make fires and choose the men for the out-pickets, for no time is to be lost."

In about an hour's time from the scene I have mentioned, a number of militia officers, of different grades, were seated round a bivouac fire, upon the bank of the Niagara river. The conversation seemed of an angry nature, for the voices of the speakers were loud and irascible, and their gestures evidenced a state of high excitement.

"I see," said one, who seemed the superior of the party—"I see well where this will end. We shall have another Queenston affair, as we had last fall with the Delawares."

"I only say," replied another, "that if you wish our men to stand fire to-morrow morning, the less you remind them of the Delawares the better. What is that noise? Is not that a drum beating?"

The party at these words sprang to their legs, and stood in an attitude of listening for some seconds.

"Who goes there?" sang out a sentinel from his post; and then, after a moment's delay, added: "Pass flag of truce to Major Brown's quarters."

Scarcely were the words spoken, when three officers in scarlet, preceded by a drummer with a white flag, stood before the American party.

"To whom may I address myself?" said one of the British—who, I may inform my reader, *en passant*, was no other than O'Flaherty—"to whom may I address myself as the officer in command?"

"I am Major Brown," said a short, plethoric little man, in a blue uniform and round hat. "And who are you?"

"Major O'Flaherty, of his Majesty's Fifth Foot," said Tom, with a very sonorous emphasis on each word, "the bearer of a flag of truce and an amicable proposition from Major-General Allen, commanding the garrison of Fort Peak."

The Americans, who were evidently taken by surprise at their intentions of attack being known, were silent, while he continued:—

"Gentlemen, it may appear somewhat strange that a garrison, possessing the natural strength of a powerful position, supplied with abundant ammunition and every muniment of war, should despatch a flag of truce on the eve of an attack, in preference to waiting for the moment when a sharp and well-prepared reception might best attest its vigilance and discipline. But the reasons for this step are soon explained. In the first place, you intend a surprise. We have been long aware of your projected attack. Our spies have tracked you from your crossing the river above the whirlpool to your present position. Every man of your party is numbered by us; and, what is still more, numbered by our allies; yes, gentlemen, I must repeat it, 'allies,' though, as a Briton, I blush at the word. Shame and disgrace for ever be that man's portion who first associated the honorable usages of war with the atrocious and bloody cruelties of the savage. Yet so it is: the Delawares of the hills"—here the Yankees exchanged very peculiar looks—"have this morning arrived at Fort Peak, with orders to ravage the whole of your frontier, from Fort George to Lake Erie. They brought us the information of your approach, and

their chief is, while I speak, making an infamous proposition, by which a price is to be paid for every scalp he produces in the morning. Now, as the General cannot refuse to co-operate with the savages without compromising himself with the commander-in-chief, neither can he accept of such assistance without some pangs of conscience, he has taken the only course open to him; he has despatched myself and my brother officers here"—O'Flaherty glanced at two privates dressed up in his regimentals—"to offer you terms——"

O'Flaherty paused when he arrived thus far, expecting that the opposite party would make some reply; but they continued silent; when suddenly, from the dense forest, there rang forth a wild and savage yell, that rose and fell several times, like the pibroch of the Highlander, and ended at last in a loud whoop, that was echoed and re-echoed again and again for several seconds after.

"Hark!" said O'Flaherty, with an accent of horror. "Hark! the war-cry of the Delawares! The savages are eager for their prey. May it yet be time enough to rescue you from such a fate! Time presses—our terms are these—as they do not admit of discussion, and must be at once accepted or rejected, to your own ear alone can I impart them."

Saying which, he took Major Brown aside, and walking apart from the others, led him, by slow steps, into the forest. While O'Flaherty continued to dilate upon the atrocities of Indian war, and the revengeful character of the savages, he contrived to be always advancing toward the river side, till at length the glare of a fire was perceptible through the gloom. Major Brown stopped suddenly, and pointed in the direction of the flame.

"It is the Indian picket," said O'Flaherty, calmly: "and as the facts I have been detailing may be more palpable to your mind, you shall see them with your own eyes. Yes, I repeat it, you shall, through the cover of this brushwood, see Caudandacwagae himself—for he is with them in person."

As O'Flaherty said this, he led Major Brown, now speechless with terror, behind a massive cork-tree, from which spot they could look down upon the river side, where in a small creek sat five or six persons in blankets and scarlet head-dresses; their faces streaked with patches of yellow and red paint, to which the glare of the fire lent fresh horror. In the midst sat one whose violent gestures and savage cries gave him the very appearance of a demon, as he resisted with all his might the efforts of the others to restrain him, shouting like a maniac all the while, and struggling to rise.

"It is the chief," said O'Flaherty; "he will wait no longer. We have bribed the others to keep him quiet, if possible, a little time; but I see they cannot succeed."

A loud yell of triumph from below interrupted Tom's speech. The infuriated savage—who was no other than Mr. Malone—having obtained the rum bottle, for which he was fighting with all his might; his temper not being improved in the struggle by occasional admonitions from the red end of a cigar, applied to his naked skin by the other Indians, who were his own soldiers acting under O'Flaherty's orders.

"Now," said Tom, "that you have convinced yourself, and can satisfy your brother officers, will you take your chance? or will you accept the honorable terms of the General—pile your arms, and retreat beyond the river before daybreak! Your muskets and ammunition will offer a bribe to the cupidity of the savage, and delay his pursuit till you can reach some place of safety."

Major Brown heard the proposal in silence, and at last determined upon consulting his brother officers.

"I have outstayed my time," said O'Flaherty; "but stop; the lives of so many are at stake, I consent." Saying which, they walked on without speaking, till they arrived where the others were standing around the watch-fire.

As Brown retired to consult with the officers, Tom heard with pleasure how much *his* two companions had worked upon the Yankees' fears during his absence, by details of the vindictive feelings of the Delawares, and their vows to annihilate the Buffalo militia.

Before five minutes they had decided. Upon a solemn pledge from O'Flaherty that the terms of the compact were to be observed as he stated them, they agreed to march with their arms to the ford, where, having piled them, they were to cross over, and make the best of their way home.

By sunrise the next morning all that remained of the threatened attack on Fort Peak were the smouldering ashes of some wood fires—eighty muskets piled in the fort—and the yellow ochre and red stripes that still adorned the countenance of the late Indian chief—but now snoring Lieutenant—Maurice Malone.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE COURIER'S PASSPORT.

A SECOND night succeeded to the long dreary day of the diligence, and the only one agreeable reflection arose in the feeling that every mile traveled was diminishing the chance of pursuit, and removing me still further from that scene of trouble and annoyance that was soon to furnish gossip for Paris—under the title of the "*Affaire O'Leary.*"

How *he* was ever to extricate himself from the numerous and embarrassing difficulties gave me, I confess, less uneasiness than the uncertainty of my own fortunes. Luck seemed ever to befriend *him—me* it had always accompanied far enough through life to make its subsequent desertion more painful. How far I should blame myself for this, I stopped not to consider, but brooded over the fact in a melancholy and discontented mood. The one thought uppermost in my mind was, How will Lady Jane receive me—am I forgotten—or am I only remembered as the subject of that unlucky mistake, when, under the guise of an elder son, I was fêted and made much of? What pretensions I had, without fortune, rank, influence, or even expectations of any kind, to seek the hand of the most beautiful girl of the day, with the largest fortune as her dowry, I dare not ask myself—the reply would have dashed all my hopes, and my pursuit would have at once been abandoned. "Tell the people you are an excellent preacher," was the advice of an old and learned divine to a younger and less experienced one—"tell them so every morning, and every noon, and every evening, and at last they will begin to believe it." "So," thought I, "I shall impress upon the Callonbys that I am a most unexceptionable *parti*. Upon every occasion they shall hear it, as they open their newspapers at breakfast, as they sip their soup at luncheon, as they adjust their napkin at dinner, as they chat over their wine at night. My influence in the house shall be unbounded, my pleasures consulted, my dislikes remembered. The people in favor with me shall dine there three times a week—those less fortunate shall be put into schedule B. My opinions on all subjects shall be a law, whether I pronounce upon politics, or discuss a dinner: and all this I shall accomplish by a successful flattery of my lady, a little bullying of my lord, a devoted attention to the youngest sister, a special cultivation of Kilkee, and a very *prononcé* neglect of Lady Jane."

These were my half-waking thoughts, as the heavy diligence rumbled over the *pavé* into Nancy; and I was aroused by the door being suddenly jerked open, and a bronzed face, with a black beard and moustache, being thrust in amongst us.

"Your passports, messieurs?" as a lantern was held up in succession across our faces, and we handed forth our crumpled and worn papers to the official.

The night was stormy and dark—gusts of wind sweeping along, bearing with them the tail of some thunder-cloud—mingling their sounds with a falling tile from the roofs, or a broken chimney-pot. The officer in vain endeavored to hold open the passports while he inscribed his name; and just as the last scrawl was completed, the lantern went out. Muttering a heavy curse upon the weather, he thrust them in upon us *en masse*, and, banging the door to, called out to the conductor, "*En route.*"

Again we rumbled on, and, ere we cleared the last lamps of the town, the whole party were once more sunk in sleep, save myself. Hour after hour rolled by, the rain pattering upon the roof, and the heavy plash of the horses' feet contributing their mournful sounds to the melancholy that was stealing over me. At length we drew up at the door of a little inn, and, by the noise and bustle without, I perceived there was a change of horses. Anxious to stretch my legs, and relieve, if even for a moment, the wearisome monotony of the night, I got out, and strode into the little parlor of the inn. There was a cheerful fire in an open stove, beside which stood a portly figure in a sheepskin bunta and a cloth traveling cap, with a gold band; his legs were cased in high Russia leather boots, all evident signs of the profession of the wearer, had even his haste at supper not bespoke the fact that he was a government courier.

"You had better make haste with the horses, Antoine, if you don't wish the postmaster to hear of it," said he, as I entered, his mouth filled with pie crust and vin de Beaune, as he spoke.

A lumbering peasant, with a blouse, sabots, and a striped nightcap, replied in some unknown patois; when the courier again said,—

"Well, then, take the diligence horses; I must get on, at all events; they are not so hurried, I'll be bound; besides, it will save the gendarmes some miles of a ride if they overtake them here."

"Have we another *visé* of our passports here, then?" said I, addressing the courier, "for we have already been examined at Nancy."

"Not exactly a *visé*," said the courier, eyeing me most suspiciously as he spoke, and then continuing to eat with his former veracity.

"Then what, may I ask, have we to do with the gendarmes?"

"It is a search," said the courier, gruffly, and with the air of one who desired no further questioning.

I immediately ordered a bottle of Burgundy, and filling a large goblet before him, said, with much respect,—

"A votre bon voyage, Monsieur le Courier."

To this he at once replied, by taking off his cap and bowing politely as he drank off the wine. .

"Have we any runaway felon or stray galley slave among us," said I, laughingly, "that they are going to search us?"

"No, Monsieur," said the courier; "but there has been a government order to arrest a person on this road connected with the dreadful Polish plot that has just *éclatéd* at Paris. I passed a vidette of cavalry at Nancy, and they will be up here in half an hour."

"A Polish plot! Why, I left Paris only two days ago, and never heard of it."

"C'est bien possible, Monsieur? Perhaps, after all, it may only be an affair of the police; but they have certainly arrested one prisoner at Meurice, charged with this, as well as the attempt to rob Frascati, and murder the croupier."

"Alas," said I, with a half-suppressed groan, "it is too true; that infernal fellow, O'Leary, has ruined me, and I shall be brought back to Paris, and only taken from prison to meet the open shame and disgrace of a public trial."

What was to be done?—every moment was precious. I walked to the door to conceal my agitation. All was dark and gloomy. The thought of escape was my only one; but how to accomplish it? Every stir without suggested to my anxious mind the approaching tread of horses —every rattle of the harness seemed like the clink of accoutrements.

While I yet hesitated, I felt that my fate was in the balance. Concealment where I was, was impossible; there were no means of obtaining horses to proceed. My last only hope then rested in the courier; he, perhaps, might be bribed to assist me at this juncture. Still his impression as to the enormity of the crime imputed, might deter him; and there was no time for explanation, if even he would listen to it. I returned to the room; he had finished his meal, and was now engaged in all the preparations for encountering a wet and dreary night. I hesitated; my fears that if he should refuse my offers, all chance of my escape was gone, deterred me for a moment. At length, as he wound a large woolen shawl around his throat, and seemed to have completed his costume, I summoned nerve for the effort, and with as much boldness in my manner as I could muster, said,—

"Monsieur le Courier, one word with you." I here closed the door, and continued: "My fortunes, my whole prospects in life, depend upon my reaching Strasbourg by to-morrow night. You alone can be the means of my doing so. Is there any price you can mention for which you will render me this service?—if so, name it."

"So, then, Monsieur," said the courier, slowly, "so, then, you are the——"

"You have guessed it," said I, interrupting. "Do you accept my proposal."

"It is impossible," said he, "utterly impossible, for even should I be disposed to run the risk on my own account, it would avail you nothing; the first town we entered, your passport would be demanded, and not being *vised* by the minister to travel *en courier* you would at once be detained and arrested."

"Then am I lost," said I, throwing myself upon a chair; at the same instant my passport, which I carried in my breast-pocket, fell out at the feet of the courier. He lifted it and opened it leisurely. So engrossed was I by my misfortunes, that for some minutes I did not perceive that, as he continued to read the passport, he smiled from time to time till at length a hearty fit of laughing awoke me from my abstraction. My first impulse was to seize him by the throat; controlling my temper, however, with an effort, I said,—

"And pray, Monsieur, may I ask in what manner the position I stand in at this moment affords you so much amusement? Is there anything so particularly droll—anything so excessively ludicrous in my situation—or what particular gift do you possess that shall prevent me throwing you out of the window?"

"Mais, Monsieur," said he, half stifled with laughter, "do you know the blunder I fell into? it is really too good. Could you only guess whom I took you for, you would laugh too."

Here he became so overcome with merriment, that he was obliged to sit down, which he did opposite to me, and actually shook with laughter.

"When this comedy is over," thought I,

"we may begin to understand each other." Seeing no prospect of this, I became at length impatient, and jumping on my legs, said,—

"Enough, sir, quite enough of this foolery. Believe me, you have every reason to be thankful that my present embarrassment should so far engross me, that I cannot afford time to give you a thrashing."

"Pardon, mille pardons," said he, humbly, "but you will, I am sure, forgive me when I tell you that I was stupid enough to mistake you for the fugitive Englishman, whom the gendarmes are in pursuit of. How good, eh?"

"Oh! devilish good—but what do you mean?"

"Why, the fellow that caused the attack at Frascati, and all that, and——"

"Yes—well, eh? Did you think I was he?"

"To be sure I did, till I saw your passport."

"Till you saw my passport!—Why, what on earth can he mean?" thought I.—"No, but," said I, half jestingly, "how could you make such a blunder?"

"Why, your confused manner—your impatience to get on—your hurried questions, all convinced me. In fact, I'd have wagered anything you were the Englishman."

"And what, in Heaven's name, does he think me now?" thought I, as I endeavored to join the laugh so ludicrous a mistake occasioned.

"But we are delaying sadly," said the courier. "Are you ready?"

"Ready?—ready for what?"

"To go on with me, of course. Don't you wish to get early to Strasbourg?"

"To be sure I do."

"Well, then, come along. But, pray don't mind your luggage, for my calèche is loaded. Your instruments can come in the diligence."

"My instruments in the diligence! He's mad—that's flat."

"How they will laugh at Strasbourg at my mistake."

"That they will," thought I. "The only doubt is, will *you* join in the merriment?"

So saying, I followed the courier to the door, jumped into his calèche, and in another moment was hurrying over the *pavé* at a pace that defied pursuit, and promised soon to make up for all our late delay. Scarcely was the fur-lined apron of the calèche buttoned around me, and the German blinds let down, when I set to *work* to think over the circumstance that had just befallen me. As I had never examined my passport from the moment Trevanion handed it to me at Paris, I knew nothing of its contents; therefore, as to what impression it might convey of me, I was totally ignorant. To ask the courier for it now might excite suspicion; so that I was totally at sea how to account for his sudden change in my favor, or in what precise capacity I was traveling beside him. Once, and once only, the thought of treachery occurred to me. "Is he about to hand me over to the gendarmes? and are we now only retracing our steps toward Nancy? If so, Monsieur le Courier, whatever be *my* fate, *yours* is certainly an unenviable one." My reflections on this head were soon broken in upon, for my companion again returned to the subject of his "singular error," and assured me that he was as near as possible leaving me behind, under the mistaken impression of my being "myself;" and informed me that all Strasbourg would be delighted to see me, which latter piece of news was only the more flattering, that I knew no one there, nor had ever been in that city in my life; and after about an hour's mystification as to my tastes, habits, and pursuits, he fell fast asleep, leaving me to solve the difficult problem as to whether I was not somebody else, or, the only alternative—whether traveling *en courier* might not be prescribed by physicians as a mode of treating insane patients.

CHAPTER XLIX.

A NIGHT IN STRASBOURG.

WITH the dawn of day my miseries recommenced; for after letting down the sash, and venting some very fervent imprecations upon the postilion for not going faster than his horses were able, the courier once more recurred to his last night's blunder, and proceeded very leisurely to catechize me as to my probable stay at Strasbourg, whither I should go from thence, and so on. As I was still in doubt what or whom he took me for, I answered with the greatest circumspection—watching, the while, for any clue that might lead me to a discovery of myself. Thus occasionally evading all pushing and home queries, and sometimes, when hard pressed, feigning drowsiness, I passed the long and anxious day—the fear of being overtaken ever mingling with the thoughts that some unlucky admission of mine might discover my real character to the courier, who, as

any post station, might hand me over to the authorities. "Could I only guess at the part I am performing," thought I, "and I might manage to keep up the illusion;" but my attention was so entirely engrossed by fencing off all his thrusts, that I could find out nothing. At last, as night drew near, the thought that we were approaching Strasbourg rallied my spirits, suggesting an escape from all pursuit, as well as the welcome prospect of getting rid of my present torturer, who, whenever I awoke from a doze, reverted to our singular meeting with a pertinacity that absolutely seemed like malice.

"As I am aware that this is your first visit to Strasbourg," said the courier, "perhaps I can be of service to you in recommending an hotel. Put up, I advise you, at the 'Bear'—a capital hotel, and not ten minutes' distance from the theatre."

I thanked him for the counsel; and, rejoicing in the fact that my prototype, whoever he might be, was unknown in the city, began to feel some little hope of getting through this scrape, as I had done so many others.

"They have been keeping the 'Huguenots' for your arrival, and all Strasbourg is impatient for your coming."

"Indeed!" said I, mumbling something meant to be modest. "Who the devil am I, then, to cause all this fracas? Heaven grant, not the new 'prefect,' or the commander of the forces."

"I am told the 'Zauberflöte' is your favorite opera?"

"I can't say that I ever heard it—that is, I mean that I could say—well got up."

Here I floundered on, having so far forgot myself as to endanger everything.

"How very unfortunate! Well, I hope you will not long have as much to say. Meanwhile, here we are—this is the 'Bear.'"

We rattled into the ample *porte cochère* of a vast hotel, the postilion cracking his enormous whip, and bells ringing on every side, as if the Crown Prince of Russia had been the arrival, and not a poor sub. in the 4—th.

The courier jumped out, and running up to the landlord, whispered a few words in his ear, to which the other answered by a deep "Ah, vraiment!" and then saluted me with an obsequiousness that made my flesh quake.

"I shall make 'mes hommages' in the morning," said the courier, as he drove off at full speed to deliver his dispatches, and left me to my own devices to perform a character, without even being able to guess what it might be. My passport, too, the only thing that could throw any light upon the affair, he had taken along with him, promising to have it *viséd*, and save me any trouble.

Of all my difficulties and puzzling situations in life, this was certainly the worst; for however often my lot had been to personate another, yet hitherto I had had the good fortune to be aware of what and whom I was performing. Now I might be anybody, from Marshal Soult to Monsieur Scribe; one thing only was certain, I must be a "Celebrity." The confounded pains and trouble they were taking to receive me, attested that fact, and left me to the pleasing reflection that my detection, should it take place, would be sure of attracting a very general publicity. Having ordered my supper from the landlord, with a certain air of reserve, sufficient to prevent even an Alsace host from obtruding any questions upon me, I took my opportunity to stroll from the inn down to the river side. There lay the broad, rapid Rhine, separating me, by how narrow a limit, from that land, where, if I once arrived, my safety was certain. Never did that great boundary of nations strike me so forcibly as now when my own petty interests and fortunes were at stake. Night was fast settling upon the low, flat banks of the stream, and nothing stirred, save the ceaseless ripple of the river. One fishing bark alone was on the water. I hailed the solitary tenant of it, and after some little parley, induced him to ferry me over. This, however, could only be done when the night was farther advanced—it being against the law to cross the river except at certain hours, and between two established points, where officers of the revenue were stationed. The fisherman was easily bribed, however, to evade the regulation, and only bargained that I should meet him on the bank before daybreak. Having settled this point to my satisfaction, I returned to my hotel in better spirits; and with a Strasbourg paté, and a flask of Nierensteiner, drank to my speedy deliverance.

How to consume the long, dreary hours between this time and that of my departure, I knew not; for though greatly fatigued, I felt that sleep was impossible; the usual resource of a gossip with the host was equally out of the question; and all that remained was the theatre, which I happily remembered was not far from the hotel.

It was an opera night, and the house was crowded to excess; but with some

little management, I obtained a place in a box near the stage. The piece was "Les Francs Maçons," which was certainly admirably supported, and drew down from the audience—no mean one as judges of music—the loudest thunders of applause. As for me, the house was as great a curiosity as the opera. The novel spectacle of some hundred people relishing and appreciating the highest order of musical genius, was something totally new and surprising to me. The curtain at length fell upon the fifth act—and now the deafening roar of acclamation was tremendous; and amid a perfect shout of enthusiasm, the manager announced the opera for the ensuing evening. Scarcely had this subsided, when a buzz ran through the house; at first subdued, but gradually getting louder—extending from the boxes to the balcony—from the balcony to the parterre—and finally even to the galleries. Groups of people stood upon the benches, and looked fixedly in one part of the house; then changed and regarded as eagerly the other.

What can this mean? thought I. Is the theatre on fire? Something surely has gone wrong!

In this conviction, with the contagious spirit of curiosity, I mounted upon a seat, and looked about me on every side; but unable still to catch the object which seemed to attract the rest, as I was about to resume my place, my eyes fell upon a well-known face, which in an instant I remembered was that of my late fellow-traveler, the courier. Anxious to avoid his recognition, I attempted to get down at once; but before I could accomplish it, the wretch had perceived and recognized me; and I saw him, even with a gesture of delight, point me out to some friends beside him.

"Confound the fellow," muttered I; "I must leave this at once, or I shall be involved in some trouble."

Scarcely was my resolve taken, when a new burst of voices arose from the pit—the words "L'Auteur!" mingling with loud cries for "Meyerbeer!" "Meyerbeer!" to appear. "So," thought I, "it seems the great composer is here. Oh, by Jove! I must have a peep at him before I go." So, leaning over the front rail of the box, I looked anxiously about to catch one hasty glimpse of one of the great men of his day and country. What was my surprise, however, to perceive that about two thousand eyes were firmly riveted upon the box I was seated in; while about half the number of tongues called out unceasingly, "Mr. Meyerbeer!—vive Meyerbeer! vive l'Auteur des Francs Maçons!—vive les Francs Maçons!" etc. Before I could turn to look for the hero of the scene, my legs were taken from under me, and I felt myself lifted by several strong men and held out in front of the box, while the whole audience, rising *en masse*, saluted me—yes me, Harry Lorrequer—with a cheer that shook the building. Fearful of precipitating myself into the pit beneath if I made the least effort, and half wild with terror and amazement, I stared about like a maniac, while a beautiful young woman tripped along the edge of the box, supported by her companion's hand, and placed lightly upon my brow a chaplet of roses and laurel. Here the applause was like an earthquake..

"May the devil fly away with half of you," was my grateful response to as full a cheer of applause as ever the walls of the house re-echoed to.

"On the stage—on the stage!" shouted that portion of the audience who, occupying the same side of the house as myself, preferred having a better view of me; and to the stage I was accordingly hurried, down a narrow stair, through a side scene, and over half the *corps de ballet* who were waiting for their *entrée*. Kicking, plunging, buffeting like a madman, they carried me to the "flats," when the manager led me forward to the foot-lights, my wreath of flowers contrasting rather ruefully with my bruised cheeks and torn habiliments. Human beings, God be praised! are only capable of certain efforts—so that one-half the audience were coughing their sides out, while the other were hoarse as bull-frogs from their enthusiasm in less than five minutes.

"You'll have what my friend Rooney calls a *chronic bronchitis* for these three weeks," said I, "that's one comfort," as I bowed my back to the "practicable" door, through which I made my exit, with the thousand faces of the parterre shouting my name, or, as fancy dictated, that of one of *my* operas. I retreated behind the scenes to encounter very nearly as much, and at closer quarters, too, as that lately sustained before the audience. After an embrace of two minutes' duration from the manager, I ran the gauntlet from the prima donna to the last triangle of the orchestra, who cut away a back button of my coat as a souvenir. During all this, I must confess, very little acting was needed on my part. They were so perfectly contented with their self-deception, that if I had made an affidavit before the mayor—

if there be such a functionary in such an insane town—they would not have believed me. Wearied and exhausted at length by all I had gone through, I sat down upon a bench, and, affecting to be overcome by my feelings, concealed my face in my handkerchief. This was the first moment of relief I experienced since my arrival; but it was not to last long, for the manager, putting down his head close to my ear, whispered,—

"Monsieur Meyerbeer, I have a surprise for you, such as you have not had for some time, I venture to say."

"I defy you on this head," thought I. "If they make me out King Solomon now, it will not amaze me."

"And when I tell you my secret," continued he, "you will acknowledge I cannot be of a very jealous disposition. Madame Baptiste has just told me she knew you formerly, and that she—that is you—were, in fact—you understand—there had been—so to say—a little something between you."

I groaned in spirit as I thought, "Now am I lost without a chance of escape—the devil take her reminiscences!"

"I see," continued *le bon mari*, "you cannot guess of whom I speak; but when I tell you of Amélie Grandet, your memory will, perhaps, be better."

"Amélie Grandet!" said I, with a stage start. I need not say that I had never heard the name before—"Amélie Grandet here!"

"Yes, that she is," said the manager, rubbing his hands; "and *my* wife, too."

"Married!—Amélie Grandet married! No, no, it is impossible—I cannot believe it. But were it true—true, mark me—for worlds would I not meet her."

"Comme il est drôle," said the manager, soliloquizing aloud; "for my wife takes it much easier, seeing they never met each other since they were fifteen."

"Ho, ho!" thought I, "the affair is not so bad either; time makes great changes in that space. And does she still remember me?" said I, in a very Romeo-in-the-garden voice.

"Why, so far as remembering the little boy that used to play with her in the orchard at her mother's cottage near Pirna, and with whom she used to go boating upon the Elbe, I believe the recollection is perfect. But come along, she insists upon seeing you, and is at this very moment waiting supper in our room for you."

"A thorough German she must be," thought I, "with her sympathies and her supper, her reminiscences and her Rhine wine hunting in couples through her brain."

Summoning courage from the fact of our long absence from each other, I followed the manager through a wilderness of pavilions, forests, clouds, and cataracts, and at length arrived at a little door, at which he knocked gently.

"Come in," said a soft voice inside. We opened, and beheld a very beautiful young woman in Tyrolese costume. She was to perform in the afterpiece, her low bodice and short scarlet petticoat displaying the most perfect symmetry of form and roundness of proportion. She was dressing her hair before a low glass as we came in, and scarcely turned at our approach; but in an instant, as if some sudden thought struck her, she sprang fully round, and looking at me fixedly for above a minute—a very trying one for me—she glanced at her husband, whose countenance plainly indicated that she was right, and calling out 'C'est lui—c'est bien lui!' threw herself into my arms, and sobbed convulsively.

"If this were to be the only fruits of my impersonation," thought I, "it is not so bad; but I am greatly afraid these good people will find out a wife and seven babies for me before morning."

Whether the manager thought that enough had been done for stage effect, I know not; but he gently disengaged the lovely Amélie, and deposited her upon a sofa, to a place upon which she speedily motioned me by a look from a pair of very seducing blue eyes.

"François, mon cher, you must put off 'La Chaumière.' I can't play to-night."

"Put it off! But only think of the audience, ma mie—they will pull down the house."

"C'est possible," said she, carelessly. "If that give them any pleasure, I suppose they must be indulged; but I, too, must have a little of my own way. I shall not play!"

The tone this was said in—the look—the easy gesture of command—no less than the afflicted helplessness of the luckless husband—showed me that Amélie, however docile as a sweetheart, had certainly her own way as wife.

While le cher François then retired to make his proposition to the audience, of substituting something for the "Chaumière"—the "sudden illness of Madame Baptiste having prevented her appearance"—we began to renew our old acquaintance by a thousand inquiries into

that long-past time when we were sweethearts and lovers.

"You remember me then so well?" said I.

"As of yesterday. You are much taller, and your eyes darker; but still there is something—— You know, however, I have been expecting to see you these two days, and tell me frankly how do you find me looking?"

"More beautiful, a thousand times more beautiful, than ever—all save one thing, Amélie——"

"And that is——?"

"You are married."

"How you jest. But let us look back. Do you ever think on any of our old compacts?" Here she pulled a leaf from a rosebud in her bouquet, and kissed it. "I wager you have forgotten *that.*"

How I should have replied to this masonic sign, Heaven knows; but the manager fortunately entered, to assure us that the audience had kindly consented not to pull down the house, but to listen to a five-act tragedy instead, in which he had to perform the principal character. "So, then, don't wait supper, Amélie; but take care of Monsieur Meyerbeer till my return."

Thus once more were we left to our souvenirs, in which, whenever hard pushed myself, I regularly carried the war into the enemy's camp, by allusions to incidents which, I need not observe, had never occurred. After a thousand stories of our early loves, mingled with an occasional sigh over their fleeting character—now indulging a soft retrospect of the once happy past, now moralizing on the future—Amélie and I chatted away the hours till the conclusion of the tragedy.

By this time the hour was approaching for my departure; so, after a very tender leave-taking with my new friend and my old love, I left the theatre, and walked slowly along to the river.

"So much for early associations," thought I; "and how much better pleased are we ever to paint the past according to our own fancy, than to remember it as it really was. Hence all the insufferable cant about happy infancy, and 'the glorious schoolboy days,' which have generally no more foundation in fact than have the 'Châteaux en Espagne' we build up for the future. I wager that the real Amant d'Enfance, when he arrives, is not half so great a friend with the fair Amélie as his unworthy shadow. At the same time, I had just as soon that Lady Jane should have no 'early loves' to look back upon, except such as I have performed a character in."

The plash of oars near me broke my reflections, and the next moment found me skimming the rapid Rhine, as I thought for the last time, "What will they say in Strasbourg to-morrow? How will they account for the mysterious disappearance of Monsieur Meyerbeer? Poor Amélie Grandet!" for so completely had the late incidents engrossed my attention, that I had for the moment lost sight of the most singular event of all—how I came to be mistaken for the illustrious composer.

CHAPTER L.

A SURPRISE.

It was late upon the following day ere I awoke from the long deep sleep that closed my labors in Strasbourg. In the confusion of my waking thoughts, I imagined myself still before a crowded and enthusiastic audience—the glare of the footlights—the crash of the orchestra—the shouts of "*L'Auteur!*" "*L'Auteur!*" were all before me, and so completely possessed me, that, as the waiter entered with hot water, I could not resist the impulse to pull off my nightcap with one hand, and press the other to my heart in the usual theatrical style of acknowledgments for a most flattering reception. The startled look of the poor fellow as he neared the door to escape, roused me from my hallucination, and awakened me to the conviction that the suspicion of lunacy might be a still heavier infliction than the personation of Monsieur Meyerbeer.

With thoughts of this nature, I assumed my steadiest demeanor — ordered my breakfast in the most orthodox fashion—ate it like a man in his senses; and when I threw myself back in the wicker convenience they call a calèche, and bid adieu to Kehl, the whole fraternity of the inn would have given me a certificate of sanity before any court in Europe.

"Now for Munich," said I, as we rattled along down the steep street of the little town. "Now for Munich, with all the speed that first of postmasters and slowest of men, the Prince of Tour and Taxis, will afford us."

The future engrossed all my thoughts; and, puzzling as my late adventures had been to account for, I never for a moment reverted to the past. "Is she to be mine?" was the ever-rising question in my mind.

The thousand difficulties that had crossed my path might long since have terminated a pursuit where there was so little of promise, did I not cherish the idea in my heart, that I was fated to succeed. Sheridan answered the ribald sneers of his first auditory by saying, "Laugh on; but I have it in me, and by —— it shall come out." So I whispered to myself,—"Go on, Harry. Luck has been hitherto against you, it is true; but you have yet one throw of the dice, and something seems to say, a fortunate one in store; and if so ——" But I cannot trust myself with such anticipations. I am well aware how little the world sympathizes with the man whose fortunes are the sport of his temperament —that April-day frame of mind is ever the jest and scoff of those hardier and sterner natures who, if never overjoyed by success, are never much depressed by failure. That I have been cast in the former mold, these Confessions have, alas! plainly proved; but that I regret it, I fear also, for my character for sound judgment, I must answer "No."

"Better far to be
In utter darkness lying,
Than be blest with light, and see
That light for ever flying,"

is doubtless very pretty poetry, but very poor philosophy. For myself—and some glimpses of sunshine this fair world has afforded me, fleeting and passing enough, in all conscience—and yet I am not so ungrateful as to repine at my happiness because it was not permanent, while I am thankful for those bright hours of "Love's young dream," which, if nothing more, are at least delightful souvenirs. They form the golden thread in the tangled web of our existence, ever appearing amid the darker surface around, and throwing a fair halo of brilliancy on what, without it, were cold, bleak, and barren. No, no—

"The light that lies
In woman's eyes,"

were it twice as fleeting—as it is ten times more brilliant—than the forked lightning, irradiates the dark gloom within us for many a long day after it has ceased to shine upon us. As in boyhood it is the humanizing influence that tempers the fierce and unruly passions of our nature, so in manhood it forms the goal to which all our better and higher aspirations tend, telling us there is something more worthy than gold, and a more lofty pinnacle of ambition than the praise and envy of our fellow-men; and we may rest assured that when this feeling dies within us, all the ideal of life dies with it, and nothing remains save the dull reality of our daily cares and occupations. "I have lived and have loved," saith Schiller; and if it were not that there seems some tautology in the phrase, I should say, such is my own motto. "If Lady Jane but prove true—if I have really succeeded—if, in a word—— But why speculate upon such chances?—what pretensions have I?—what reasons to look for such a prize? Alas! and alas! were I to catechise myself too closely, I fear that my horses' heads would face toward Calais, and that I should turn my back upon the only prospect of happiness I can picture to myself in this world." In reflections such as these, the hours rolled over, and it was already late at night when we reached the little village of Merchem. While fresh horses were being got ready, I seized the occasion to partake of the table d'hôte supper of the inn, at the door of which the diligence was drawn up. Around the long, and not over-scrupulously clean table, sat the usual assemblage of a German "Eilwagen,"—smoking, dressing salad, knitting, and occasionally picking their teeth with their forks, until the soup should make its appearance. Taking my place amid this motley assemblage of mustachioed shopkeepers and voluminously-petticoated Fraus, I sat calculating how long human patience could endure such companionship, when my attention was aroused by hearing a person near me narrate to his friend the circumstances of my *début* at Strasbourg, with certain marginal notes of his own, that not a little surprised me.

"And so it turned out not to be Meyerbeer after all," said the listener.

"Of course not," replied the other. "Meyerbeer's passport was stolen from him in the diligence by this English *escroc*, and the consequence was that our poor countryman was arrested, the other passport being found upon him; while the Englishman, proceeding to Strasbourg, took his benefit at the opera, and walked away with above twelve thousand florins."

"Sappermint!" said the other, tossing off his beer. "He must have been a clever fellow, though, to lead the orchestra in the *Francs Maçons*."

"That is the most astonishing part of all, for they say in Strasbourg that his performance upon the violin was far finer than Paganini's; but there seems some secret in it, after all: for Madame Baptiste swears that he is Meyerbeer; and, in fact,

the matter is far from being cleared up—nor can it be, till he is apprehended."

"Which shall not be for some time to come," said I to myself, as, slipping noiselessly from the room, I regained my calèche, and in ten minutes more was proceeding on my journey. "So much for correct information," thought I. "One thing, however, is certain—to the chance interchange of passports I owe my safety, with the additional satisfaction that my little German acquaintance is reaping a pleasant retribution for all his worry and annoyance of me in the *coupé*."

Only he who has toiled over the weary miles of a long journey—exclusively occupied with one thought—one overpowering feeling—can adequately commiserate my impatient anxiety as the days rolled slowly over on the long tiresome road that leads from the Rhine to the South of Germany.

The morning was breaking on the fourth day of my journey as the tall spires of Munich rose to my view, amid the dull and arid desert of sand that city is placed in. "At last!" was my exclamation, as the postilion tapped at the window with his whip, and then pointed toward the city—"at last!" Oh! what would be the ecstasy of my feelings now, could I exchange the torturing anxieties of suspense for the glorious certainty my heart throbs for; now my journey is nearing its end, to see me claim as my own what I only barely aspire to in the sanguine hope of a heart that *will* not despair. But cheer up, Harry. It is a noble stake you play for; and it is ever the bold gambler that wins." Scarcely was this reflection made half aloud, when a sudden shock threw me from my seat. I fell toward the door, which, bursting open, launched me out upon the road, at the same moment that the broken axletree of the calèche had upset it on the opposite side, carrying one horse along with it, and leaving the other, with the postilion on his back, kicking and plunging with all his might. After assisting the frightened fellow to dismount, and having cut the traces of the restive animal, I then perceived that in the *melée* I had not escaped scathless. I could barely stand; and, on passing my hand along my instep, perceived I had sprained my ankle in the fall. The day was only breaking, no one was in sight, so that after a few minutes' consideration, the best thing to do appeared to get the other horse upon his legs, and despatching the postilion to Munich, then about three leagues distant, for a carriage, wait patiently on the roadside for his return. No sooner was the resolve made than carried into execution; and in less than a quarter of an hour from the moment of the accident, I was seated upon the bank, watching the retiring figure of the postilion, as he disappeared down a hill, on his way to Munich. When the momentary burst of impatience was over, I could not help congratulating myself that I was so far fortunate in reaching the end of my journey, ere the mischance befell me. Had it occurred at Stutgard, I really think that it would have half driven me distracted.

I was not long in my present situation, when a number of peasants, with broad-brimmed hats and many-buttoned coats, passed on their way to work; they all saluted me respectfully; but although they saw the broken carriage, and might well guess at the nature of my accident, yet not one ever thought of proffering his services, or even indulging curiosity, by way of inquiry. "How thoroughly German," I thought; "these people are the Turks of Europe, stupefied with tobacco and strong beer. They have no thought for anything but themselves, and their own immediate occupations." Perceiving at length one whose better dress and more intelligent look bespoke a rank above the common, I made the effort with such *plat Deutsch* as I could muster, to ask if there were any house near, where I could remain till the postilion's return, and learned, greatly to my gratification, that by taking the path which led through a grove of pine-trees near me, I should find a château, but who was the proprietor he knew not; indeed, the people were only newly come, and he believed were foreigners—English, he thought. Oh, how my heart jumped, as I said, "Can they be the Callonbys? are they many in family? are there ladies—young ladies among them?" He knew not. Having hastily arranged with my new friend to watch the carriage till my return, I took the path he showed me, and, smarting with pain at every step, hurried along as best I could toward the château. I had not walked many minutes, when a break in the wood gave me a view of the old mansion, and at once dispelled the illusion that was momentarily gaining upon me. "They could not be the Callonbys." The house was old; and though it had once been a fine and handsome structure, exhibited now abundant traces of decay; the rich cornices which supported the roof had fallen in many places, and lay in fragments upon the terrace beneath; the portico of the door was half tumbling; and the architraves of the windows were broken

and dismantled; the tall and once richly ornamented chimneys were bereft of all their tracery, and stood bolt upright in all their nakedness above the high-pitched roof. A straggling *jet d'eau* was vigorously fighting its way amid a mass of creeping shrubs and luxuriant lichens that had grown around and above a richly carved fountain, and fell in a shower of sparkling dew upon the rank grass and tall weeds around. The gentle murmur was the only sound that broke the stillness of the morning.

A few deities in lead and stone, mutilated and broken, stood like the Genii loci, guarding the desolation about them, where an old superannuated peacock, with drooping, ragged tail, was the only living thing to be seen. All bespoke the wreck of what once was great and noble, and all plainly told me that such could not be the abode of the Callonbys.

Half doubting that the house were inhabited, and half scrupling, if so, to disturb its inmates from their rest, I sat down upon the terrace steps and fell into a fit of musing on the objects about. That strange propensity of my countrymen to settle down in remote and unfrequented spots upon the Continent had never struck me so forcibly: for although unquestionably there were evident traces of the former grandeur of the place, yet it was a long-past greatness; and, in the dilapidated walls, weed-grown walks, the dark and gloomy pine-groves, there were more hints for sadness than I should willingly surround myself by, in a residence. The harsh grating of a heavy door behind roused me; I turned and beheld an old man in a species of tarnished and worm-eaten livery, who, holding the door, again gazed at me with a mingled expression of fear and curiosity. Having briefly explained the circumstances which had befallen me, and appealed to the broken calèche upon the road to corroborate my testimony, which I perceived needed such aid, the old man invited me to enter, saying that his master and mistress had not yet risen, but that he would himself give me some breakfast, of which by this time I stood much in want. The room into which I was ushered corresponded well with the exterior of the house. It was large, bleak, and ill-furnished; the ample, uncurtained windows, the cold, white-paneled walls, the uncarpeted floor, all giving it an air of uninhabitable misery. A few chairs of the Louis-Quatorze taste, with blue velvet linings, faded and worn, a cracked marble table upon legs that once had been gilt, two scarcely detectable portraits of a mail-clad hero and a scarcely less formidable fair, with a dove upon her wrist, formed the principal articles of furniture in this dismal abode, where so sad and depressing did everything appear, that I half regretted the curiosity that had tempted me from the balmy air and cheerful morning without, to the gloom and solitude around me.

The old man soon reappeared with a not despicable cup of *café noir*, and a piece of bread as large as a teaspoon, and used by the Germans pretty much in the same way. As the adage of the "gift horse" is of tolerably general acceptation, I ate and was thankful, mingling my acknowledgments from time to time with some questions about the owners of the mansion, concerning whom I could not help feeling curious. The ancient servitor, however, knew little or nothing of those he served; his master was the honorable baron; but of his name he was ignorant; his mistress was young; they had not been many months there; they knew no one—had no visitors—he had heard they were English, but did not know it himself; they were "gute Leute," "good people," and that was enough for him. How strange did all this seem, that two people, young, too, should separate themselves from all the attractions and pleasures of the world and settle down in this dark and dreary solitude, where every association was of melancholy, every object a text for sad reflections. Lost in these thoughts, I sat down beside the window, and heeded not the old man as he noiselessly left the room. My thoughts ran on over the strange phases in which life presents itself, and how little, after all, external influences have to do with that peace of mind whose origin is within. "The Indian, whose wigwam is beside the cataract, heeds not its thunders, nor feels its sprays as they fall in everlasting dews upon him; the Arab of the desert sees no bleakness in those never-ending plains, upon whose horizon his eye has rested from childhood to age. Who knows but he who inhabits this lonely dwelling may have once shone in the gay world, mixing in its follies, tasting of its fascination? And to think that now——" The low murmurs of the pine tops, the gentle rustle of the water through the rank grass, and my own thoughts combining, overcame me at length, and I slept—how long I know not; but when I awoke, certain changes about me showed that some length of time had elapsed; a gay wood fire was burning on the hearth; an ample breakfast covered the table; and the broad sheet

of the *Times* newspaper was negligently reposing in the deep hollow of an arm-chair. Before I had well thought how to apologize for the cool *insouciance* of my intrusion, the door opened, and a tall, well-built man entered; his shooting-jacket and gaiters were evidence of his English origin, while a bushy moustache and most ample "Henri Quatre" nearly concealed features that still were not quite unknown to me; he stopped, looked steadily at me, placed a hand on either shoulder, and calling out, "Harry—Harry Lorrequer, by all that's glorious!" rushed from the room in a transport of laughter.

If my escape from the gallows depended upon my guessing my friend, I should have submitted to the last penalty of the law: never was I so completely nonplussed. "Confound him, what does he mean by running away in that fashion! It would serve him right were I to decamp by one of the windows before he comes back; but, hark! some one is approaching."

"I tell you I cannot be mistaken," said the man's voice from without.

"Oh, impossible!" said a ladylike accent that seemed not heard by me for the first time.

"Judge for yourself, though certainly the last time you saw him may confuse your memory a little."

"What the devil does he mean by that?" said I, as the door opened, and a very beautiful young woman came forward, who, after a moment's hesitation, called out,—

"True, indeed, it is Mr. Lorrequer; but he seems to have forgotten me."

The eyes, the lips, the tone of the voice, were all familiar. "What! can it be possible!" Her companion, who had now entered, stood behind her, holding his sides with ill-suppressed mirth, and at length called out,—

"Harry, my boy, you scarcely were more discomposed the last morning we parted when the yellow plush——"

"By Jove it is!" said I, as I sprang forward, and seizing my fair friend in my arms, saluted upon both cheeks my quondam flame, Miss Kamworth, now the wife of my old friend, Jack Waller, of whom I have made due mention in an early chapter of these Confessions.

Were I given a muster-roll of my acquaintance to say which of them might inhabit this deserted mansion, Jack Waller would certainly have been the last I should have selected—the gay, lively, dashing, high-spirited Jack, fond of society, dress, equipage, living entirely in the world, known to and liked by every body, of universal reputation. Did you want a cavalier to see your wife through a crush at the Opera, a friend in a duel, a rider for your kicking horse in a stiff steeplechase, a bow-oar for your boat at a rowing-match, Jack was your man. Such, then, was my surprise at finding him here, that although there were many things I longed to inquire about, my first question was—

"And how came you here?"

"Life has its vicissitudes," replied Jack, laughing; "many stranger things have come to pass than *my* reformation. But first of all let us think of breakfast; you shall have ample satisfaction for all your curiosity afterward."

"Not now, I fear; I am hurrying on to Munich."

"Oh, I perceive; but you are aware that——your friends are not there."

"The Callonbys not at Munich!" said I, with a start.

"No, they have been at Saltzburg, in the Tyrol, for some weeks; but don't fret yourself; they are expected to-morrow in time for the court masquerade, so that until then at least you are my guest."

Overjoyed at this information, I turned my attention toward madame, whom I found much improved; the *embonpoint* of womanhood had still further increased the charms of one who had always been handsome, and I could not help acknowledging that my friend was warrantable in any scheme for securing such a prize.

CHAPTER LI.

JACK WALLER'S STORY.

THE day passed quickly over with my newly-found friends, whose curiosity to learn my adventures since we parted anticipated me in my wish to learn theirs. After an early dinner, however, with a fresh log upon the hearth, a crusty flask of red hermitage before us, Jack and I sound ourselves alone, and at liberty to speak freely together.

"I scarcely could have expected such would be our meeting, Jack," said I, "from the way we last parted."

"Yes, by Jove, Harry, I believe I behaved but shabbily to you in that affair; but 'Love and War,' you know; and, besides, we had a distinct agreement drawn up between us."

"All true; and, after all, you are, perhaps, less to blame than my own miserable

fortune that lies in wait to entrap and disappoint me at every turn in life. Tell me, what do you know of the Callonbys?"

"Nothing personally. We have met them at dinner, a visit passed subsequently between us, *et voilà tout;* they have been scenery hunting, picture hunting, and all that sort of thing, since their arrival, and rarely much in Munich. But how do you stand there? 'To be or not to be'—eh?"

"That is the very question of all others I would fain solve, and yet am in most complete ignorance of all about it; but the time approaches which must decide all. I have neither temper nor patience for further contemplation of it. So here goes: 'Success to the Enterprise.'"

"Or," said Jack, tossing off his glass at the moment, "or, as they would say in Ireland, 'Your health and inclinations, if they be virtuous.'"

"And now, Jack, tell me something of your own fortunes since the day you passed me in the post-chaise and four."

"The story is soon told. You remember that when I carried off Mary, I had no intention of leaving England whatever: my object was, after making her my wife, to open negotiations with the old colonel; and after the approved routine of penitential letters, imploring forgiveness, and setting forth happiness only wanting his sanction to make it heaven itself, to have thrown ourselves at his feet *selon les règles*, sobbed, blubbered, blew our noses, and dressed for dinner, very comfortable inmates of that particularly snug residence, 'Hydrabad Cottage.' Now Mary, who behaved with great courage for a couple of days after that, got low-spirited and depressed; the desertion of her father, as she called it, weighed upon her mind, and all my endeavors to rally and comfort her were fruitless and unavailing. Each day, however, I expected to hear something of, or from, the colonel that would put an end to this feeling of suspense; but no—three weeks rolled on, although I took care that he knew of our address, we never received any communication. You are aware that when I married I knew Mary had, or was to have had, a large fortune, and that I myself had not then enough in the world to pay the common expenses of our wedding tour. My calculation was this—the reconciliation will possibly, what with delays of post, distance, and deliberation, take a month—say five weeks—now, at forty pounds per week, that makes exactly two hundred pounds—such being the precise limit of my exchequer, when, blessed with a wife, a man, and a maid, three imperials, a cap-case, and a poodle, I arrived at the Royal Hotel, in Edinburgh. Had I been Lord Francis Somebody, with his hundred thousand a year, looking for a new 'distraction' at any price, or, still more, were I a London shopkeeper spending a Sunday in Boulogne-sur-Mer, and trying to find out something 'expensive, as he had only one day to stay,' I could not have more industriously sought out opportunities for extravagance, and each day contrived to find out some two or three acquaintances to bring home to dinner. And as I affected to have been married for a long time, Mary felt less awkward among strangers, and we got on famously; still the silence of the colonel weighed upon her mind, and although she partook of none of my anxieties from that source, being perfectly ignorant of the state of my finances, she dwelt so constantly upon this subject, that I at length yielded to her repeated solicitations, and permitted her to write to her father. Her letter was a most proper one, combining a dutiful regret for leaving her home, with the hope that her choice had been such as to excuse her rashness, or, at least, palliate her fault. It went to say, that her father's acknowledgment of her was all she needed or cared for to complete her happiness, and asking for his permission to seek it in person. This was the substance of the letter, which, upon the whole, satisfied me, and I waited anxiously for the reply. At the end of five days the answer arrived. It was thus:—

"'DEAR MARY,—You have chosen your own path in life, and having done so, I have neither the right nor inclination to interfere with your decision; I shall neither receive you, nor the person you have made your husband; and to prevent any further disappointment, inform you, that, as I leave this to-morrow, any future letters you might think proper to address, will not reach,

"'Yours very faithfully,

"'C. KAMWORTH.

"'Hydrabad Cottage.'

"This was a tremendous *coup*, and not in the least anticipated by either of us; upon me the effect was stunning, knowing, as I did, that our fast-diminishing finances were nearly expended. Mary, on the other hand, who neither knew nor thought of the exchequer, rallied at once from her depression, and after a hearty fit of crying, dried her eyes, and putting her arm round my neck, said,—

"'Well, Jack, I must only love you the more, since papa will not share any of my affection.'

"'I wish he would his purse though,' muttered I, as I pressed her in my arms, and strove to seem perfectly happy.

"I shall not prolong my story by dwelling upon the agitation this letter cost me; however, I had yet a hundred pounds left, and an aunt in Harley Street, with whom I had always been a favorite. This thought, the only rallying one I possessed, saved me for the time; and as fretting was never my forte, I never let Mary perceive that anything had gone wrong, and managed so well in this respect, that my good spirits raised hers, and we set out for London one fine sunshiny morning as happy a looking couple as ever traveled the north road.

"When we arrived at the 'Clarendon,' my first care was to get into a cab, and drive to Harley Street. I rang the bell; and not waiting to ask if my aunt was at home, I dashed upstairs to the drawing-room; in I bolted, and instead of the precise old Lady Lilford, sitting at her embroidery, with her fat poodle beside her, beheld a strapping-looking fellow, with a black moustache, making fierce love to a young lady on a sofa beside him.

"'Why, how is this—I really—there must be some mistake here.' In my heart I knew that such doings in my good aunt's dwelling were impossible.

"'I should suspect there is, sir,' drawled out he of the moustache, as he took a very cool survey of me through his glass.

"'Is Lady Lilford at home, may I ask?' said I, in a very apologetic tone of voice.

"'I haven't the honor of her ladyship's acquaintance,' replied he, in a lisp, evidently enjoying my perplexity, which was every moment becoming more evident.

"'But this is her house,' said I, 'at least——'

"'Lady Lilford is at Paris, sir,' said the young lady, who now spoke for the first time. 'Papa has taken the house for the season, and that may perhaps account for your mistake.'

"What I muttered by way of apology for my intrusion, I know not; but I stammered—the young lady blushed—the beau chuckled, and turned to the window, and when I found myself in the street, I scarcely knew whether to laugh at my blunder, or curse my disappointment.

"The next morning I called upon my aunt's lawyer, and having obtained her address in Paris, sauntered to the 'Junior Club,' to write her a letter before post hour. As I scanned over the morning papers, I could not help smiling at the flaming paragraph which announced my marriage to the only daughter and heiress of the millionnaire Colonel Kamworth. Not well knowing how to open the correspondence with my worthy relative, I folded the paper containing the news, and addressed it to 'Lady Lilford, Hôtel de Bristol, Paris.'

"When I arrived at the 'Clarendon,' I found my wife and her maid surrounded by cases and bandboxes; laces, satins, and velvets were displayed on all sides, while an emissary from 'Storr and Mortimer' was arranging a grand review of jewelry on a side-table, one half of which would have ruined the Rajah of Mysore to purchase. My advice was immediately called into requisition; and pressed into service, I had nothing left for it but to canvass, criticise, and praise, between times, which I did with a good grace, considering that I anticipated the 'Fleet' for every flounce of Valenciennes lace; and could not help associating a rich diamond aigrette with hard labor for life and the climate of New South Wales. The utter abstraction I was in led to some awkward *contretemps*, and as my wife's enthusiasm for her purchases increased so did my reverie gain ground.

"'Is it not beautiful, Jack? how delicately worked! it must have taken a long time to do it.'

"'Seven years,' I muttered, as my thoughts ran upon a very different topic.

"'Oh, no, not so much,' said she, laughing; 'and it must be such a hard thing to do.'

"'Not half so hard as carding wool, or pounding oyster shells.'

"'How absurd you are! Well, I'll take this, it will look so well in——'

"'Botany Bay,' said I, with a sigh that set all the party laughing, which at last roused me, and enabled me to join in the joke.

"As at length one half of the room became filled with millinery, and the other glittered with jewels and *bijouterie*, my wife grew weary with her exertions, and we found ourselves alone.

"When I told her that my aunt had taken up her residence in Paris, it immediately occurred to her how pleasant it would be to go there too; and, although I concurred in the opinion for very different reasons, it was at length decided that we should do so; and the only difficulty now existed as to the means, as though the daily papers teemed with 'four ways to go from London to Paris,' they all resolved them-

selves into one, and that one, unfortunately to me, the most difficult and impracticable —by money.

"There was, however, one last resource open—the sale of my commission. I will not dwell upon what it cost me to resolve upon this—the determination was a painful one, but it was soon come to, and before five o'clock that day, Cox and Greenwood had got their instructions to sell out for me, and had advanced a thousand pounds of the purchase. Our bill settled, the waiters bowing to the ground (it is your ruined man that is always the most liberal), the post-horses harnessed, and impatient for the road, I took my place beside my wife, while my valet held a parasol over the soubrette in the ramble—all in the approved fashion of those who have an unlimited credit with Coutts or Drummond—the whips cracked, the leaders capered, and with a patronizing bow to the proprietor of the 'Clarendon,' away we rattled to Dover.

"After the usual routine of sea-sickness, fatigue, and poisonous cookery, we reached Paris on the fifth day, and put up at the 'Hôtel de Londres,' Place Vendôme.

"To have an adequate idea of the state of my feelings as I trod the splendid apartments of this princely hotel, surrounded by every luxury that wealth can procure or taste suggest, you must imagine the condition of a man who is regaled with a sumptuous banquet on the eve of his execution. The inevitable termination to all my present splendor was never for a moment absent from my thoughts, and the secrecy with which I was obliged to conceal my feelings formed one of the greatest sources of my misery. 'The *coup*, when it does come, will be sad enough, and poor Mary may as well have the comfort of the deception as long as it lasts without suffering as I do.' Such was the reasoning by which I met every resolve to break to her the real state of our finances, and such the frame of mind in which I spent my days at Paris, the only really unhappy ones I can ever charge my memory with.

"We had scarcely got settled in the hotel, when my aunt, who inhabited the opposite side of the 'Place,' came over to see us and wish us joy. She had seen the paragraph in the *Post*, and like all other people with plenty of money, fully approved a match like mine.

"She was delighted with Mary, and despite the natural reserve of the old maiden lady, became actually cordial, and invited us to dine with her that day, and every succeeding one we might feel disposed to do so. 'So far so well,' thought I, as I offered her my arm to see her home; 'but if she knew of what value even this small attention is to us, am I quite so sure she would offer it? However, no time is to be lost; I cannot live in this state of hourly agitation; I must make some one the confidant of my sorrows, and none so fit as she who can relieve as well as advise upon them.' Although such was my determination, yet somehow I could not pluck up courage for the effort. My aunt's congratulations upon my good luck made me shrink from the avowal; and while she ran on upon the beauty and grace of my wife, topics I fully concurred in, I almost chimed in with her satisfaction at the prudential and proper motives which led to the match. Twenty times I was on the eve of interrupting her, and saying, 'But, madam, I am a beggar, my wife has not a shilling—I have absolutely nothing—her father disowns us—my commission is sold, and in three weeks the "Hôtel de Londres" and the "Palais Royal" will be some hundred pounds the richer, and I without the fare of a cab to drive me down to the Seine to drown myself.'

"Such were my thoughts; but whenever I endeavored to speak them, some confounded fulness in my throat nearly choked me; my temples throbbed, my hands trembled, and whether it was shame, or the sickness of despair, I cannot say, but the words would not come, and all that I could get out was some flattery of my wife's beauty, or some vapid eulogy upon my own cleverness in securing such a prize. To give you in one brief sentence an idea of my state, Harry, know, then, that though loving Mary with all my heart and soul, as I felt she deserved to be loved, fifty times a day I would have given my life itself that you had been the successful man on the morning that I carried her off, and that Jack Waller was once more a bachelor, to see the only woman he ever loved the wife of another.

"But this is growing tedious, Harry; I must get over the ground faster. Two months passed over at Paris, during which we continued to live at the Londres, giving dinners, *soirées*, *déjeûners*, with the prettiest equipage in the Champs Elysées we were quite the mode, for my wife, which is rare enough for an Englishwoman, knew how to dress herself. Our evening parties were the most distinguished things going, and if I were capable of partaking of any pleasure in the *éclat*, I had my share, having won all the pigeon matches in the Bois de Boulogne, and beat

Lord Henry Seymour himself in a steeple-chase. The continual round of occupation in which pleasure involves a man is certainly its greatest attraction—reflection is impossible—the present is too full to admit any of the past, and very little of the future; and even I, with all my terrors awaiting me, began to feel a half indifference to the result in the manifold cares of my then existence. To this state of fatalism, for such it was becoming, had I arrived, when the vision was dispelled in a moment by a visit from my aunt, who came to say, that some business requiring her immediate presence in London, she was to set out that evening, but hoped to find us in Paris on her return. I was thunderstruck at the news, although as yet I had obtained no manner of assistance from the old lady, yet I felt that her very presence was a kind of security to us, and that in every sudden emergency she was there to apply to. My money was nearly expended, the second and last instalment of my commission was all that remained, and much of even that I owed to tradespeople. I now resolved to speak out. 'The worst must be known,' thought I, 'in a few days, and now or never be it.' So saying, I drew my aunt's arm within my own, and telling her that I wished a few minutes' conversation alone, led her to one of the less frequented walks in the Tuileries gardens. When we had got sufficiently far to be removed from all listeners, I began thus: 'My dearest aunt, what I have suffered in concealing from you so long the subject of my present confession, will plead as my excuse in not making you sooner my confidante.' When I had got thus far, the agitation of my aunt was such that I could not venture to say more for a minute or two. At length she said, in a kind of hurried whisper, 'Go on;' and although then I would have given all I possessed in the world to have continued, I could not speak a word.

"'Dear John, what is it?—anything about Mary? For Heaven's sake, speak.'

"'Yes, dearest aunt, it is about Mary, and entirely about Mary.'

"'Ah, dear me, I feared it long since; but then, John, consider she is very handsome—very much admired—and——'

"'That makes it all the heavier, my dear aunt; the prouder her present position, the more severely will she feel the reverse.'

"'Oh, but surely, John, your fears must exaggerate the danger.'

"'Nothing of the kind—I have not words to tell you.'

"'Oh dear, oh dear, don't say so,' said the old lady, blushing; 'for, though I have often remarked a kind of gay flirting manner she has with men, I am sure she means nothing by it—she is so young—and so——'

"I stopped, stepped forward, and looking straight in my aunt's face, broke out into a fit of laughter, that she, mistaking for hysterical from its violence, nearly fainted upon the spot.

"As soon as I could sufficiently recover gravity to explain to my aunt her mistake, I endeavored to do so; but so ludicrous was the *contretemps*, and so ashamed the old lady for her gratuitous suspicions, that she would not listen to a word, and begged me to return to her hotel. Such an unexpected turn to my communication routed all my plans; and after a very awkward silence of some minutes on both sides, I mumbled something about her expensive habits of life, costly equipage, number of horses, etc., and hinted at the propriety of retrenchment.

"'Mary rides beautifully,' said my aunt, drily.

"'Yes; but, my dear aunt, it was not exactly of that I was going to speak, for in fact——'

"'Oh, John,' said she, interrupting, 'I know your delicacy too well to suspect; but, in fact, I have myself perceived what you allude to, and wished very much to have some conversation with you on the subject.'

"'Thank God!' said I to myself, 'at length we understand each other, and the ice is broken at last.'

"'Indeed, I think I have anticipated your wish in the matter; but as time presses, and I must look after all my packing, I shall say good-by for a few weeks; and in the evening, Jepson, who stays here, will bring you *what I mean* over to your hotel. Once more, then, good-by!'

"'Good-by, my dearest, kindest friend!' said I, taking a most tender adieu of the old lady. 'What an excellent creature she is!' said I, half aloud, as I turned toward home; 'how considerate, how truly kind, to spare me, too, all the pain of explanation. Now I begin to breathe once more. If there be a flask of Johannisberg in the "Londres," I'll drink your health this day, and so shall Mary.' So saying, I entered the Hotel with a lighter heart and a firmer step than ever it had been my fortune to do hitherto.

"'We shall miss the old lady, I'm sure, Mary, she is so kind.'

"'Oh! indeed she is; but then, John, she is *such* a prude.'

"Now I could not help recurring in my mind to some of the conversation in the Tuileries gardens, and did not feel exactly at ease.

"'Such a prude, and so very old-fashioned in her notions.'

"'Yes, Mary,' said I, with more gravity than she was prepared for, 'she is a prude; but I am not certain that in foreign society, where less liberties are tolerated than in our country, if such a bearing be not wiser.' What I was going to plunge into, Heaven knows, for the waiter entered at the moment, and presenting me with a large and carefully-sealed package, said, 'De le part de Miladi Lilfore.' 'But stay, here comes, if I am not mistaken, a better eulogy upon my dear aunt than any I can pronounce.'

"'How heavy it is,' said I to myself, balancing the parcel in my hand. 'There is no answer,' said I aloud to the waiter, who stood as if expecting one.

"'The servant wishes to have some acknowledgment in writing, sir, that it has been delivered into your own hands.'

"'Send him here, then,' said I.

"Jepson entered. 'Well, George, your parcel is all right, and here is a napoleon to drink my health.'

"Scarcely had the servants left the room, when Mary, whose curiosity was fully roused, rushed over, and tried to get the packet from me. After a short struggle, I yielded, and she flew to the end of the room, and tearing open the seals, several papers fell to the ground. Before I could have time to snatch them up, she had read some lines written on the envelope, and, turning toward me, threw her arms around my neck, and said, 'Yes, Jack, she is indeed all you have said. Look here!' I turned and read, with what feeling I leave to you to guess, the following:—

"'DEAR NEPHEW AND NIECE,—The inclosed will convey to you, with my warmest wishes for your happiness, a ticket on the Frankfort Lottery, of which I inclose the scheme. I also take the opportunity of saying that I have purchased the Hungarian pony for Mary, which we spoke of this morning. It is at Johnston's stable, and will be delivered on sending for it.'

"'Think of that, Jack—the Borghese pony, with the silky tail, mine! Oh, what a dear, good old soul! it was the very thing of all others I longed for, for they told me the princess had refused every offer for it.'

"While Mary ran on in this strain, I sat mute and stupefied; the sudden reverse my hopes had sustained deprived me for a moment of all thought, and it was several minutes before I could rightly take in the full extent of my misfortunes.

"How that crazy old maid—for such, alas! I called her to myself now—could have so blundered all my meaning—how she could so palpably have mistaken—I could not conceive. What a remedy for a man overwhelmed with debt—a ticket in a German lottery, and a cream-colored pony, as if my whole life had not been one continued lottery with every day a blank; and as to horses, I had eleven in my stables already. Perhaps she thought twelve would read better in my schedule, when I, next week, surrendered as insolvent.

"Unable to bear the delight, the childish delight of Mary, on her new acquisition, I rushed out of the house, and wandered for several hours on the Boulevards. At last I summoned up courage to tell my wife. I once more turned toward home, and entered her dressing-room, where she was having her hair dressed for a ball at the Embassy. My resolution failed me: 'Not now;' thought I, 'to-morrow will do as well—one night more of happiness for her, and then——' I looked on with pleasure and pride, as ornament after ornament, brilliant with diamonds and emeralds, shone in her hair and upon her arms, still heightening her beauty, and lighting up with a dazzling brilliancy her lovely figure. 'But then it must come, and whenever the hour arrives, the reverse will be fully as bitter; besides, I am able now, and when I may again be so, who can tell? Now then be it,' said I, as I told the waiting-maid to retire; and taking a chair beside my wife, put my arm round her.

"'There, John, dearest, take care; don't you see you'll crush all that great affair of Malines lace, and Rosetta has been breaking her heart to manage this half hour.'

"'Et puis?' said I.

"'Et puis, I could not go to the ball, naughty boy. I am bent on great conquest to-night; so pray don't mar such good intentions.'

"'And would be greatly disappointed were you not to go?'

"'Of course I should. But what do you mean; is there any reason why I should not? You are silent, John; speak

—oh speak—has anything occurred to my——'

"'No, no, dearest—nothing that I know has occurred to the colonel.'

"'Well, then, who is it? Oh, tell me at once.'

"'Oh, my dear, there is no one in the case but ourselves.' So saying, despite the injunction about the lace, I drew her toward me and in as few words, but as clearly as I was able, explained all our circumstances—my endeavor to better them—my hopes—my fears—and now my bitter disappointment, if not despair.

"The first shock over, Mary showed not only more courage, but more sound sense than I could have believed. All the frivolity of her former character vanished at the first touch of adversity; just as of old, Harry, we left the tinsel of our gay jackets behind, when active service called upon us for something more sterling. She advised, counselled, and encouraged me by turns; and in half an hour the most poignant regret I had was in not having sooner made her my confidante, and checked the progress of our enormous expenditure somewhat earlier.

"I shall not detain you much longer. In three weeks we had sold our carriages and horses, our pictures (we had begun this among our extravagances), soon after our china followed, and under the plea of ill-health set out for Baden, not one among our Paris acquaintances ever suspecting the real reason of our departure, and never attributing any pecuniary difficulties to us—for we paid our debts.

"The same day we left Paris I dispatched a letter to my aunt, explaining fully all about us, and suggesting that, as I had now left the army for ever, perhaps she would interest some of her friends—and she had powerful ones—to do something for me.

"After some little loitering on the Rhine, we fixed upon Hesse Cassel for our residence. It was very quiet—very cheap. The country around picturesque, and last, but not least, there was not an Englishman in the neighborhood. The second week after our arrival brought us letters from my aunt. She had settled four hundred a year upon us for the present, and sent the first year in advance; and, pledging herself not to forget when an opportunity of serving me should offer, promised us a visit as soon as we were ready to receive her.

"From that moment to this," said Jack, "all has gone well with us. We have, it is true, not many luxuries, but we have no wants, and, better still, no debts. The dear old aunt is always making us some little present or other, and somehow I have a kind of feeling that better luck is still in store; but faith, Harry, as long as I have a happy home, and a warm fireside for a friend when he drops in upon me, I scarcely can say that better luck need be wished for."

"There is only one point, Jack, you have not enlightened me upon; how came you here? You are some hundred miles from Hesse in your present château."

"Oh! by Jove, that was a great omission in my narrative; but come, this will explain it; see here." So saying, he drew from a little drawer a large lithographic print of a magnificent castellated building, with towers and bastions, keep, moat, and even drawbridge, the walls bristling with cannon, and an eagled banner floating proudly above them.

"What, in the name of the Sphynxes, is this?"

"There," said Jack, "is the Schloss von Eberhausen; or, if you like it in English, Eberhausen Castle, as it was in the year of the Deluge, since the present mansion that we are now sipping our wine in bears no close resemblance to it. But to make the mystery clear, this was the great prize in the Frankfort lottery, the ticket of which my aunt's first note contained, and which we were fortunate enough to win. We have only been here a few weeks, and though the affair looks somewhat meagre, we have hopes that in a little time, and with some pains, much may be done to make it habitable. There is a capital *chasse* of some hundred acres; plenty of wood and innumerable rights, seignorial, manorial, etc., which fortunately for my neighbors, I neither understand nor care for; and we are therefore the best friends in the world. Among others, I am styled the Graf or Count——"

"Well, then, Monsieur le Comte," said his wife, coming in, "do you intend favoring me with your company at coffee this evening? for already it is ten o'clock; and considering my former claim upon Mr. Lorrequer, you have let me enjoy very little of his society."

We now adjourned to the drawing-room, where we gossiped away till past midnight; and I retired to my room, meditating over Jack's adventures, and praying in my heart, that, despite all his mischances, my own might end as happily.

CHAPTER LII.

MUNICH.

THE rest and quietness of the preceding day had so far recovered me from the effects of my accident, that I resolved, as soon as breakfast was over, to take leave of my kind friends, and set out for Munich.

"We shall meet to-night, Harry," said Waller, as we parted—"we shall meet at the Casino—and don't forget that the Croix Blanche is your hotel; and Schnetz, the tailor, in the Grande Place, will provide you with everything you need in the way of dress."

This latter piece of information was satisfactory, inasmuch as the greater part of my luggage, containing my uniform, etc., had been left in the French diligence; and as the ball was patronized by the Court, I was greatly puzzled how to make my appearance.

Bad roads and worse horses made me feel the few leagues before me the most tiresome part of my journey. But, of course, in this feeling impatience had its share. A few hours more, and my fate would be decided; and yet I thought the time would never come. "If the Callonbys should not arrive—if, again, my evil star be in the ascendant, and any new impediment to our meeting arise—but I cannot will not think this—Fortune must surely be tired of persecuting me by this time, and, even to sustain her old character for fickleness, must befriend me now. Ah! here we are in Munich—and this is the Croix Blanche—what a dingy old mansion!" Beneath a massive porch, supported by heavy stone pillars, stood the stout figure of Andreas Behr, the host. A white napkin, fastened in one button-hole, and hanging gracefully down beside him—a soup-ladle held sceptre-wise in his right hand, and the grinding motion of his nether jaw, all showed that he had risen from his table d'hôte to welcome the new arrival; and certainly, if noise and uproar might explain the phenomenon, the clatter of my equipage over the pavement might have roused the dead.

While my postilion was endeavoring, by mighty efforts, with a heavy stone, to turn the handle of the door, and thus liberate me from my cage, I perceived that the host came forward and said something to him—on replying to which, he ceased his endeavors to open the door, and looked vacantly about him. Upon this I threw down the sash, and called out,—

"I say, is not this the Croix Blanche?"

"Ja," said the man-mountain with the napkin.

"Well, then, open the door, pray—I'm going to stop here."

"Nein."

"No! What do you mean 'by that? Has not Lord Callonby engaged rooms here?"

"Ja."

"Well, then, I am a particular friend of his, and will stay here too."

"Nein."

"What the devil are you at, with your Ja and Nein?" said I. "Has your confounded tongue nothing better than a monosyllable to reply with?"

Whether disliking the tone the controversy was assuming, or remembering that his dinner waited, I know not, but at these words my fat friend turned leisurely round, and waddled back into the house; where, in a moment after, I had the pleasure of beholding him at the head of a long table, distributing viands with a very different degree of activity from what he displayed in dialogue.

With one vigorous jerk I dashed open the door, upsetting, at the same time, the poor postilion, who had recommenced his operations on the lock, and, foaming with passion, strode into the *salle à manger*. Nothing is such an immediate damper to any sudden explosion of temper, as the placid and unconcerned faces of a number of people, who, ignorant of yourself and your peculiar miseries at the moment, seem only to regard you as a madman. This I felt strongly, as, flushed in face and tingling in my fingers, I entered the room.

"Take my luggage," said I to a gaping waiter, "and place a chair there, do you hear?"

There seemed, I suppose, something in my looks that did not admit of much parley, for the man made room for me at once at the table, and left the room, as if to discharge the other part of my injunction, without saying a word. As I arranged my napkin before me, I was collecting my energies and my German, as well as I was able, for the attack of the host, which, I anticipated from his recent conduct, must now ensue; but, greatly to my surprise, he sent me my soup without a word, and the dinner went on without any interruption. When the dessert had made its appearance, I beckoned the waiter toward me, and asked what the landlord meant by his singular reception of me. The man shrugged his shoulders and raised his eyebrows without speaking, as if to imply, "It's his way."

"Well, then, no matter," said I. "Have you sent my luggage upstairs?"

"No, sir, there is no room—the house is full."

"The house full! Confound it—this is too provoking. I have most urgent reasons for wishing to stay here. Cannot you make some arrangement—see about it, waiter." I here slipped a napoleon into the fellow's hand, and hinted that as much more awaited the finale of the negotiation.

In about a minute after, I perceived him behind the host's chair pleading my cause with considerable energy; but to my complete chagrin I heard the other answer all his eloquence by a loud "Nein," that he grunted out in such a manner as closed the conference.

"I cannot succeed, sir," said the man, as he passed behind me, "but don't leave the house till I speak with you again."

"What confounded mystery is there in all this?" thought I. "Is there anything so suspicious in my look or appearance, that the old bear in the fur cap will not even admit me? What can it all mean? One thing I'm resolved upon—nothing less than force shall remove me."

So saying, I lit my cigar, and in order to give the waiter an opportunity of conferring with me unobserved by his master, walked out into the porch and sat down.

In a few minutes he joined me, and after a stealthy look on each side, said,—

"The Herr Andreas is a hard man to deal with, and when he says a thing, never goes back of it. Now, he has been expecting the new English Chargé d'Affaires here these last ten days, and has kept the hotel half empty in consequence; and as Milor Callonby has engaged the other half, why we have nothing to do; so that when he asked the postilion if you were milor, and found that you were not, he determined not to admit you."

"But why not have the civility to explain that?"

"He seldom speaks; and when he does, only a word or two at a time. He is quite tired with what he has gone through today, and will retire very early to bed; and for this reason I have requested you to remain, for as he never ventures upstairs, I will then manage to give you one of the ambassador's rooms, which, even if he come, he'll never miss. So that if you keep quiet, and do not attract any particular attention toward you, all will go well."

This advice seemed so reasonable, that I determined to follow it, any inconvenience being preferable, provided I could be under the same roof with my beloved Jane; and from the waiter's account, there seemed no doubt whatever of their arrival that evening. In order, therefore, to follow his injunctions to the letter, I strolled out toward the Place in search of the tailor, and also to deliver a letter from Waller to the chamberlain, to provide me with a card for the ball. Monsieur Schnetz, who was the very pinnacle of politeness, was nevertheless, in fact, nearly as untractable as my host of the "Cross." All his people were engaged in preparing a suit for the English Chargé d'Affaires, whose trunks had been sent in a wrong direction, and who had dispatched a courier from Frankfort to order a uniform. This second thwarting, and from the same source, so nettled me, that I greatly fear all my respect for the Foreign Office, and those who live thereby, would not have saved them from something most unlike a blessing, had not Monsieur Schnetz saved diplomacy from such desecration by saying, that if I could content myself with a plain suit, such as civilians wore, he would do his endeavor to accommodate me.

"Anything, Monsieur Schnetz; dress me like the Pope's Nuncio, or the Lord Mayor of London, if you like, but only enable me to go."

Although my reply did not seem to convey a very exalted idea of my taste in costume to the worthy artist, it at least evinced my anxiety for the ball; and running his measure over me, he assured me that the dress he would provide was both well-looking and becoming; adding, "At nine o'clock, sir, you'll have it, exactly the same size as his Excellency the Chargé d'Affaires."

"Confound the Chargé d'Affaires!" I added, and left the house.

CHAPTER LIII.

INN AT MUNICH.

As I had never been in Munich before, I strolled about the town till dusk. At that time the taste of the King had not enriched the capital with the innumerable objects of art which render it now second to none in Europe. There were, indeed, then but few attractions—narrow streets, tall, unarchitectural-looking houses, and gloomy, unimpressive churches. Tired of this, I turned toward my inn, wondering in my mind if Antoine had succeeded in procuring me the room, or whether I should be obliged to seek my lodging elsewhere.

Scarcely had I entered the porch, when I found him awaiting my arrival, candle in hand. He conducted me at once up the wide oaken stair, then along the gallery, into a large wainscoted room, with a most capacious bed. A cheerful wood fire burned and crackled away in the grate—the cloth was already spread for supper—(remember it was in Germany)—the newspapers of the day were placed before me; and, in a word, every attention showed that I had found the true avenue to Antoine's good graces, who now stood bowing before me, in apparent ecstasy at his own cleverness.

"All very well done, Antoine; and now for supper. Order it yourself for me; I never can find my way in a German speisscarte; and be sure to have a *fiacre* here at nine—nine precisely."

Antoine withdrew, leaving me to my own reflections, which now, if not gloomy, were still of the most anxious kind.

Scarcely was the supper placed upon the table, when a tremendous tramping of horses along the street, and loud cracking of whips, announced a new arrival.

"Here they are!" said I, as, springing up, I upset the soup, and nearly threw the *rôti* into Antoine's face, as he was putting it before me.

Downstairs I rushed through the hall, pushing aside waiters and overturning chambermaids in my course. The carriage was already at the door. "Now for a surprise," thought I, as I worked through the crowd in the porch, and reached the door just as the steps were clattered down, and a gentleman began to descend, whom twenty expectant voices, now informed of his identity, welcomed as the new Chargé d'Affaires.

"May all the——"

What I wished for his Excellency it would not be polite to repeat, nor most discreet even to remember; but, certes, I mounted the stairs with as little goodwill toward the envoy extraordinary as was consistent with due loyalty.

When once more in my room, I congratulated myself that now at least no more "false starts" could occur: "The eternal Chargé d'Affaires, of whom I have been hearing since my arrival, cannot come twice. He is here, now, and I hope I've done with him."

The supper—some greasiness apart—was good; the wine excellent. My spirits were gradually rising, and I paced my room in that mingled state of hope and fear, that, amid all its anxieties, has such moments of ecstasy. A new noise without—some rabble in the street; hark! it comes nearer—I hear the sound of wheels; yes, there go the horses—nearer and nearer. Ah, it is dying away again—stay—yes, yes, here it is, here they are! The noise and tumult without now increased every instant; the heavy trot of six or eight horses shook the very street, and I heard the round, dull, rumbling sound of a heavy carriage, as it drew up at last at the door of the inn. Why it was, I know not, but this time I could not stir; my heart beat almost loud enough for me to hear; my temples throbbed, and then a cold and clammy perspiration came over me, and I sank into a chair. Fearing that I was about to faint, sick as I was, I felt angry with myself, and tried to rally, but could not, and only at length was roused by hearing that the steps were let down, and shortly after, the tread of feet coming along the gallery toward my room.

"They are coming—she is coming," thought I. "Now then for my doom!"

There was some noise of voices outside. I listened, for I still felt unable to rise. The talking grew louder—doors were opened and shut—then came a lull—then more slamming of doors and more talking—then all was still again—and at last I heard the steps of people as if retiring, and in a few minutes after, the carriage door was jammed to, and again the heavy tramp of the horses rattled over the *pavé*. At this instant Antoine entered.

"Well, Antoine," said I, in a voice trembling with weakness and agitation—"well, who has arrived?"

"It was his Grace the Grand Maréchal," said Antoine, scarcely heeding my question, in the importance of the illustrious visitor who had come.

"Ah, the Grand Maréchal," said I, carelessly; "does he live here?"

"Sappermint nein, Mein Herr; but he has just been to pay his respects to his Excellency the new Chargé d'Affaires."

In the name of all patience, I ask, who could endure this? From the hour of my arrival I am haunted by this one image—the Chargé d'Affaires. For him I have been almost condemned to go houseless, and naked; and now the most sacred feelings of my heart are subject to his influence. I walked up and down in an agony. "Another such disappointment, and my brain will turn," thought I, "and they may write my epitaph—'Died of love and a Chargé d'Affaires.'"

"It is time to dress," said the waiter.

"I could strangle him with my own hands," muttered I, worked up into a

real heat by the excitement of my passion.

"The Chargé——"

"Say that name again, villain, and I'll blow your brains out," cried I, seizing Antoine by the throat, and pinning him against the wall; "only dare to mutter it, and you'll never breathe another syllable."

The poor fellow grew green with terror, and fell upon his knees before me.

"Get my dressing things ready," said I, in a more subdued tone. "I did not mean to terrify you—but beware of what I told you."

While Antoine occupied himself with the preparations for my toilet, I sat broodingly over the wood embers, thinking of my fate.

A knock came to the door. It was the tailor's servant with my clothes. He laid down the parcel and retired, while Antoine proceeded to open it, and exhibit before me a blue uniform with embroidered collar and cuffs—the whole, without being gaudy, being sufficiently handsome, and quite as showy as I could wish.

The poor waiter expressed his unqualified approval of the costume, and talked away about the approaching ball as something pre-eminently magnificent.

"You had better look after the *fiacre*, Antoine," said I; "it is past nine."

He walked toward the door, opened it, and then turning round, said, in a kind of low, confidential whisper, pointing, with the thumb of his left hand toward the wall of the room as he spoke,—

"He won't go—very strange that."

"Who do you mean?" said I, quite unconscious of the allusion.

"The Chargé d'Aff——"

I made one spring at him, but he slammed the door to, and before I could reach the lobby, I heard him rolling from top to bottom of the oak staircase, making noise enough in his fall to account for the fracture of every bone in his body.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE BALL.

As I was informed that the King would himself be present at the ball, I knew that Court etiquette required that the company should arrive before his Majesty; and, although at every minute I expected the arrival of the Callonbys, I dared not defer my departure any longer.

"They are certain to be at the ball," said Waller, and that sentence never left my mind.

So saying I jumped into the *fiacre*, and in a few minutes found myself in the long line of carriages that led to the "Hof-saal." Any one who has been in Munich will testify for me, that the ball-room is one of the most beautiful in Europe, and to me, who for some time had not been living much in the world, its splendor was positively dazzling. The glare of the chandeliers, the clang of the music, the magnificence of the dresses, the beauty of the Bavarian women, too, all surprised and amazed me. There were several hundred people present, but the King not having yet arrived, dancing had not commenced. Feeling as I did then, it was rather a relief to me than otherwise, that I knew no one. There was quite amusement enough in walking through the saloons, observing the strange costumes, and remarking the various groups as they congregated around the trays of ices and the champagne frappé. The buzz of talking and the sounds of laughter and merriment prevailed over even the orchestra; and, as the gay crowds paraded the rooms, all seemed pleasure and excitement. Suddenly a tremendous noise was heard without—then came a loud roll of the drums, which lasted for several seconds, and the clank of musketry—then a cheer;——it is the King.

"The King!" resounded on all sides; and in another moment the folding-doors at the end of the saal were thrown open, and the music struck up the national anthem of Bavaria.

His Majesty entered, accompanied by the Queen, his brother, two or three Archduchesses, and a long suite of officers.

I could not help remarking upon the singular good taste with which the assembly—all anxious and eager to catch a glimpse of his Majesty—behaved on this occasion. There was no pressing forward to the *estrade* where he stood—no vulgar curiosity evinced by any one, but the groups continued, as before, to gather and scatter. The only difference being, that the velvet chair and cushion, which had attracted some observers before, were, now that they were tenanted by royalty, passed with a deep and respectful salutation. "How proper this," thought I, "and what an inducement for a monarch to come among his people, who remember to receive him with such true politeness." While these thoughts were passing through my mind, and I was leaning against a pillar that supported the gallery of the orchestra, a gentleman whose dress, covered with gold

and embroidery, bespoke him as belonging to the court, eyed me with his lorgnette, and then passed rapidly on. A quadrille was now forming near me, and I was watching, with some interest, the proceeding, when the same figure that I remarked before, approached me, bowing deeply at every step, and shaking a halo of powder from his hair at each reverence.

"May I take the liberty of introducing myself to you?" said he. "Le Comte Benningsen." Here he bowed again, and I returned the obeisance still deeper.—"Regret much that I was not fortunate enough to make your acquaintance this evening, when I called upon you," said he, with another salutation.

"Never heard of that," said I to myself.

"Your Excellency arrived this evening?"

"Yes," said I, "only a few hours since."

"How fond these Germans are of titles," thought I. Remembering that in Vienna every one is "his Grace," I thought it might be Bavarian politeness to call every one his Excellency.

"You have not been presented, I believe?"

"No," said I; "but I hope to take an early opportunity of paying *mes hommages* to his Majesty."

"I have just received his orders to present you now," replied he, with another bow.

"The devil you have," thought I. "How very civil that." And, although I had heard innumerable anecdotes of the free-and-easy habits of the Bavarian Court, this certainly surprised me, so that I actually, to prevent a blunder, said, "Am I to understand you, Monsieur le Comte, that his Majesty was graciously pleased——"

"If you will follow me," replied the courtier, motioning with his chapeau; and in another moment I was elbowing my way through the mob of Marquises and Duchesses, on my way to the raised platform where the King was standing.

"Heaven grant I have not misunderstood all he has been saying," was my last thought, as the crowd of courtiers fell back on either side, and I found myself before his Majesty. How the Grand Maréchal entitled me, I heard not; but when the King addressed me immediately in English, saying, "I hope your excellency has had a good journey?" I said to myself, "Come, there is no mistake here, Harry; and it is only another freak of fortune, who is now in good humor with you."

The King, who was a fine, tall, well-built man, with a large, bushy moustache, possessed, though not handsome, a most pleasing expression; his utterance was very rapid, and his English none of the best, so that it was with the greatest difficulty I contrived to follow his questions, which came thick as hail upon me. After some commonplaces about the roads, the weather, and the seasons, his Majesty said,—

"My Lord Callonby has been residing some time here. You know him?" And then, not waiting for a reply, added, "Pleasant person—well informed—like him much, and his daughters, too—how handsome they are!" Here I blushed, and felt most awkwardly, while the King continued,—

"Hope they will remain some time—quite an ornament to our court. Monsieur le Comte, his Excellency will dance." I here muttered an apology about my sprained ankle, and the King turned to converse with some of the ladies of the court. His Majesty's notice brought several persons now around me, who introduced themselves; and in a quarter of an hour, I felt myself surrounded by acquaintances, each vying with the other in showing me attention.

"Worse places than Munich, Master Harry," thought I, as I chaperoned a fat Duchess, with fourteen quarterings, toward the refreshment-room, and had just accepted invitations enough to occupy me three weeks in advance.

"I have been looking everywhere for your Excellency," said the Grand Maréchal, bustling his way to me, breathless and panting. "His Majesty desires you will make one of his party at whist, so pray come at once."

"Figaro quà, Figaro là," muttered I. "Never was man in such request. Heaven grant the whole royal family of Bavaria be not mad, for this looks very like it. Lady Jane had better look sharp, for I have only to throw my eyes on an Archduchess, to be King of the Bavarian Tyrol some fine morning."

"You play whist, of course; every Englishman does," said the King. "You shall be my partner."

Our adversaries were the Prince Maximilian, brother to his Majesty and the Prussian Ambassador. As I sat down at the table, I could not help saying in my heart, "Now is your time, Harry; if my Lord Callonby should see you, your fortune is made." Waller passed at this moment, and as he saluted the King, I saw him actually start with amazement as he beheld me.—"Better fun this than figur-

ing in the yellow plush, Master Jack," I muttered, as he passed on, actually thunderstruck with amazement. But the game was begun, and I was obliged to be attentive. We won the first game, and the King was in immense good humor as he took some franc pieces from the Prussian minister, who, small as the stake was, seemed not to relish losing. His Majesty now complimented me upon my play, and was about to add something, when he perceived some one in the crowd, and sent an aide-de-camp for him.

"Ah, my Lord, we expected you earlier;" and then said some words in too low a tone for me to hear, motioning toward me as he spoke. If Waller was surprised at seeing me where I was, it was nothing to the effect produced upon the present party, whom I now recognized as Lord Callonby. Respect for the presence we were in restrained any expression on either side, and a more ludicrous tableau than we presented can scarcely be conceived. What I would have given that the whist party was over, I need not say, and certainly his Majesty's eulogy upon my play came too soon, for I was now so discomposed, my eyes wandering from the table to see if Lady Jane was near, that I lost every trick, and finished by revoking. The King rose half pettishly, observing that "His Excellency seems fatigued," and I rushed forward to shake hands with Lord Callonby, totally forgetting the royal censure in my delight at discovering my friend.

"Lorrequer, I am indeed rejoiced to see you, and when did you arrive?"

"This evening."

"This evening! and how the deuce have you contrived already, eh?—why you seem quite at home here?"

"You shall hear all," said I, hastily; "but is Lady Callonby here?"

"No. Kilkee only is with me; there he is, figuranting away in a galop. The ladies were too tired to come; particularly as they dine at court to-morrow, the fatigue would be too great."

"I have his Majesty's order to invite your Excellency to dinner to-morrow," said the Grand Maréchal, coming up at this instant.

I bowed my acknowledgments, and turned again to Lord Callonby, whose surprise now seemed to have reached the climax.

"Why, Lorrequer, I never heard of this;—when did you adopt this new career?"

Not understanding the gist of the question, and conceiving that it applied to my success at court, I answered at random, something about "falling upon my legs, good luck, etc.," and once more returned to the charge, inquiring most anxiously for Lady Callonby's health.

"Ah! she is tolerably well. Jane is the only invalid; but then we hope Italy will restore her." Just at this instant, Kilkee caught my eye, and rushing over from his place beside his partner, shook me by both hands, saying,—

"Delighted to see you here, Lorrequer; but as I can't stay now, promise to sup with me to-night at the 'Cross.'"

I accepted of course, and the next instant he was whirling along in his waltz, with one of the most lovely German girls I ever saw. Lord Callonby saw my admiration of her, and as it were replying to my gaze, remarked,—

"Yes, very handsome, indeed; but really Kilkee is going too far with it. I rely very much upon you to reason him out of his folly, and we have all agreed that you have most influence over him, and are most likely to be listened to patiently."

Here was a new character assigned me, the confidential friend and adviser of the family, trusted with a most delicate and important secret, likely to bring me into most intimate terms of intercourse with them all, for the "*we*" of Lord Callonby bespoke a family consultation, in which I was deputed as the negotiator. I at once promised my assistance, saying, at the same time, that if Kilkee really was strongly attached, and had also reason to suppose that the lady liked him, it was not exactly fair; that in short, if the matter had gone beyond flirtation, any interference of mine would be imprudent, if not impertinent. Lord Callonby smiled slightly as he replied,—

"Quite right, Lorrequer; I am just as much against constraint as yourself, if only no great barriers exist; but here, with a difference of religion, country, language, habits, in fact, everything that can create disparity, the thing is not to be thought of."

I suspected that his lordship read in my partial defense of Kilkee a slight attempt to prop up my own case, and felt confused and embarrassed beyond measure at the detection.

"Well, we shall have time enough for all this. Now let us hear something of my old friend Sir Guy. How is he looking?"

"I am unfortunately unable to give you any account of him. I left Paris the very day before he was expected to arrive there."

"Oh, then, I have all the news myself in that case, for in his letter which I received yesterday, he mentions that we are not to expect him before Tuesday."

"Expect him. Is he coming here then?"

"Yes. Why, I thought you were aware of that; he has been long promising to pay us a visit, and at last, by great persuasion, we have succeeded in getting him across the sea, and, indeed, were it not that he was coming, we should have been in Florence before this."

A gleam of hope shot through my heart as I said to myself, "What can this visit mean?" and the moment after I felt sick, almost fainting, as I asked if my cousin Guy was also expected.

"Oh, yes. We shall want him, I should think," said Lord Callonby, with a very peculiar smile.

I thought I should have fallen at these few words. "Come, Harry," thought I, "it is better to learn your fate at once. Now or never; death itself were preferable to this continued suspense. If the blow is to fall, it can scarcely sink me lower than I now feel." So reasoning, I laid my hand upon Lord Callonby's arm, and with a face pale as death, and a voice all but inarticulate, said,—

"My lord, you will pardon, I am sure——"

"My dear Lorrequer," said his Lordship, interrupting me, "for heaven's sake sit down. How ill you are looking; we must nurse you, my poor fellow."

I sank upon a bench—the light danced before my eyes—the clang of the music sounded like the roar of a waterfall, and I felt a cold perspiration burst over my face and forehead; at the instant I recognized Kilkee's voice, and without well knowing why or how, discovered myself in the open air.

"Come, you are better now," said Kilkee, "and will be quite well when you get some supper, and a little of the tokay his Majesty has been good enough to send us."

"His Majesty desires to know if his Excellency is better," said an aide-de-camp.

I muttered my most grateful acknowledgments.

"One of the Court carriages is in waiting for your Excellency," said a venerable old gentleman in a tie wig, whom I recognized as the Minister for Foreign Affairs, as he added, in a lower tone, to Lord Callonby, "I fear he has been greatly overworked lately. His exertions on the subject of the Greek Loan are well known to his Majesty."

"Indeed!" said Lord Callonby, with a start of surprise; "I never heard of that before."

If it had not been for that start of amazement, I should have died of terror. It was the only thing that showed me I was not out of my senses, which I now concluded the old gentleman must be, for I never had heard of the Greek Loan in my life before."

"Farewell! mon cher collègue," said the venerable minister, as I got into the carriage, wondering, as well I might, what singular band of brotherhood united one of his Majesty's 4—th with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Court of Bavaria.

When I arrived at the "White Cross," I found my nerves, usually proof to anything, so shaken and shattered, that, fearing, with the difficult game before me, any mistake however trivial, might mar all my fortunes for ever, I said a "Good-night" to my friends, and went to bed.

CHAPTER LV.

A DISCOVERY.

"A NOTE for Monsieur," said the waiter, awaking me at the same time from the soundest sleep and the most delightful dream. The billet was thus:—

"If 'your Excellency' does not intend to slumber during the next twenty-four hours, it might be as well to remember that we are waiting breakfast. Ever yours,

"KILKEE."

"It is true, then," said I, following up the delusion of my dream—"it is true I am really domesticated once more with the Callonbys; my suit is prospering, and at length the long-sought, long hoped-for moment is come——"

"Well, Harry," said Kilkee, as he dashed open the door—"well, Harry, how are you?—better than last night, I hope?"

"Oh! yes, considerably. In fact, I can't think what could have been the matter with me; but I felt confoundedly uncomfortable."

"You did! Why, man, what can you mean? Was it not a joke?"

"A joke!" said I, with a start.

"Yes, to be sure. I thought it was only the sequel of the other humbug."

"'The sequel of the other humbug!' Gracious mercy," thought I, getting pale with horror, "is it thus he ventures to designate my attachment to his sister?"

"Come, come, it's all over now. What the devil could have persuaded you to push the thing so far?"

"Really, I am so completely in the dark as to your meaning, that I only get deeper in the mystery by my chance replies. What do you mean?"

"What do I mean? Why, the affair of last night of course. All Munich is full of it; and most fortunately for you, the King has taken it all in the most good-humored way, and laughs more than any one else about it."

"Oh, then," thought I, "I must have done or said something last night, during my illness, that I can't remember now. Come, Kilkee, out with it. What happened last night, that has served to amuse the good people of Munich? for as I am a true man, I forget all you are alluding to."

"And don't remember the Greek Loan, eh?"

"The Greek Loan?"

"And your Excellency's marked reception by his Majesty? By Jove! though, it was the rarest piece of impudence I ever heard of: hoaxing a crowned head, quizzing one of the Lord's anointed, is *un peu trop fort*."

"If you really do not wish to render me insane at once, for the love of mercy say, in plain terms, what all this means."

"Come, come, I see you are incorrigible; but as breakfast is waiting all this time, we shall have your explanations below stairs."

Before I had time for another question, Kilkee passed his arm within mine, and led me along the corridor, pouring out, the entire time, a whole rhapsody about the practical joke of my late illness, which he was pleased to say would ring from one end of Europe to the other.

Lord Callonby was alone in the breakfast-room when we entered, and the moment he perceived me, called out,—

"Eh, Lorroquer, you here still? Why, man, I thought you'd have been over the frontier early this morning."

"Indeed! my lord. I am not exactly aware of any urgent reason for so rapid a flight."

"You are not?—the devil you are not! Why, you must surely have known his Majesty to be the best-tempered man in his dominions, then, or you would never have played off such a *ruse*; though, I must say, there never was anything better done. Old Heldersteen, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, is nearly deranged this morning about it. It seems that he was the first that fell into the trap. But, seriously speaking, I think it would be better if you got away from this. The King, it is true, has behaved with the best possible good feeling; but——"

"My lord, I have a favor to ask, perhaps—indeed, in all likelihood, the last I shall ever ask of your lordship—it is this: what are you alluding to all this while? and for what especial reason do you suggest my immediate departure from Munich?"

"Bless my heart and soul! you surely cannot mean to carry the thing on any further? You never can intend to assume your ministerial functions by daylight?"

"My what!—my ministerial functions!"

"Oh no, that were too much, even though his Majesty did say that you were the most agreeable diplomatist he had met for a long time."

"I, a diplomatist!"

"You!—certainly. Surely, you cannot be acting now! Why, gracious mercy, Lorrequer! can it be possible that you were not doing it by design? Do you really not know in what character you appeared last night?"

"If in any other than that of Harry Lorrequer, my lord, I pledge my honor I am ignorant."

"Nor the uniform you wore—don't you know what it meant?"

"The tailor sent it to my room."

"Why, by Jove! this will kill me!" said Lord Callonby, bursting into a fit of laughter, in which Kilkee, a hitherto silent spectator of our colloquy, joined to such an extent, that I thought he might burst a bloodvessel. "Why, man, you went as the Chargé d'Affaires."

"I, the Chargé d'Affaires!"

"That you did, and a most successful *débût* you made of it."

While shame and confusion covered me from head to foot at the absurd and ludicrous blunder I had been guilty of, the sense of the ridiculous was so strong in me, that I fell upon a sofa, and laughed on with the others for full ten minutes.

"Your Excellency is, I am rejoiced to find, in good spirits," said Lady Callonby, entering, and presenting her hand.

"He is so glad to have arranged the Greek Loan," said Lady Catherine, smiling, with a half-malicious twinkle of the eye.

Just at this instant, another door opened, and Lady Jane appeared. Luckily for me, the increased mirth of the party, as Lord Callonby informed them of *my* blunder, prevented their paying any attention to me; for, as I half-sprung forward toward her, my agitation would have revealed to any observer the whole state of my feelings. I took her hand, which she extended to me, without speaking, and bowing deeply over it, raised my head and looked into her eyes, as if to read, at one glance, my fate, and when I let fall her hand, I would not have exchanged my fortune for a kingdom.

"You have heard, Jane, how our friend opened his campaign in Munich last night?"

"Oh, I hope, Mr. Lorrequer, they are only quizzing. You surely could not——"

"Could not. What he could not—what he would not do, is beyond my calculation to make out," said Kilkee, laughing; "anything in life from breaking an axletree to hoaxing a king." I turned, as may be imagined, a deaf ear to this allusion, which really frightened me, not knowing how far Kilkee's information might lead, nor how he might feel disposed to use it. Lady Jane turned a half-reproachful glance at me, as if rebuking my folly; but the interest she thus took in me I would not have bartered for the smile of the proudest queen in Christendom.

Breakfast over, Lord Callonby undertook to explain to the Court the blunder by which I had unwittingly been betrayed into personating the newly-arrived minister, and as the mistake was more of their causing than my own, my excuses were accepted, and when his lordship returned to the hotel, he brought with him an invitation for me to dine at Court in my own unaccredited character. By this time I had been carrying on the siege as briskly as circumstances permitted; Lady Callonby being deeply interested in her newly-arrived purchases, and Lady Catherine being good-natured enough to pretend to be so also, left me, at intervals, many opportunities of speaking to Lady Jane.

As I feared that such occasions would not often present themselves, I determined on making the best use of my time, and at once led the conversation toward the goal I aimed at, by asking, "if Lady Jane had completely forgotten the wild cliffs and rocky coast of Clare, amid the tall mountains and glaciered peaks of the Tyrol?"

"Far from it," she replied. "I have a most clear remembrance of bold Moher and the rolling swell of the blue Atlantic, and long to feel its spray once more upon my cheek; but then, I knew it in childhood—your acquaintance with it was of a later date, and connected with fewer happy associations."

"Fewer happy associations—how can you say so? Was it not there the brightest hours of my whole life were passed—was it not there I first met——"

"Kilkee tells me," said Lady Jane, interrupting me shortly, "that Miss Bingham is extremely pretty."

This was turning my flank with a vengeance; so I muttered something about difference of tastes, etc., and continued, "I understand my worthy cousin Guy had the good fortune to make your acquaintance in Paris."

It was now her turn to blush, which she did deeply, and said nothing.

"He is expected, I believe, in a few days at Munich," said I, fixing my eyes upon her, and endeavoring to read her thoughts; she blushed more deeply, and the blood at my own heart ran cold, as I thought over all I had heard, and I muttered to myself, "She loves him."

"Mr. Lorrequer, the carriage is waiting, and as we are going to the Gallery this morning, and have much to see, pray let us have your escort."

"Oh, I'm sure," said Catherine, "his assistance will be considerable—particularly if his knowledge of art only equals his tact in botany. Don't you think so, Jane?" But Jane was gone.

They left the room to dress, and I was alone—alone with my anxious, now half-despairing thoughts, crowding and rushing upon my beating brain. "She loves him, and I have only come to witness her becoming the wife of another. I see it all, too plainly: my uncle's arrival—Lord Callonby's familiar manner—Jane's own confession. All—all convince me that my fate is decided. Now, then, for one last brief explanation, and I leave Munich, never to see her more." Just as I had so spoken, she entered. Her gloves had been forgotten in the room, and she came in, not knowing that I was there. What would I not have given at that moment for the ready-witted assurance, the easy self-possession with which I should have made my advances had my heart not been as deeply engaged as I now felt it. Alas! my courage was gone; there was too much at stake, and I preferred, now that the time was come, any suspense, any vacillation, to the dreadful certainty of refusal.

These were my first thoughts, as she en-

tered; how they were followed, I cannot say. The same wild confusion of my brain, which I once felt when mounting the breach in a storm-party, now completely beset me; and as then, when death and destruction raged on every side, I held on my way regardless of every obstacle, and forgetting all save the goal before me; so did I now, in the intensity of my excitement, disregard everything, save the story of my love, which I poured forth with that fervor which truth only can give. But she spoke not; her averted head, her cold and tremulous hand, and half-drawn sigh, were all that replied to me, as I waited for that one word upon which hung all my fortune. At length her hand, which I scarcely held within my own, was gently withdrawn. She lifted it to her eyes, but still was silent.

"Enough," said I; "I seek not to pain you more. The daring ambition that prompted me to love you has met its heaviest retribution. Farewell. *You*, Lady Jane, have nothing to reproach yourself with—*you* never encouraged, you never deceived me. I, and I alone, have been to blame, and mine must be the suffering. Adieu, then, once more, and for ever."

She turned slowly round, and, as the handkerchief fell from her hand—her features were pale as marble—I saw that she was endeavoring to speak, but could not; and, at length, as the color came slowly back to her cheek, her lips moved, and just as I leaned forward, with beating heart, to hear, her sister came running forward, and suddenly checked herself in her career, as she said, laughingly,—

"Mille pardons, Jane, but his Excellency must take another occasion to explain the quadruple alliance, for mamma has been waiting in the carriage these ten minutes."

I followed them to the door, placed them in the carriage, and was turning again toward the house, when Lady Callonby said,

"Oh, Mr. Lorrequer, we count upon you; you must not desert us."

I muttered something about not feeling well.

"And then, perhaps, the Greek Loan is engaging your attention," said Catherine; "or, mayhap, some reciprocity treaty is not prospering?"

The malice of this last sally told, for Jane blushed deeply, and I felt overwhelmed with confusion.

"But pray come; the drive will do you good."

"Your ladyship will, I am certain, excuse——"

Just as I had got so far, I caught Lady Jane's eye, for the first time since we had left the drawing-room. What I read there, I could not, for the life of me, say; but, instead of finishing my sentence, I got into the carriage, and drove off, very much to the surprise of Lady Callonby, who, never having studied magnetism, knew very little the cause of my sudden recovery.

The thrill of hope that shot through my heart succeeding so rapidly the dark gloom of my despairing thoughts, buoyed me up; and while I whispered to myself, "All may not yet be lost," I summoned my best energies to my aid. Luckily for me, I was better qualified to act as cicerone in a gallery than as a guide in a greenhouse; and with the confidence that knowledge of a subject ever inspires, I rattled away about art and artists, greatly to the edification of Lady Callonby—much to the surprise of Lady Catherine—and, better than all, evidently to the satisfaction of her, to win whose praise I would gladly have risked my life.

"There," said I, as I placed my fair friend before a delicious little Madonna of Carlo Dolce,—"there is, perhaps, the triumph of coloring; from the downy softness of that cheek, the luscious depth of that blue eye, the waving richness of those sunny locks, all is perfect; fortunately so beautiful a head is not a monopoly, for he painted many copies of this picture."

"Quite true," said a voice behind; "and mine at Elton is, I think, if anything, better than this."

I turned, and beheld my good old uncle, Sir Guy, who was standing beside Lady Callonby. While I welcomed my worthy relative, I could not help casting a glance around to see if Guy were also there, and not perceiving him, my heart beat freely again.

My uncle, it appeared, had just arrived, and lost no time in joining us at the gallery. His manner to me was cordial to a degree; and I perceived that, immediately upon being introduced to Lady Jane, he took considerable pains to observe her, and paid her the most marked attention.

The first moment I could steal unnoticed, I took the opportunity of asking if Guy were come. That one fact was to me all, and upon the answer to my question I hung with deep anxiety.

"Guy here!—no, not yet. The fact is, Harry, my boy, Guy has not got on here as well as I could have wished. Everything had been arranged among us; Callonby behaved most handsomely; and, as far as regarded myself, I threw no impedi-

ment in the way. But still, I don't know how it was, but Guy did not advance, and the matter now——"

"Pray, how does it stand? Have you any hopes to put all to rights again?"

"Yes, Harry, I think, with your assistance, much may be done."

"Oh, count upon me, by all means," said I, with a sneering bitterness that my uncle could not have escaped remarking, had his attention not been drawn off by Lady Callonby.

"What have I done—what sin did I meditate before I was born, that I should come into the world branded with failure in all I attempt? Is it not enough that my cousin, my elder by some months, should be rich while I am poor; honored and titled, while I am unknown and unnoticed; but is he also to be preferred to me in every station in life? Is there no feeling of the heart so sacred that it must not succumb to primogeniture?"

"What a dear old man Sir Guy is!" said Catherine, interrupting my sad reflections, "and how gallant! he is absolutely flirting with Lady Jane."

And quite true it was. The old gentleman was paying his devoirs with a studied anxiety to please, that went to my very heart as I witnessed it. The remainder of that day to me was a painful and suffering one. My intention of suddenly leaving Munich had been abandoned; why, I knew not. I felt that I was hoping against hope, and that my stay was only to confirm, by the most "damning proof," how surely I was fated to disappointment. My reasonings all ended in one point. "If she really love Guy, then my present attentions can only be a source of unhappiness to her; if she do not, is there any prospect that, from the bare fact of my attachment, so proud a family as the Callonbys will suffer their daughter to make a mere love-match?"

There was but one answer to this question, and I had at last the courage to make it: and yet the Callonbys had marked me out for their attentions, and had gone unusually out of their way to inflict injury upon me, if all were meant to end in nothing. "If I only could bring myself to think that this was a systematic game adopted by them, to lead to the subsequent arrangement with my cousin!—if I could but satisfy my doubts on this head——" What threats of vengeance I muttered, I cannot remember, for I was summoned at that critical moment to attend the party to the palace.

The state of excitement I was in was an ill preparative for the rigid etiquette of a Court dinner. All passed off, however, happily; and the King, by a most good-natured allusion to the blunder of the night before, set me perfectly at ease on that head.

I was placed next to Lady Jane at dinner; and half from wounded pride, half from the momentarily increasing conviction that all was lost, chatted away gayly, without any evidence of a stronger feeling than the mere vicinity of a pretty person is sure to inspire. What success this game was attended with, I know not; but the suffering it cost me, I shall never cease to remember. One satisfaction I certainly did experience—she was manifestly piqued, and several times turned toward the person on the other side of her, to avoid the tone of indifference in which I discussed matters that were actually wringing my own heart at the moment. Yet such was the bitterness of my spirit, that I set down this conduct on her part as coquetry; and quite convinced myself that any slight encouragement she might ever have given my attentions was only meant to indulge a spirit of vanity, by adding another to the list of her conquests.

As the feeling grew upon me, I suppose my manner to her became more palpably cutting, for it ended at last in our discontinuing to speak; and when we retired from the palace, I accompanied her to the carriage in silence, and wished her a cold and distant good-night, without any advance to touch her hand at parting—and yet that parting I had destined for our last.

The greater part of that night I spent in writing letters. One was to Jane herself, owning my affections, confessing that even the rudeness of my late conduct was the fruit of it, and finally assuring her that failing to win from her any return of my passion, I had resolved never to meet her more. I also wrote a short note to my uncle, thanking him for all he had formerly done in my behalf, but coldly declining for the future any assistance upon his part, resolving that upon my own efforts alone should I now rest my fortunes. To Lord Callonby I wrote at greater length, recapitulating the history of our early intimacy, and accusing him of encouraging me in expectations, which, as he never intended to confirm them, were fated to prove my ruin. More—much more—I said, which to avow, I should gladly shrink from, were it not that I have pledged myself to honesty in these "Confessions," and as they depict the bitterness and mis-

ery of my spirit, I must plead guilty to them here. In a word, I felt myself injured. I saw no outlet for redress, and the only consolation open to my wounded pride and crushed affection, was to show, that if I felt myself a victim, at least I was not a dupe. I set about packing up for the journey—whither, I knew not. My leave was nearly expired, yet I could not bear the thought of rejoining the regiment. My only desire was to leave Munich, and that speedily. When all my arrangements were completed, I went down noiselessly to the inn yard to order post-horses by daybreak; there to my surprise I found all activity and bustle. Though so late at night, a courier had arrived from England for Lord Callonby, with some important dispatches from the Government. This would, at any other time, have interested me deeply; now I heard the news without a particle of feeling, and I made all the necessary dispositions for my journey, without paying the slightest attention to what was going on about me. I had just finished, when Lord Callonby's valet came to say that his lordship wished to see me immediately in his dressing-room. Though I would gladly have declined any further interview, I saw no means of escape, and followed the servant to his lordship's room.

There I found Lord Callonby in his dressing-gown and night-cap, surrounded by papers, letters, dispatch boxes, and red tape-tied parcels, that all bespoke business.

"Lorrequer, sit down, my boy; I have much to say to you, and as we have no time to lose, you must forego a little sleep. Is the door closed? I have just received most important news from England; and to begin." Here his lordship opened a letter and read as follows:—

"My dear Lord,—They are out at last—the majority on Friday increased to forty yesterday evening, when they resigned; the Duke has meanwhile assumed the reins till further arrangements can be perfected, and dispatches are now preparing to bring all our friends about us. The only rumors as yet are, L——, for the Colonies, H——, to the Foreign Office, W——, President of the Council, and we anxiously hope, yourself, Viceroy in Ireland. In any case lose no time in coming back to England. The struggle will be a sharp one, as the outs are distracted, and we shall want you much. Ever yours, my dear lord, Henry ——."

"This is much sooner than I looked for, Lorrequer, perhaps almost than I wished; but as it has taken place, we must not decline the battle; now what I wanted with you is this—if I go to Ireland, I should like your acceptance of the Private Secretary's Office. Come, come, no objections; you know that you need not leave the army; you can become unattached; I'll arrange all that; *à propos*, this concerns you; it is from the Horse Guards; you need not read it now though; it is merely your gazette to the company; your promotion, however, shall not stop there. However, the important thing I want with you is this: I wish you to start for England to-morrow; circumstances prevent my going from this for a few days. You can see L—— and W——, etc., and explain all I have to say; I shall write a few letters, and some hints for your own guidance; and as Kilkee never would have head for these matters, I look to your friendship to do it for me."

Looking only to the past, as the proposal suited my already-made resolve to quit Munich, I acceded at once, and assured Lord Callonby that I should be ready in an hour.

"Quite right, Lorrequer, but still I shall not need this; you cannot leave before eleven or twelve o'clock; in fact, I have another service to exact at your hands before we part with you; meanwhile, try and get some sleep; you are not likely to know anything of a bed before you reach the Clarendon." So saying, he hurried me from the room, and as he closed the door, I heard him muttering his satisfaction, that already so far, all had been well arranged.

CHAPTER LVI.

CONCLUSION.

Sleep came on me, without my feeling it, and amid all the distracting cares and pressing thoughts that embarrassed me, I only awoke when the roll of the calèche sounded beneath my window, and warned me that I must be stirring and ready for the road.

"Since it is to be thus," thought I, "it is much better that this opportunity should occur of my getting away at once, and thus obviate the unpleasantness of any future meeting with Lady Jane, and the thousand conjectures that my departure, so sudden and unannounced, might give rise to. So be it, and I have now only one hope more—that the terms we last parted

on may prevent her appearing at the breakfast-table." With these words I entered the room, where the Callonbys were assembled.

"This is too provoking, really, Mr. Lorrequer," said Lady Callonby, with her sweetest smile, and most civil manner; "quite too bad to lose you now that you have just joined us."

"Come, no tampering with our party," said Lord Callonby; "my friend here must not be seduced by honeyed words and soft speeches from the high road that leads to honors and distinctions. Now for your instructions." Here his lordship entered into a very deep discussion as to the conditions upon which his support might be expected and relied upon, which Kilkee from time to time interrupted by certain quizzing allusions to the low price he put upon his services, and suggested that a mission for myself should certainly enter into the compact.

At length breakfast was over, and Lord Callonby said, "Now make your adieux, and let me see you for a moment in Sir Guy's room; we have a little discussion there, in which your assistance is wanting." I accordingly took my farewell of Lady Callonby, and approached to do so to Lady Jane; but much to my surprise, she made me a very distant salute, and said in her coldest tone, "I hope you may have a pleasant journey." Before I had recovered my surprise at this movement, Kilkee came forward and offered to accompany me a few miles of the road. I accepted readily the kind offer, and once more bowing to the ladies, withdrew. "And thus it is," thought I, "that I leave all my long-dreamed-of happiness, and such is the end of many a long day's ardent expectation." When I entered my uncle's room, my temper was certainly not in the mood most fit for further trials, though it was doomed to meet them.

"Harry, my boy, we are in a great want of you here, and, as time presses, we must state our case very briefly. You are aware, Sir Guy tells me, that your cousin Guy has been received among us as the suitor of my eldest daughter. It has been an old compact between us to unite our families by ties still stronger than our very ancient friendship, and this match has been accordingly looked to by us both with much anxiety. Now, although on our parts I think no obstacle intervenes, yet I am sorry to say there appear difficulties in other quarters. In fact, certain stories have reached Lady Jane's ears concerning *your cousin*, which have greatly prejudiced her against him, and we have reason to think most unfairly; for we have succeeded in tracing some of the offenses in question, not to Guy, but to a Mr. Morewood, who it seems has personated your cousin upon more than one occasion, and not a little to his disadvantage. Now we wish you to sift these matters to the bottom, by your going to Paris as soon as you can venture to leave London—find out this man, and, if possible, make all straight; if money is wanting, he must of course have it; but bear one thing in mind, that any possible step which may remove this unhappy impression from my daughter's mind, will be of infinite service, and never forgotten by us. Kilkee, too, has taken some dislike to Guy. You have only, however, to talk to him on the matter, and he is sure to pay attention to you."

"And, Harry," said my uncle, "tell Guy I am much displeased that he is not here; I expected him to leave Paris with me, but some absurd wager at the Jockey Club detained him."

"Another thing, Harry, you may as well mention to your cousin, that Sir Guy has complied with every suggestion that he formerly threw out—he will understand the allusion."

"Oh, yes," said my uncle; "tell him roundly, he shall have Elton Hall; I have fitted up Marsden for myself; so no difficulty lies in that quarter."

"You may add, if you like, that my present position with the Government enables me to offer him a speedy prospect of a regiment, and that I think he had better not leave the army."

"And say that by next post Hammercloth's bond for the six thousand shall be paid off, and let him send me a note of any other large sum he owes."

"And above all things, no more delays. I must leave this for England inevitably, and as the ladies will probably prefer wintering in Italy——"

"Oh, certainly," said my uncle, "the wedding must take place at once."

"I scarcely can ask you to come to us on the occasion, though I need not say how greatly we should all feel gratified if you could do so," said my lord.

While this cross fire went on from both sides, I looked from one to the other of the speakers. My first impression being, that having perceived and disliked my attention to Lady Jane, they adopted this *mauvaise plaisanterie* as a kind of smart lesson for my future guidance. My next impression was that they were really in earnest, but

about the very stupidest pair of old gentlemen that ever wore hair powder.

"And this is all?" said I, drawing a long breath, and inwardly uttering a short prayer for patience.

"Why, I believe I have mentioned everything," said Lord Callonby, "except that if anything occurs to yourself that offers a prospect of forwarding this affair, we leave you a *carte blanche* to adopt it."

"Of course, then," said I, "I am to understand that as no other difficulties lie in the way than those your lordship has mentioned, the feelings of the parties—their affections are mutual?"

"Oh, of course; your cousin, I suppose, has made himself agreeable; he is a good-looking fellow, and, in fact, I am not aware why they should not like each other, eh, Sir Guy?"

"To be sure; and the Elton estates run half the shire with your Gloucestershire property; never was there a more suitable match."

"Then only one point remains, and that being complied with, you may reckon upon my services; nay, more, I promise you success. Lady Jane's own consent must be previously assured to me; without this, I most positively decline moving a step in the matter; that once obtained, freely and without constraint, I pledge myself to do all you require."

"Quite fair, Harry, I perfectly approve of your scruples." So saying, his lordship rose, and left the room.

"Well, Harry, and yourself, what is to be done for *you?*—has Callonby offered you anything yet?"

"Yes, sir, his lordship has most kindly offered me the under secretaryship in Ireland, but I have resolved on declining it, though I shall not at present say so, lest he should feel any delicacy in employing me upon the present occasion."

"Why, is the boy deranged?—decline it!—what have you got in the world, that you should refuse such an appointment?"

The color mounted to my cheeks, my temples burned, and what I should have replied to this taunt, I know not, for passion had completely mastered me. When Lord Callonby again entered the room, his usually calm and pale face was agitated and flushed, and his manner tremulous and hurried; for an instant he was silent; then turning toward my uncle, he took his hand affectionately, and said,—

"My good old friend, I am deeply, deeply grieved; but we must abandon this scheme. I have just seen my daughter, and from the few words which we have had together, I find that her dislike to the match is invincible, and, in fact, she has obtained my promise never again to allude to it. If I were willing to constrain the feelings of my child, you yourself would not permit it. So here let us forget that we ever hoped for, ever calculated on a plan in which both our hearts were so deeply interested."

These words, few as they were, were spoken with deep feeling, and for the first time I looked upon the speaker with sincere regard. They were both silent for some minutes; Sir Guy, who was himself much agitated, spoke first.

"So be it then, Callonby, and thus do I relinquish one—perhaps the only cheering prospect my advanced age held out to me. I have long wished to have your daughter for my niece, and since I have known her, the wish has increased tenfold."

"It was the chosen dream of all my anticipations," said Lord Callonby, "and now Jane's affections only——but let it pass."

"And is there then really no remedy?—can nothing be thought of?"

"Nothing."

"I am not quite so sure, my lord," said I, tremulously.

"No, no, Lorrequer; you are a ready-witted fellow, I know, but this passes even *your* ingenuity; besides, I have given her my word."

"Even so."

"Why, what do you mean? speak out, man," said Sir Guy. "I'll give you ten thousand pounds on the spot if you suggest a means of overcoming this difficulty."

"Perhaps you might not accede afterward."

"I pledge myself to it."

"And I too," said Lord Callonby, "if no unfair stratagem be resorted to toward my daughter. If she only give her free and willing consent, I agree."

"Then you must bid higher, uncle; ten thousand won't do, for the bargain is well worth the money."

"Name your price, boy, and keep your word."

"Agreed then. Holding my uncle to his promise, I pledge myself that his nephew shall be the husband of Lady Jane Callonby. And now, my lord, write Harry *vice* Guy in the contract, and I am certain my uncle is too faithful to his plighted word, and too true to his promise, not to say it shall be."

The suddenness of this rash declaration absolutely stunned them both, and then recovering at the same moment, their eyes met.

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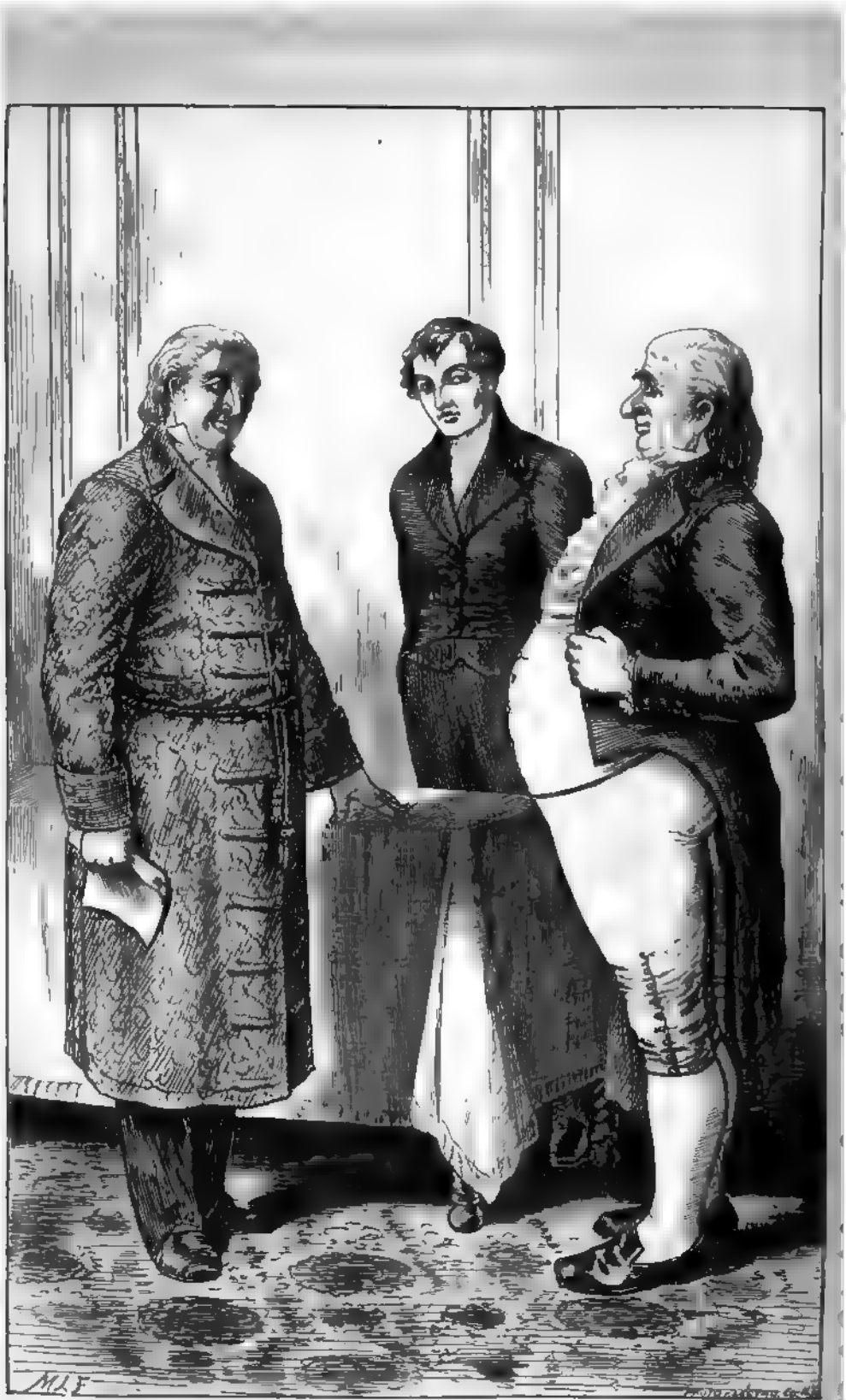

"FAIRLY CAUGHT, GUY," SAID LORD CALLONBY; "A BOLD STROKE, IF IT ONLY SUCCEED."
(P. 237.)

"Fairly caught, Guy," said Lord Callonby; "a bold stroke, if it only succeed."

"And it shall, by G——," said my uncle; "Elton is yours, Harry, and with seven thousand a year, and *my* nephew to boot, Callonby won't refuse you."

There are moments in life in which conviction will follow a bold *coup de main* that never would have ensued from the slow process of reasoning. Luckily for me, this was one of those happy intervals. Lord Callonby, catching my uncle's enthusiasm, seized me by the hand, and said,—

"With her consent, Lorrequer, you may count upon mine; and faith, if truth must be told, I always preferred you to the other."

What my uncle added, I waited not to listen to, but with one bound sprung from the room—dashed upstairs to Lady Callonby's drawing-room — looked rapidly around to see if *she* were there, and then, without paying the slightest attention to the questions of Lady Callonby and her youngest daughter, was turning to leave the room, when my eye caught the flutter of a cashmere shawl in the garden beneath. In an instant the window was torn open—I stood upon the sill, and, though the fall was some twenty feet, with one spring I took it, and before the ladies had recovered from their first surprise at my unaccountable conduct, put the finishing stroke to their amazement, by throwing my arms around Lady Jane, and clasping her to my heart.

I cannot remember by what process I explained the change that had taken place in my fortunes. I had some very vague recollection of vows of eternal love being mingled with praises of my worthy uncle, and the state of my affections and finances were jumbled up together, but still sufficiently intelligible to satisfy my beloved one that this time, at least, I made love with something more than *my own* consent to support me. Before we had walked half round the garden she had promised to be mine; and Harry Lorrequer, who that morning with nothing but despair and darkness before him, was now the happiest of men.

Dear reader, I have little more to confess. Lord Callonby's politics were fortunately deemed of more moment than maidenly scruples, and the treasury benches more respected than the trousseau. Our wedding was therefore settled for the following week. Meanwhile every day seemed to teem with its own meed of good fortune. My good uncle, under whose patronage, forty odd years before, Colonel Kamworth had obtained his commission, undertook to effect the reconciliation between him and the Wallers, who now only waited for our wedding before they set out for Hydrabad cottage, that snug receptacle of curry and Madeira, Jack confessing that he had rather listen to the siege of Java by that fireside, than hear an account of Waterloo from the lips of the great Duke himself.

I wrote to Trevanion to invite him over to Munich for the ceremony, and the same post which informed me that he was *en route* to join us, brought also a letter from my eccentric friend O'Leary, whose name having so often occurred in these Confessions, I am tempted to read aloud; the more so as its contents are no secret, Kilkee having insisted upon reading it to a committee of the whole family assembled after dinner.

"Dear Lorrequer,—The trial is over, and I am acquitted, but still in Sainte Pélagie; for as the government were determined to cut my head off, if guilty, so the mob resolved to murder me, if innocent. A pleasant situation this. Before the trial, I was the most popular man in Paris; my face was in every print-shop; plaster busts of me, with a great organ behind the ear, in all the thoroughfares; my autograph selling at six-and-twenty sous, and a lock of my hair at five francs. Now that it is proved I did not murder the 'minister at war' (who is in excellent health and spirits), the popular feeling against me is very violent, and I am looked upon as an impostor, who had obtained his notoriety under false pretences; and Vernet, who had begun my picture for a Judas, has left off in disgust. Your friend Trevanion is a trump; he procured a Tipperary gentleman to run away with Mrs. Ram, and they were married at Frankfort on Tuesday last. By the by, what an escape you had of Emily: she was only quizzing you all the time. She is engaged to be married to Tom O'Flaherty, who is here now. Emily's imitation of you, with the hat a little on one side, and a handkerchief flourishing away in one hand, is capital; but when she kneels down and says, 'Dearest Emily,' etc., you'd swear it was yourself.—[Here the laughter of the auditory prevented Kilkee proceeding, who, to my utter confusion, resumed after a little.]—Don't be losing your time making up to Lord Callonby's daughter—[here came another burst of laughter]—they say here you have not a chance, and, moreover,

she's a downright flirt.—['It is your turn now, Jane,' said Kilkee, scarcely able to proceed.]—Besides that, her father's a pompous old Tory, that won't give a sixpence with her; and the old curmudgeon, your uncle, has as much idea of providing for you as he has of dying.—[This last sally absolutely convulsed all parties.]—To be sure, Kilkee's a fool, but he is no use to you.—['Begad, I thought I was going to escape,' said the individual alluded to, 'but your friend O'Leary cuts on every side of him.']" The letter, after some very grave reflections upon the hopelessness of my pursuit, concluded with a kind pledge to meet me soon, and become my traveling companion. "Meanwhile," added he, "I must cross over to London, and look after my new work, which is to come out soon, under the title of 'The Loiterings of Arthur O'Leary.'"

This elegant epistle formed the subject of much laughter and conversation amongst us long after it was concluded, and little triumph could be claimed by any party, where nearly all were so roughly handled. So passed the last evening I spent in Munich. The next morning I was married.

TOM BURKE OF "OURS."

PREFACE.

BEFORE I had written the last chapters of Jack Hinton, I engaged to write a new story; and as the material I had already collected, with reference to the campaigns of the Consulate and the Empire, still continued fresh in my mind, I resolved that I would take that period for my tale.

Had I, according to my original intention, begun this story when I first conceived the plan, and when I was living abroad, it is more than probable that I should not have opened the tale in Ireland. But coming back to my country, after an absence of three years, all old memories and associations came flooding in upon me, mixed with fresh impressions of scenery, habits, and ways, so powerfully that I could not tear myself away from them without, at least, some words at parting.

I wanted, besides, to imbue my hero so intensely with the traits of his own country, to make him out so distinctly Irish before I launched him among Frenchmen, that he would have a place in the reader's mind, and be able to attach to himself an interest quite different from that of any other character in the story.

Irish Celtism is not French Celtism, and though there are many points of contact there are disparities and contrasts enough to make their action on each other interesting and amusing. I had done my best to store myself not only with the historical records of the period I wanted to paint, but to possess my mind with all the coloring and tone of men's tempers and talk; and if my Frenchmen seem more melodramatic and stagey than men living in a time so near our own should be, I can only declare that they were not by any means exaggerations of the characters who often furnished me with anecdotes and pictures of the period.

From my school days, the campaigns of the great Emperor had a fascination for me beyond anything I can remember, and to write about them was to revel in a theme I delighted in. At the period when I was about to begin my story, the world was recovering from all that depreciating estimate of the great Napoleon which the various memories of St. Helena, and the narratives of his life there, had disseminated. Men were beginning to forget the fretful and impatient scenes with Sir Hudson Lowe, and the still smaller complainings with his doctors, and to turn back to the glorious eras of his power and his greatness; and I derived all the benefit that such a change in popular feeling could confer. It is needless for me to say that I had no originals for any of the characters of this fiction except such as I myself derived from the narratives of my informants. For my localities, at least, in battle-fields, I lay claim to more accuracy, and on this subject I endeavored to be correct.

Writing occasionally, rapidly, and with my mind charged with details derived from books, and a variety of anecdotic matter communicated by friends and acquaintences, it is not, perhaps, to be wondered at if I was often unable to determine what was historical fact, and what merely traditionary gossip. In the same way I became confused about proper names, and actually hit upon real names where I fervently believed I was inventing.

Washington Irving records how a real Ichabod Crane once called upon him to remonstrate with him on the liberty he had taken to use his name in fiction; and though the author conscientiously believed he had invented the appellation, there is every reason to suppose that it had been

heard by him and forgotten, and that it was memory—unconscious memory—and not imagination, had supplied the curious designation. A somewhat similar incident befell me in writing this story. In my sketch of a French duellist, a character rife enough in the armies of the Empire, I had set down some traits by no means flattering, or attractive. To this character I gave the name of Amedée Pichot, most conscientiously believing that I had invented that name, as well as every other incident about him. What was my surprise on my return home to my house after some weeks' absence, to discover a note addressed to me, along with a card of Amedée Pichot; the note being a most courteous assurance that he was not a dangerous swordsman nor a hot-tempered individual, but a very quietly disposed man of peaceful pursuits, and editor of the *Revue Britannique*, at Paris.

I regretted sincerely he had left Ireland before I had received his letter, and deprived me of an opportunity of making my excuses to him for my accidental liberty, but which I am now convinced must have originated in memory—not invention.

Poor Thackeray was on a visit with me while I was writing this story. He at that time was engaged on his Irish Sketch Book, and I believe, though we discussed every other book and book writer we could think of, neither of us ever by a chance alluded to what the other was employed on. Nay, I am wrong. Thackeray once referred to his Irish Book. It was in the drawing-room, after dinner, when I had had some twelve or fourteen friends anxious to meet the renowned "Yellow Plush"—for it was at that stage of his literary eminence he visited Ireland, and was not yet known by the transcendent success of "Vanity Fair." "Can any of your friends here," whispered he to me, "cram me on the subject of the Irish Corporation?" it was the time of O'Connell's mayoralty—"I must give them a page or two."

"There's your man," said I, leading him to Isaac Butt. "He is an Alderman, and in a question of 'cram,' equal to anything—from the siege of Troy to Donnybrook Fair."

My friend Butt did not discredit the reputation I gave him. He invited us both to breakfast for the following Monday, and for Thackeray's enlightenment and amusement he got up a debate, which incidentally opened the question of the Repeal of the Union, and called up the Liberator himself to speak with an amount of temper and passion, that showed he had detected the spirit of the discussion, and knew it to be merely a "field day" got up to amuse the stranger.

If I have wandered away from Tom Burke to memories of the time and circumstances in which it was written, I ask pardon for my egotism; but in good truth, I remember everything about that period better than the details of my daily work.

It was a very happy period of my life. As editor of the Dublin University Magazine, I had drawn around me a circle of men of very great and varied powers, and when I mention such names as Archie Butler, Petrie, Griffin, the late Bishop of Limerick, Butt, and Mortimer O'Sullivan, I may be believed when I assert that conversation took a range and was maintained with a brilliancy that left us nothing to regret of the more famous gatherings at Holland or Gore House. Indeed, Thackeray himself assured me he had met no such collective agreeability anywhere.

If the men who wrote for the University Magazine were all, more or less, engrossed in their several careers, as churchmen, barristers, and physicians, and there was consequently less of that bond of professional spirit, which they who make literature a career, possess; there was, on the other hand, a great breadth from the diversity of daily occupation, vast variety from the contrasts of experiences, and a total absence of all the rivalries and jealousies that unhappily attend men when seeking distinction by the same road.

I will not say that quizzing, a very Irish defect, was not rife amongst us, and that any lapses into tall talk or any slips of "sentimentality" in an article, would not have met very summary punishment as we sat after dinner, but on the whole there was great good humor and great good fellowship, and to the very few who remain—for alas! the ranks are grievously thinned—my heart warms as I write these words of memory.

If I have not been able to say much about the history of Tom Burke, I have candidly related in what spirit it was written; or, what is pleasanter to remember, in what companionship. The tale was well received when it appeared, and although some of my critics seemed to opine that in striving to anything other than to make them laugh, I was passing beyond the limits of my brief, on the whole they were kindly disposed toward me, reproved my shortcomings with gentleness, and gave me encouragement for future efforts. Thackeray's inimitable burlesque of the book did not, as I am sure he never intended it should, describe it, nor has anyone more

thoroughly relished this novel by an eminent hand than the well quizzed object of it,

CHARLES LEVER.

TRIESTE, 1872.

CHAPTER I.

MYSELF.

IT was at the close of a cold, raw day in January—no matter for the year—that the Galway mail was seen to wind its slow course through that long and dull plain that skirts the Shannon, as you approach the "sweet town of Athlone." The reeking box-coats and dripping umbrellas that hung down on every side bespoke a day of heavy rain, while the splashed and mud-stained panels of the coach bore token of cut-up roads, which the jaded and toil-worn horses amply confirmed. If the outsides, with hats pressed firmly down, and heads bent against the cutting wind, presented an aspect far from comfortable, those within, who peeped with difficulty through the dim glass, had little to charm the eye; their flannel nightcaps and red comforters were only to be seen at rare intervals, as they gazed on the dreary prospect, and then sank back into the coach, to con over their moody thoughts, or if fortunate, perhaps to doze.

In the rumble, with the guard, sat one, whose burly figure and rosy cheeks seemed to feel no touch of the inclement wind that made his companions crouch. An oiled-silk foraging cap, fastened beneath the chin, and a large mantle of blue cloth, bespoke him a soldier, if even the assured tone of his voice, and a certain easy carriage of his head, had not conveyed to the acute observer the same information.

Unsubdued in spirit, undepressed in mind, either by the long day of pouring rain or the melancholy outline of country on every side, his dark eye flashed as brightly from beneath the brim of his cap, and his ruddy face beamed as cheerily, as though Nature had put forth her every charm of weather and scenery to greet and delight him.

Now inquiring of the guard of the various persons whose property lay on either side, the name of some poor hamlet or some humble village, now humming to himself some stray verse of an old campaigning song, he passed his time, diversifying these amusements by a courteous salute to a gaping country girl, as, with unmeaning look, she stared at the passing coach. But his principal occupation seemed to consist in retaining one wing of his wide cloak around the figure of a little boy, who lay asleep beside him, and whose head jogged heavily against his arm with every motion of the coach.

"And so that's Athlone, yonder, you tell me," said the Captain, for such he was. "'The sweet town of Athlone, ochone!' Well, it might be worse. I've passed ten years in Africa—on the burning coast, as they call it: you never light a fire to cook your victuals, but only lay them before the sun for ten minutes, game something less, and the joint's done; all true, by Jove! Lie still, my young friend, or you'll heave us both over! And whereabouts does he live, guard?"

"Something like a mile and a half from here," replied the gruff guard.

"Poor little fellow, he's sleeping it out well. They certainly don't take over much care of him, or they'd never have sent him on the top of a coach, in weather like this, without even a great coat to cover him. I say, Tom, my lad, wake up, you're not far from home now. Are you dreaming of the plum-pudding, and the pony, and the big spaniel—eh?"

"Whist!" said the guard, in a low whisper. "The chap's father is dying, and they've sent for him from school to see him."

A loud blast of the horn now awoke me thoroughly from the half dreamy slumber in which I had listened to the previous dialogue, and I sat up and looked about me. Yes, reader, my unworthy self it was who was then indulging in as pleasant a dream of home and holidays as ever blessed even a schoolboy's vigils. Though my eyes were open, it was some minutes before I could rally myself to understand where I was, and with what object. My senses were blunted by cold, and my drenched limbs were cramped and stiffened; for the worthy captain, to whose humanity I owed the share of his cloak, had only joined the coach late in the day, and during the whole morning I had been exposed to the most pitiless downpour of rain and sleet.

"Here you are!" said the rough guard, as the coach drew up to let me down. "No need of blowing the horn here, I suppose."

This was said in allusion to the miserable appearance of the ruined cabin that figured as my father's gate-lodge, where some naked children were seen standing before the door, looking with astonishment at the coach and passengers.

"Well, good-by, my little man. I hope you'll find the governor better. Give him my respects; and, hark ye, if ever you come over to Athlone don't forget to come and see me—Captain Bubbleton—George Frederick Augustus Bubbleton, 45th Regiment, or, when at home, Little Bubbleton, Herts, and Bungalow Hut, in the Carnatic; that's the mark; so good-by—good-by."

I waved my hand to him in adieu, and then turned to enter the gate.

"Well, Freney," said I, to a half-dressed, wild-looking figure that rushed out to lift the gate open, for the hinges had been long broken, and it was attached to the pier by some yards of strong rope, "how is my father?"

A gloomy nod and a discouraging sign with his open hand were the only reply.

"Is there any hope?" said I, faintly.

"Sorrow one of me knows. I daren't go near the house. I was served with notice to quit a month ago, and they tell him I'm gone. Oh, vo, vo! what's to become of us all!"

I threw the bag, which contained my humble wardrobe, on my shoulder, and, without waiting for further questioning, walked forward. Night was falling fast, and nothing short of my intimacy with the place from infancy could have enabled me to find my way. The avenue, from long neglect and disuse, was completely obliterated; the fences were broken up to burn; the young trees had mostly shared the same fate; the cattle strayed at will through the plantations, and all bespoke utter ruin and destruction.

If the scene around me was sad, it only the better suited my own heart. I was returning to a home where I had never heard the voice of kindness or affection; where one fond word—one look of welcome had never met me. I was returning, not to receive the last blessing of a loving parent, but merely sent for as a necessary ceremony on the occasion. And perhaps there was a mock propriety in inviting me once more to the house which I was never to revisit. My father—a widower for many years—had bestowed all his affection on my elder brother, to whom so much of his property as had escaped the general wreck was to descend. He had been sent to Eton under the guidance of a private tutor, while an obscure Dublin school was deemed good enough for me. For him every nerve was strained to supply all his boyish extravagance, and enable him to compete with the sons of men of high rank and fortune, whose names, mentioned in his letters home, were an ample recompense for all the lavish expenditure their intimacy entailed. My letters were few and brief, their unvaried theme the delay in the last quarter's payment, or the unfurnished condition of my little trunk, which more than once exposed me to the taunts of my schoolfellows.

He was a fair and delicate boy, timid in manner, and retiring in disposition; I, a brown-faced varlet, who knew every one from the herd to the high-sheriff. To him the servants were directed to look up as the head of the house, while I was consigned either to total neglect, or the attentions of those who only figured as supernumeraries in our army list.

Yet, with all these sources of jealousy between us, we loved each other tenderly. George pitied "poor Tommy," as he called me; and for that very pity my heart clang to him. He would often undertake to plead my cause for those bolder infractions his gentle nature never ventured on, and it was only from long association with boys of superior rank, whose habits and opinions he believed to be standards for his imitation, that at length a feeling of estrangement grew up between us, and we learned to look somewhat coldly on each other.

From these brief details it will not be wondered at if I turned homeward with a heavy heart. From the hour I received the letter of my recall—which was written by my father's attorney in most concise and legal phrase—I had scarcely ceased to shed tears; for, so it is, there is something in the very thought of being left an orphan, friendless and unprotected, quite distinct from the loss of affection and kindness which overwhelms the young heart with a very flood of wretchedness. Besides, a stray word or two of kindness had now and then escaped my father toward me, and I treasured these up as my richest possession. I thought of them over and over. Many a lonely night, when my heart has been low and sinking, I repeated them to myself, like talismans against grief; and when I slept, my dreams would dwell on them, and make my waking happy.

As I issued from a dark copse of beech-trees the indistinct outline of the old house met my eye. I could trace the high-pitched roof, the tall and pointed gables against the sky, and with a strange sense of undefinable fear, beheld a solitary light that twinkled from the window of an upper room, where my father lay; the remainder of the building was in deep shadow.

I mounted the long flight of stone steps that led to what once had been a terrace;

it the balustrades were broken many a ar ago, and even the heavy granite stone d been smashed in several places. The all-door lay wide open, and the hall itself d no other light save such as the flicker-g of a wood fire afforded, as its uncertain shes fell upon the dark wainscot and the oor.

I had just recognized the grim, old-fash-oned portraits that covered the walls, when y eye was attracted by a figure near the re. I approached, and beheld an old man oubled with age; his bleared eyes were nt upon the wood embers, which he was ying to rake together with a stick. His lothes bespoke the most miserable poverty, nd afforded no protection against the cold nd cutting blast. He was croning some ld song to himself as I drew near, and aid no attention to me. I moved round o as to let the light fall on his face, and hen perceived it was old Lanty, as he was alled. Poor fellow! Age and neglect had changed him sadly since I had seen him last. He had been the huntsman of the family for two generations, but having somehow displeased my father one day at the cover, he rode at him and struck him on the head with his loaded whip. The man fell senseless from his horse, and was carried home. A few days, however, enabled him to rally and be about again, but his senses had left him forever. All recollection of the unlucky circumstance had faded from his mind, and his rambling thoughts dwelt on his old pursuits, so that he passed his days about the stables, looking after the horses and giving directions about them. Latterly he had become too infirm for this, and never left his own cabin; but now, from some strange cause, he had come up to "the house," and was sitting by the fire as I found him.

They who know Ireland will acknowledge the strange impulse which, at the approach of death, seems to excite the people to congregate about the house of mourning. The passion for deep and powerful excitement —the most remarkable feature in their complex nature—seems to revel in the details of sorrow and suffering. Not content even with the tragedy before them, they call in the aid of superstition to heighten the awfulness of the scene; and every story of ghost and banshee is conned over in tones that need not the occasion to make them thrill upon the heart. At such a time, the deepest workings of their wild spirits are revealed. Their grief is low and sorrow-struck, or it is loud and passionate; now breaking into some plaintive wail over the virtues of the departed, now bursting into a frenzied appeal to the Father of Mercies as to the justice of recalling those from earth who were its blessing; while, stranger than all, a dash of reckless merriment will break in upon the gloom, but it is like the red lightning through the storm, that, as it rends the cloud, only displays the havoc and desolation around, and at its parting leaves even a blacker darkness behind it.

From my infancy I had been familiar with scenes of this kind, and my habit of stealing away unobserved from home to witness a country wake had endeared me much to the country people, who felt this no small kindness from "the master's son." Somehow, the ready welcome and attention I always met with had worked on my young heart, and I learned to feel all the interest of these scenes fully as much as those about me. It was, then, with a sense of desolation that I looked upon the one solitary mourner who now sat at the hearth—that poor old idiot man who gazed on vacancy, or muttered with parched lips some few words to himself. That he alone should be found to join his sorrows to ours, seemed to me like utter destitution, and as I leaned against the chimney I burst into tears.

"Don't cry, alannah, don't cry," said the old man; "it's the worst way at all. Get up again and ride him at it bould. Oh, vo, look at where the thief is taking now—along the stone wall there!" Here he broke out into a low, wailing ditty:

"And the fox set him down and looked about,
And many were feared to follow.
'Maybe I'm wrong,' says he, 'but I doubt
That you'll be as gay to-morrow.
For loud as you cry, and high as you ride,
And little you feel my sorrow,
I'll be free on the mountain-side,
While you'll lie low to-morrow.'
Oh, Moddideroo, aroo, aroo.

Ay, just so—they'll run to earth in the cold churchyard. Whisht—hark there—soho, soho—that's Badger I hear."

I turned away with a bursting heart, and felt my way up the broad oak stair, which was left in complete darkness. As I reached the corridor, off which the bedrooms lay, I heard voices talking together in a low tone —they came from my father's room, the door of which lay ajar. I approached noiselessly and peeped in: by the fire, which was the only light now in the apartment, sat two persons at a small table, one of whom I at once recognized as the tall, solemn-looking figure of Doctor Finnerty; the other I detected by the sharp tones of

his voice to be Mr. Anthony Basset, my father's confidential attorney.

On the table before them lay a mass of papers, parchments, leases, deeds, together with glasses and a black bottle, whose accompaniments of hot water and sugar left no doubt as to its contents. The chimney-piece was crowded with a range of vials and medicine bottles, some of them empty, some of them half-finished. From the bed in the corner of the room came the heavy sounds of snoring respiration, which either betokened deep sleep or insensibility. If I enjoyed but little favor in my father's house, I owed much of the coldness shown to me to the evil influence of the very two persons who sat before me in conclave. Of the precise source of the doctor's dislike I was not quite clear, except, perhaps, that I recovered from the measles when he predicted my certain death; the attorney's was, however, no mystery. About three years before he had stopped to breakfast at our house on his way to Ballinasloe fair. As his pony was led round to the stable it caught my eye. It was a most tempting bit of horseflesh, full of spirit and in top condition, for he was going to sell it. I followed him round, and appeared just as the servant was about to unsaddle him. The attorney was no favorite in the house, and I had little difficulty in persuading the man, instead of taking off the saddle, merely to shorten the stirrups to the utmost limit. The next minute I was on his back flying over the lawn at a stretching gallop. Fences abounded on all sides, and I rushed him at double ditches, stone walls, and bog-wood rails, with a mad delight that at every leap rose higher. After about three quarters of an hour thus passed, his blood, as well as my own, being by this time thoroughly roused, I determined to try him at the wall of an old pound, which stood some few hundred yards from the front of the house. Its exposure to the window, at any other time, would have deterred me from even the thought of such an exploit, but now I was quite beyond the pale of such cold calculations; besides that I was accompanied by a select party of all the laborers, with their wives and children, whose praises of my horsemanship would have made me take the lock of a canal if before me. A fine gallop of grass sward led to the pound, and over this I went, cheered with as merry a cry as ever stirred a light heart. One glance I threw at the house as I drew near the leap; the window of the breakfast parlor was open, my father and Mr. Basset were both at it; I saw their faces red with passion, I heard their loud shout; my very spirit sickened within me—I saw no more—I felt the pony rush at the wall—the quick stroke of his feet—the rise—the plunge—and then a crash—and I was sent spinning over his head some half-dozen yards, plowing up the ground on face and hands. I was carried home with a broken head; the pony's knees were in the same condition. My father said that he ought to be shot for humanity's sake; Tony suggested the same treatment for me, on similar grounds. The upshot, however, was, I secured an enemy for life, and, worse still, one whose power to injure was equaled by his inclination.

Into the company of these two worthies I now found myself thus accidentally thrown, and would gladly have retreated at once, but that some indescribable impulse to be near my father's sick-bed was on me, and so I crept stealthily in and sat down in a large chair at the foot of the bed, where unnoticed I listened to the long-drawn heavings of his chest, and in silence wept over my own desolate condition.

For a long time the absorbing nature of my own grief prevented me hearing the muttered conversation near the fire; but at length, as the night wore on, and my sorrow had found vent in tears, I began to listen to the dialogue beside me.

"He'll have five hundred pounds under his grandfather's will in spite of us; but what's that?" said the attorney.

"I'll take him as an apprentice for it, I know," said the doctor, with a grin that made me shudder.

"That's settled already," replied Mr. Basset. "He's to be articled to me for five years; but I think it's likely he'll go to sea before the time expires. How heavily the old man is sleeping! Now, is that natural sleep?"

"No: that's always a bad sign; that puffing with the lips is generally among the last symptoms. Well, he'll be a loss anyhow, when he's gone. There's an eight-ounce mixture he never tasted yet—infusion of gentian with soda. Put your lips to that."

"Devil a one o' me will ever sup the like," said the attorney, finishing his tumbler of punch as he spoke. "Pheugh! how can you drink them things that way?"

"Sure it's the compound infusion made with orange peel and cardamom seeds. There isn't one of them didn't cost two-and-nine-pence. He'll be eight weeks in bed come Tuesday next."

"Well, well! If he lived till the next assizes, it would be telling me four hundred pounds, not to speak of the costs of two

ejectments I have in hand against Mullins and his father-in-law."

"It's a wonder," said the doctor, after a pause, "that Tom didn't come by the coach. It's no matter now, at any rate; for since the eldest son's away, there's no one here to interfere with us."

"It was a masterly stroke of yours, doctor, to tell the old man the weather was too severe to bring George over from Eton. As sure as he came he'd make up matters with Tom, and the end of it would be, I'd lose the agency, and you wouldn't have those pleasant little bills for the tenantry—eh, Fin?"

"Whisht! he's waking now. Well, sir—well, Mr. Burke, how do you feel now? He's off again."

"The funeral ought to be on a Sunday," said Basset, in a whisper. "There'll be no getting the people to come any other day. He's saying something, I think."

"Fin," said my father, in a faint, hoarse voice—"Fin, give me a drink. It's not warm."

"Yes, sir, I had it on the fire."

"Well, then, it's myself that's growing cold. How's the pulse now, Fin? Is the Dublin doctor come yet?"

"No, sir, we're expecting him every minute; but sure, you know, we're doing everything."

"Oh! I know it. Yes, to be sure, Fin; but they've many a new thing up in Dublin, there, we don't hear of. Whisht! what's that?"

"It's Tony, sir, Tony Basset; he's sitting up with me."

"Come over here, Tony. Tony, I'm going fast. I feel it, and my heart is low. Could we withdraw the proceedings about Freney?"

"He's the biggest blackguard——"

"Ah! no matter now—I'm going to a place where we'll all need mercy. What was it that Canealy said he'd give for the land?"

"Two pound ten an acre—and Freney never paid thirty shillings out of it."

"It's mighty odd George didn't come over."

"Sure I told you there was two feet of snow on the ground."

"Lord be about us! what a severe season? But why isn't Tom here?" I started at the words, and was about to rush forward, when he added, "I don't want him, though."

"Of course you don't," said the attorney. "It's little comfort he ever gave you. Are you in pain there?"

"Ay, great pain over my heart. Well, well! don't be hard to him when I'm gone."

"Don't let him talk so much," said Basset, in a whisper, to the doctor.

"You must compose yourself, Mr. Burke," said the doctor. "Try and take a sleep. The night isn't half through yet."

The sick man obeyed without a word, and soon after the heavy respiration betokened the same lethargic slumber once more.

The voices of the speakers gradually fell into a low, monotonous sound; the long-drawn breathings from the sick-bed mingled with them; the fire only sent forth an occasional gleam, as some piece of falling turf seemed to revive its wasting life, and shot up a myriad of bright sparks; and the chirping of a cricket in the chimney corner sounded to my mournful heart like the tick of the death-watch.

As I listened my tears fell fast, and a gulping fullness in my throat made me feel like one in suffocation. But deep sorrow, somehow, tends to sleep. The weariness of the long day and dreary night, exhaustion, the dull hum of the subdued voices, and the faint light, all combined to make me drowsy, and I fell into a heavy slumber.

I am writing now of the far-off past—of the long years ago, of my youth—since which my seared heart has had many a sore and scalding lesson; yet I cannot think of that night, fixed and graven as it lies in my memory, without a touch of boyish softness. I remember every waking thought that crossed my mind—my very dream is still before me. It was of my mother. I thought of her as she lay on a sofa in the old drawing-room, the window open, and the blinds drawn; the gentle breeze of a June morning flapping them lazily to and fro, as I knelt beside her to repeat my little hymn, the first I ever learned; and how at each moment my eyes would turn and my thoughts stray to that open casement, through which the odor of flowers and the sweet song of birds were pouring; and my little heart was panting for liberty, while her gentle smile and faint words bade me remember where I was. And then I was straying away through the old garden, where the very sunlight fell scantily through the thick-woven branches, loaded with perfumed blossom; the blackbirds hopped fearlessly from twig to twig, mingling their clear notes with the breezy murmur of the leaves, and the deep hum of summer bees. How happy was I then! And why cannot such happiness be last-

ing? Why can we not shelter ourselves from the base contamination of worldly cares, and live on amid pleasures pure as these, with hearts as holy and desires as simple as in childhood?

Suddenly a change came over my dream, and the dark clouds began to gather from all quarters, and a low, creeping wind moaned heavily along. I thought I heard my name called. I started and awoke. For a second or two the delusion was so strong that I could not remember where I was; but as the gray light of a breaking morning fell through the half-open shutters, I beheld the two figures near the fire. They were both sound asleep, the deep-drawn breathing and nodding heads attesting the heaviness of their slumber.

I felt cold and cramped, but still afraid to stir, although a longing to approach the bedside was still upon me. A faint sigh and some muttered words here came to my ear, and I listened. It was my father; but so indistinct the sounds, they seemed more like the ramblings of a dream. I crept noiselessly on tiptoe to the bed, and, drawing the curtain gently over, gazed within. He was lying on his back, his hands and arms outside the clothes. His beard had grown so much, and he had wasted so far, that I could scarcely have known him. His eyes were wide open, but fixed on the top of the bed; his lips moved rapidly, and, by his hands, as they were closely clasped, I thought it was in prayer. I leaned over him, and placed my hand in his. For some time he did not seem to notice it, but at last he pressed it softly, and, rubbing the fingers to and fro, he said, in a low, faint voice, "Is this your hand, my boy?"

I thought my heart would split, as, in a gush of tears, I bent down and kissed him.

"I can't see well, my dear; there's something between me and the light, and a weight is on me—here—here—"

A heavy sigh, and a shudder that shook his whole frame, followed these words.

"They told me I wasn't to see you once again," said he, as a sickly smile played over his mouth; "but I knew you'd come to sit by me. It's a lonely thing not to have one's own at such an hour as this. Don't weep, my dear—my own heart's failing me fast."

A broken, muttering sound followed, and then he said, in a loud voice:

"I never did it! It was Tony Basset. He told me—he persuaded me. Ah! that was a sore day when I listened to him. Who's to tell me I'm not to be master of my own estate? Turn them adrift—ay, every man of them. I'll weed the ground of such wretches—eh, Tony? Did any one say Freney's mother was dead?—they may wake her at the cross roads, if they like. Poor old Molly! I'm sorry for her, too. She nursed me and my sister that's gone; and maybe her death-bed, poor as she was, was easier than mine will be—without kith or kin, child or friend. Oh, George!—and I that doted on you with all my heart! Whose hand's this?—ah, I forgot, my darling boy, it's you. Come to me here, my child. Wasn't it for you that I toiled and scraped this many a year? Wasn't it for you that I did all this, and—O God, forgive me!—maybe it's my soul that I've periled to leave you a rich man. Where's Tom?—where's that fellow now?"

"Here, sir," said I, squeezing his hand, and pressing it to my lips.

He sprang up at the words, and sat up in his bed, his eyes dilated to their widest, and his pale lips parted asunder.

"Where?" cried he, as he felt me over with his thin fingers, and drew me toward him.

"Here, father, here."

"And is this Tom?" said he, as his voice fell into a low, hollow sound, and then added, "Where's George?—answer me at once. Oh, I see it. He isn't here; he wouldn't come over to see his old father. Tony! Tony Basset, I say!" shouted the sick man, in a voice that roused the sleepers, and brought them to his bedside, "open that window there. Let me look out—do it as I bid you—open it wide. Turn in all the cattle you can find on the road. Do you hear me, Tony? Drive them in from every side. Finnerty, I say, mind my words, for"—(here he uttered a most awful and terrific oath)—"as I linger on this side of the grave, I'll not leave him a blade of grass I can take from him."

His chest heaved with a convulsive spasm, his face became pale as death, his eyes fixed; he clutched eagerly at the bedclothes, and then, with a horrible cry, he fell back upon the pillow, as a faint stream of red blood trickled from his nostril and ran down his chin.

"It's all over now," whispered the doctor.

"Is he dead?" said Basset.

The other made no reply; but, drawing the curtains close, he turned away, and they both moved noiselessly from the room.

CHAPTER II.

DARBY—THE "BLAST."

If there are dreams which, by their vividness and accuracy of detail, seem altogether like reality, so are there certain actual passages in our lives which, in their indistinctness while occurring, and in the faint impression they leave behind them, seem only as mere dreams. Most of our early sorrows are of this kind. The warm current of our young hearts would appear to repel the cold touch of affliction; nor can grief, at this period, do more than breathe an icy chill upon the surface of our affections, where all is glowing and fervid beneath. The struggle, then, between the bounding heart and the depressing care, renders our impressions of grief vague and ill-defined.

A stunning sense of some great calamity, some sorrow without hope, mingled in my waking thoughts with a childish notion of freedom. Unloved, uncared for, my early years presented but few pleasures. My boyhood had been a long struggle to win some mark of affection from one who cared not for me, and to whom still my heart had clung, as does the drowning man to the last plank of all the wreck. The tie that bound me to him was now severed, and I was without one in the wide world to look up to or to love.

I looked out from my window upon the bleak country. A heavy snowstorm had fallen during the night. A lowering sky of leaden hue stretched above the dreary landscape, across which no living thing was seen to move. Within-doors all was silent. The doctor and the attorney had both taken their departure; the deep wheel-track in the snow marked the road they had followed. The servants, seated around the kitchen fire, conversed in low and broken whispers. The only sound that broke the stillness was the ticking of the clock upon the stair. There was something that smote heavily on my heart in the monotonous ticking of that clock; that told of time passing beside him who had gone; that seemed to speak of minutes close to one whose minutes were eternity. I crept into the room where the dead body lay, and, as my tears ran fast, I bent over it. I thought sometimes the expression of those cold features changed—now frowning heavily, now smiling blandly on me. I watched them till, in my eager gaze, the lips seemed to move, and the cheek to flush. How hard is it to believe in death! —how difficult to think that "there is a sleep that knows no waking." I knelt down beside the bed and prayed. I prayed that now, as all of earth was naught to him who was departed, he would give me the affection he had not bestowed in life. I besought him not to chill the heart that in its lonely desolation had neither home nor friend. My throat sobbed to bursting as in my words I seemed to realize the fullness of my affliction. The door opened behind me as with bent-down head I knelt. A heavy footstep slowly moved along the floor, and the next moment the tottering figure of old Lanty stood beside me, gazing on the dead man. There was that look of vacancy in his filmy eye that showed he knew nothing of what had happened.

"Is he asleep, Master Tommy?" said the old man, in a faint whisper.

My lips trembled, but I could not speak the word.

"I thought he wanted the 'dogs' up at Meelif; but I'm strained here about the loins, and can't go out myself. Tell him that when he wakes."

"He'll never wake now, Lanty—he's dead," said I, as a rush of tears half choked my utterance.

"Dead!" said he, repeating the word two or three times—"dead! Well, well, I wonder will Master George keep the dogs now. There seldom comes a better; and 'twas himself that liked the cry o' them."

He tottered from the room as he spoke, and I could hear him muttering the same words over and over as he crept slowly down the stair.

I have said that this painful stroke of fortune was as a dream to me, and so for three days I felt it. The altered circumstances of everything about me were inexplicable to my puzzled brain. The very kindness of the servants—so unusual to me—struck me forcibly. They felt that the time was past when any sympathy for me had been the passport to disfavor, and they pitied me.

The funeral took place on the third morning. Mr. Basset having acquainted my brother that there was no necessity for his presence, even that consolation was denied me, to meet him who alone remained of all my name and house belonging to me. How I remember every detail of that morning! The silence of the long night broken in upon by heavy footsteps ascending the stairs—strange voices, not subdued like those of all in our little household, but loud and coarse—even laughter I could hear—the noise increasing at each moment. Then the muffled sound of wheels upon the snow, and the cries of the

drivers as they urged their horses forward. Then a long interval, in which nought was heard save the happy whistle of some poor postilion, who, careless of his errand, whiled away the tedious time with a lively tune. And, lastly, there came the dull noise of feet moving step by step down the stair, the muttered words, the shuffling sound of feet as they descended, and the clank of the coffin as it struck against the wall.

The long, low parlor was filled with people, few of whom I had ever seen before. They were broken up into little knots, chatting cheerfully together, while they made a hurried breakfast. The table and sideboard were covered with a profusion I had never witnessed previously. Decanters of wine passed freely from hand to hand; and although the voices fell somewhat as I appeared amidst them, I looked in vain for one touch of sorrow for the dead, or even respect for his memory.

As I took my place in the carriage beside the attorney, a kind of dreamy apathy settled down on me, and I scarcely knew what was passing. I only remember the horrible shrinking sense of dread with which I recoiled from his one attempt at consolation, and the abrupt way in which he desisted, and turned to converse with the doctor. How my heart sickened as we drew near the churchyard, and I beheld the open gate that stood wide awaiting us. The dusky figures, with their mournful black cloaks, moved slowly across the snow, like spirits of some gloomy world; while the death-bell echoed in my ears, and sent a shuddering through my frame.

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"What is to become of the second boy?" said the clergyman, in a low whisper, but which, by some strange fatality, struck forcibly on my ear.

"It is not much matter," replied Basset, still lower, "for the present he goes home with me. Tom, I say, you come back with me to-day."

"No," said I, boldly, "I'll go home again."

"Home!" repeated he, with a scornful laugh—"home! And where may that be, youngster?"

"For shame, Basset," said the clergyman, "don't speak that way to him. My little man, you can't go home to-day. Mr. Basset will take you with him for a few days, until your late father's will is known, and his wishes respecting you."

"I'll go home, sir," said I, but in a fainter tone, and with tears in my eyes.

"Well, well, let him do so for to-day, it may relieve his poor heart. Come, Basset, I'll take him back myself."

I clasped his hand as he spoke, and kissed it over and over.

"With all my heart," cried Basset. "I'll come over and fetch him to-morrow;" and then he added, in a lower tone, "and before that you'll have found out quite enough to be heartily sick of your charge."

All the worthy vicar's efforts to rouse me from my stupor or interest me failed. He brought me to his house, where, amid his own happy children, he deemed my heart would have yielded to the sympathy of my own age; but I pined to get back: I longed—why, I knew not—to be in my own little chamber, alone with my grief. In vain he tried every consolation his kind heart and his life's experience had taught him; the very happiness I witnessed but reminded me of my own state, and I pressed the more eagerly to return.

It was late when he drew up to the door of the house, to which already the closed window-shutters had given a look of gloom and desertion. We knocked several times before any one came, and at length two or three heads appeared at an upper window, in half-terror at the unlooked-for summons for admission.

"Good-by, my dear boy," said the vicar, as he kissed me; "don't forget what I have been telling you. It will make you bear your present sorrow better, and teach you to be happier when it is over."

"Come down to the kitchen, alannah," said the old cook, as the hall door closed—"come down and sit with us there; sure it's no wonder your heart 'ud be low."

"Yes, Master Tommy, and Darby 'the blast' is there, and a 'tune and the pipes will raise you."

I suffered myself to be led along listlessly between them to the kitchen, where, around a huge fire of red turf, the servants of the house were all assembled, together with some neighboring cottages, Darby "the blast" occupying a prominent place in the party, his pipes laid across his knees, as he employed himself in concocting a smoking tumbler of punch.

"Your most obadient," said Darby, with a profound reverence, as I entered. "May I make so bowld as to surmise that my presence isn't unsaysonable to your feelins? for I wouldn't be contumacious enough to adjudicate without your honor's permission."

What I muttered in reply I know not; but the whole party were speedily reseated, every eye turned admiringly on Darby for

the very neat and appropriate expression of his apology.

Young as I was, and slight as had been the consideration heretofore accorded me, there was that in the lonely desolation of my condition which awakened all their sympathies, and directed all their interests toward me; and in no country are the differences of rank such slight barriers in excluding the feeling of one portion of the community from the sorrows of the others. The Irish peasant, however humble, seems to possess an intuitive tact on this subject, and to minister all the consolations in his power with a gentle delicacy that cannot be surpassed.

The silence caused by my appearing among them was unbroken for some time after I took my seat by the fire; and the only sounds were the clinking of a spoon against the glass, or the deep-drawn sigh of some compassionate soul, as she wiped a stray tear from the corner of her eye with her apron.

Darby alone manifested a little impatience at the sudden change in a party where his powers of agreeability had so lately been successful, and fidgeted on his chair, unscrewed his pipes, blew into them, screwed them on again, and then slyly nodded over to the housemaid, as he raised his glass to his lips.

"Never mind me," said I to the old cook, who, between grief and the glare of a turf fire, had her face swelled out to twice its natural size—"never mind me, Molly, or I'll go away."

"And why would you, darlin'? Troth, no! sure there's nobody feels for you like them that was always about you. Take a cup of tay, alannah—it'll do you good."

"Yes, Master Tom," said the butler; "you never tasted anything since Tuesday night."

"Do, sir, av ye plaze?" said the pretty housemaid, as she stood before me, cup in hand.

"Arrah! what's tay?" said Darby, in a contemptuous tone of voice: "a few dirty laves, with a drop of water on top of them, that has neither beatification nor invigoration. Here's the *'fons animi!'*" said he, patting the whisky bottle affectionately. "Did ye ever hear of the ancients indulging in tay? D'ye think Polyphamus and Jupither took tay?"

The cook looked down abashed and ashamed.

"Tay's good enough for women—no offense, Mrs. Cook!—but you might boil down Paykin and it'd never be potteen. *'Ex quo vis ligno non fit Mercurius'*—'You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.' That's the meaning of it—*ligno's* a sow."

Heaven knows I was in no mirthful mood at that moment, but I burst into a fit of laughing at this, in which, from a sense of politeness, the party all joined.

"That's it, acushla!" said the old cook, as her eyes sparkled with delight; "sure it makes my heart light to see you smilin' again. Maybe Darby would raise a tune now, and there's nothing equal to it for the spirits."

"Yes, Mr. M'Keown, said the housemaid, "play 'Kiss me twice,' Master Tom likes it."

"Devil a doubt he does," replied Darby, so maliciously as to make poor Kitty blush a deep scarlet, "and no shame to him! But you see my fingers is cut, Master Tom, and I can't perform the reduplicating intonations with proper effect."

"How did that happen, Darby?" said the butler.

"Faix, easy enough. Tim Daly and myself was hunting a cat the other evening, and she was under the dhresser, and we wor poking her with a burnt stick and a raypinghook, and she somehow always escaped us, and except about an inch of her tail that we cut off, there was no getting at her; and at last I hated a toastin'-fork and put it in, when out she flew, teeth and claws, at me. Look, there's where she stuck her thieving nails into my thumb, and took the piece clean out. The onnatural baste!"

"Arrah!" said the old cook, with a most reflective gravity, "there's nothing so treacherous as a cat!" A moral to the story which I found met general assent among the whole company.

"Nevertheless," observed Darby, with an air of ill-dissembled condescension, "if it isn't umbrageous to your honor, I'll intonate something in the way of an ode, or a canticle."

"One of your own, Darby," said the butler, interrupting.

"Well, I've no objection," replied Darby, with an affected modesty; "for you see, master, like Homer, I accompany myself on the pipes, though—glory be to God!—I'm not blind. The little thing I'll give you is imitated from the ancients—like Tibullus or Euthropeus—in the natural key."

Mister M'Keown, after this announcement, pushed his empty tumbler toward the butler with a significant glance, gave a few preparatory grunts with the pipes, followed by a long dolorous quaver, and then a still more melancholy cadence, like the expiring bray of an asthmatic jackass—all

of which sounds, seeming to be the essential preliminaries to any performance on the bagpipes, were listened to with great attention by the company. At length, having assumed an imposing attitude, he lifted up both elbows, tilted his little finger affectedly up, dilated his cheeks, and began the following to the well-known air of "Una:"

MUSIC.

Of all the arts and sciences,
'Tis music surely takes the sway;
It has its own appliances
To melt the heart, or make it gay.
To raise us,
Or plaze us,
There's nothing with it can compare;
To make us bowld,
Or hot, or cowld,
Just as suits the kind of air.

There's not a woman, man, or child,
That hasn't felt its power too:
Don't deny it!—when you smiled
Your eyes confess'd—that so did you.

The very winds that sigh or roar—
The leaves that rustle, dry and sear—
The waves that beat upon the shore—
They all are music to your ear.
It was of use
To Orpheus,
He charmed the fishes in the say;
So everything
Alive can sing—
The kettle even sings for tay!

There's not a woman, man, nor child,
That hasn't felt its power too;
Don't deny it!—when you smiled
Your eyes confess'd—that so did you.

I have certainly, since this period, listened to more brilliant musical performances, but, for the extent of the audience, I do not think it was possible to reap a more overwhelming harvest of applause. Indeed the old cook kept repeating stray fragments of the words to every air that crossed her memory for the rest of the evening; and as for Kitty, I intercepted more than one soft glance intended for Mr. M'Keown as a reward for his minstrelsy.

Darby, to do him justice, seemed fully sensible of his triumph, and sat back in his chair, and imbibed his liquor like a man who had won his laurels, and needed no further efforts to maintain his eminent position in life.

As the wintry wind moaned dismally without, and the leafless trees shook and trembled with the cold blast, the party drew in closer to the cheerful turf fire, with that sense of selfish delight that seems to revel in the contrast of in-door comfort with the bleakness and dreariness without.

"Well, Darby," said the butler, "you weren't far wrong when you took my advice to stay here for the night; listen to how it's blowing."

"That's hail," said the old cook, as the big drops came pattering down the chimney, and hissed on the red embers as they fell. "It's a cruel night, glory be to God." Here the old lady blessed herself—a ceremony which the others followed.

"For all that," said Darby, "I ought to be up at Crocknavorrigha this blessed evening. Joe Neale was to be married to-day."

"Joe! is it Joe!" said the butler.

"I wish her luck of him, whoever she is," added the cook.

"Faix, and he's a smart boy," chimed in the housemaid, with something not far from a blush as she spoke.

"He was a raal devil for coortin', any how," said the butler.

"It's just for peace he's marrying now, then," said Darby; "the women never gave him any quietness—just so Kitty, you needn't be looking cross that way—it's truth I'm telling you; they were always coming about him, and teazing him, and the like, and he couldn't bear it any longer."

"Arrah, howld your prate," interrupted the old cook, whose indignation for the honor of the sex could not endure more; "he's the biggest liar from this to himself—and that same's not a small word, Darby M'Keown."

There was a pointedness in the latter part of this speech which might have led to angry consequences, had I not interposed, by asking Mr. M'Keown himself if he ever was in love.

"Arrah, it's wishing it, I am, the same love. Sure my back and sides is sore with it—my misfortunes would fill a book. Didn't I bind myself apprentice to a carpenter, for love of Molly Scraw, a niece he had, just to be near her, and be looking at her, and that's the way I shaved off the top of my thumb with the plane. By the mortial, it was near killing me; I usedn't to eat or drink; and though I was three years at the thrade, faix, at the end of it, I couldn't tell you the gimlet from the handsaw."

"And you wor never married, Mister M'Keown?" said Kitty.

"Never, my darling, but often mighty near it. Many's the quare thing happened to me," said Darby, meditatingly; "and sure if it wasn't my guardian angel, or something of the kind prevented it, I'd maybe have more wives this day than the Emperor of Roossia himself."

"Arrah, don't be talking," grunted out the old cook, whose passion could scarcely be restrained at the boastful tone Mister M'Keown assumed in descanting on his successes.

"There was Biddy Finn," continued Darby, without paying any attention to the cook's interruption; "she might be Mrs. M'Keown this day, av it wasn't for a remarkable thing that happened."

"What was that?" said Kitty, with eager curiosity.

"Tell us about it, Mister M'Keown," said the butler.

"The devil a word of truth he'll tell you," grumbled the cook, as she raked the ashes with a stick.

"There's them here does not care for agreeable intercoorse," said Darby, assuming a grand air.

"Come, Darby, I'd like to hear the story," said I.

After a few preparatory scruples, in which modesty, offended dignity, and conscious merit struggled, Mr. M'Keown began by informing us that he had once a most ardent attachment to a certain Biddy Finn, of Ballyclough, a lady of considerable personal attractions, to whom, for a long time, he had been constant, and at last, through the intervention of Father Curtin, agreed to marry. Darby's consent to the arrangements was not altogether the result of his reverence's eloquence, nor indeed the justice of the case—nor was it quite owing to Biddy's black eyes and pretty lips—but rather to the soul-persuading powers of some fourteen tumblers of strong punch, which he swallowed at a *séance* in Biddy's father's house, one cold evening in November; after which he betook himself to the road homeward, where—But we must give his story in his own words:

"Whether it was the prospect of happiness before me, or the potteen," quoth Darby, "but so it was, I never felt a step of the road home that night, though it was every foot of five mile. When I came to a stile, I used to give a whoop, and over it; then I'd run for a hundred yards or two, flourish my stick, cry out, 'Who'll say a word against Biddy Finn?' and then over another fence, flying. Well, I reached home at last, and wet enough I was, but I didn't care for that. I opened the door and struck a light—there was the least taste of kindling on the hearth, and I put some dry sticks into it, and some turf, and knelt down and began blowing it up.

"'Troth,' says I to myself, 'if I wor married, it isn't this way I'd be—on my knees like a nagur; but when I'd come home, there 'ud be a fine fire blazin' fornint me, and a clean table out before it, and a beautiful cup of tay waiting for me—and somebody I won't mintion, sitting there, lookin' at me, smilin'.'

"'Don't be making a fool of yourself, Darby M'Keown,' said a gruff voice near the chimney.

"I jumped at him, and cried out, 'Who's that?' but there was no answer; and at last, after going round the kitchen, I began to think it was only my own voice I heard, so I knelt down again, and set to blowing away at the fire.

"'And it's yerself, Biddy,' says I, 'that would be an ornament to a dacent cabin; and a purtier leg and foot—'

"'Be the light that shines, you're making me sick, Darby M'Keown,' said the voice again.

"'The heavens be about us!' says I, 'what's that, and who are you at all?' for someways I thought I knew the voice.

"'I'm your father!' says the voice.

"'My father!' says I. 'Holy Joseph, is it truth you're telling me?'

"'The divil a word o' lie in it,' says the voice. 'Take me down and give me an air o' the fire, for the night's cowld.'

"'And where are you, father,' says I, 'av it's plasing to ye?'

"'I'm on the dhresser," says he. 'Don't you see me?'

"'Sorra bit o' me. Where now?'

"'Arrah, on the second shelf, next the rowling-pin. Don't you see the green jug?—that's me.'

"'Oh, the saints in heaven be about us!' says I; 'and are you a green jug?'

"'I am,' says he; 'and sure I might be worse. Tim Healey's mother is only a cullender, and she died two years before me.'

"'Oh, father darlin',' says I, 'I hoped you wor in glory, and you only a jug all this time!'

"'Never fret about it,' says my father; 'it's the transmogrification of sowls, and we'll be right by-and-by. Take me down, I say, and put me near the fire.'

"So I up and took him down, and wiped him with a clean cloth, and put him on the hearth before the blaze.

"'Darby,' says he, 'I'm famished with the druth. Since you took to coortin' there's nothing ever goes into my mouth—haven't you a taste of something in the house?'

"I wasn't long till I hated some wather, and took down the bottle of whisky and some sugar, and made a rousing jugful, as strong as need be.

"'Are you satisfied, father?' says I.

"'I am,' says he, 'you're a dutiful child; and here's your health, and don't be thinking of Biddy Finn.'

"With that my father began to explain how there was never any rest nor quietness for a man after he married—more be token, if his wife was fond of talking; and that he never could take his dhrop of drink in comfort afterward.

"'May I never,' says he, 'but I'd rather be a green jug, as I am now, than alive again wid your mother. Sure it's not here you'd be sitting to-night,' says he, 'discoorsing with me, av you wor married, devil a bit. Fill me,' says my father, 'and I'll tell you more.'

"And sure enough I did, and we talked away till near daylight; and then the first thing I did was to take the ould mare out of the stable, and set off to Father Curtin, and towld him all about it, and how my father wouldn't give his consent by no means.

"'We'll not mind the marriage,' says his rivirence; 'but go back and bring me your father—the jug, I mean—and we'll try and get him out of trouble—for it's trouble he's in, or he wouldn't be that way. Give me the two-pound-ten,' says the priest: 'you had it for the wedding, and it will be better spent getting your father out of purgatory, than sending you into it.'"

"Arrah, aren't you ashamed of yourself?" cried the cook, with a look of ineffable scorn, as he concluded.

"Look now," said Darby, "see this—if it isn't thruth—"

"And what became of your father?" interrupted the butler.

"And Biddy Finn, what did she do?" said the housemaid.

Darby, however, vouchsafed no reply, but sat back in his chair with an offended look, and sipped his liquor in silence.

A fresh brew of punch under the butler's auspices speedily, however, dispelled the cloud that hovered over the conviviality of the party; and even the cook vouchsafed to assist in the preparation of some rashers, which Darby suggested "were beautiful things for the thirst at this hour of the night"—but whether in allaying or exciting it, he didn't exactly lay down. The conversation now became general; and as they seemed resolved to continue their festivities to a late hour, I took the first opportunity I could, when unobserved, to steal away and return to my own room.

No sooner alone again than all the sorrow of my lonely state came back upon me; and as I laid my head on my pillow, the full measure of my misery flowed in upon my heart, and I sobbed myself to sleep.

CHAPTER III.

THE DEPARTURE.

THE violent beating of the rain against the glass, and the loud crash of the storm as it shook the window frames, or snapped the sturdy branches of the old trees, awoke me. I got up, and, opening the shutters, endeavored to look out; but the darkness was impenetrable, and I could see nothing but the gnarled and grotesque forms of the leafless trees dimly marked against the sky, as they moved to and fro like the arms of some mighty giant—masses of heavy snow melted by the rain fell at intervals from the steep roof, and struck the ground beneath with a low sumph like thunder—a grayish, leaden tinge that marked the horizon showed it was near daybreak; but there was nought of promise in this harbinger of morning. Like my own career, it opened gloomily, and in sadness; so felt I at least; and as I sat beside the window, and strained my eyes to pierce the darkening storm, I thought that even watching the wild hurricane without was better than brooding over the sorrows within my own bosom.

How long I remained thus I knew not; but already the faint streak that announces sunrise marked the dull-colored sky, when the cheerful sounds of a voice singing in the room underneath attracted me. I listened, and in a moment recognized the piper, Darby M'Keown. He moved quickly about, and by his motions I could collect that he was making preparations for his journey.

If I could venture to pronounce, from the merry tones of his voice and the light elastic step with which he trod the floor, I certainly would not suppose that the dreary weather had any terror for him. He spoke so loud that I could catch a great deal of the dialogue he maintained with himself, and some odd verses of the song with which from time to time he garnished his reflections.

"Marry, indeed!—catch me at it—nabocklish—with the country side before me, and the hoith of good eating and drinking for a blast of the chauntre. Well, well, women's quare craytures anyway.

Ho, ho! Mister Barney,
No more of your blarney,
I'd have you not make so free;
You may go where you plaze,
And make love at your ease,
But the devil may have you for me.

Very well, Ma'am—Mister M'Keown is your most obedient—never say it twice, honey—and isn't there as good fish, eh?—whoop!

Oh! my heart is unazy,
My brain is run crazy,
Sure it's often I wish I was dead;
'Tis your smile now so sweet,
Now your ankles and feet,
That's walked into my heart, Molly Spread.
Tol de rol, de rol, oh!

Whew! that's rain, anyhow. I wouldn't mind it, bad as it is, if I hadn't the side of a mountain before me; but sure it comes to the same in the ind. Catty Delany is a good warrant for a pleasant evening, and please God I'll be playing 'Baltiorum' beside the fire there before this time to-night.

She'd a pig and boneens,
And a bed and a dresser,
And a nate little room,
For the father confessor,
With a cupboard and curtains, and something, I'm towld,
That his riv'rance liked, when the weather was cowld.
And its hurroo, hurroo! Biddy O'Rafferty.

After all, faix, the priest bates us out. There's eight o'clock now, and I'm not off—devil a one's stirring in the house either. Well, I believe I may take my leave of it—sorrow many tunes of the pipes it's likely to hear, with Tony Basset over it; and my heart's low when I think of that child there. Poor Tom! and it was you liked fun when you could have it."

I wanted but the compassionate tone in which these few words were spoken to decide me in a resolution that I had been for some time pondering over. I knew that ere many hours Basset would come in search of me—I felt that, once in his power, I had nothing to expect but the long-promised payment of his old debt of hatred to me. In a few seconds I ran over with myself the prospect of misery before me, and determined at once, at every hazard, to make my escape. Darby seemed to afford me the best possible opportunity for this purpose, and I dressed myself, therefore, in the greatest haste, and, throwing whatever I could find of my wardrobe into my carpet-bag, I pocketed my little purse, with all my worldly wealth—some twelve or thirteen shillings—and noiselessly slipped down stairs to the room beneath. I reached the door at the very moment Darby opened it to issue forth. He started back with fear, and crossed himself twice.

"Don't be afraid, Darby," said I, uneasy lest he should make any noise that would alarm the others; "I want to know which road you are traveling this morning."

"The saints be about us, but you frightened me, Master Tommy—though, intermediately, I may obsarve, I'm by no ways timorous. I'm going within two miles of Athlone."

"That's exactly where I want to go, Darby; will you take me with you?" for at the instant Captain Bubbleton's address flashed on my mind, and I resolved to seek him out and ask his advice in my difficulties.

"I see it all," replied Darby, as he placed the tip of his finger on his nose. "I conceive your embarrassments—you're afraid of Basset, and small blame to you; but don't do it, Master Tommy, don't do it, alannah: that's the hardest life at all."

"What?" said I, in amazement.

"To list: sure I know what you are after; faix, it would sarve you better to larn the pipes."

I hastened to assure Darby of his error, and in a few words informed him of what I had overheard of Basset's intentions respecting me.

"Make you an attorney!" said Darby, interrupting me abruptly—"an attorney! There's nothing so mean as an attorney; the police is gentlemen compared to them—they fight it out fair like men; but the other chaps sit in a house planning and contriving mischief all day long, inventing every kind of wickedness, and then getting people to do it. See, now, I believe in my conscienee the devil was the first attorney, and it was just to serve his own ends that he bred a ruction between Adam and Eve. But whisht! there's somebody stirring. Are you for the road?"

"Yes, Darby; my mind's made up."

Indeed, his own elegant eulogium on legal pursuits assisted my resolution, and filled my heart with renewed disgust at the thought of such a guardian as Tony Basset.

We walked stealthily along the gloomy passages, traversed the old hall, and noiselessly withdrew the heavy bolts and the great chain that fastened the door. The rain was sweeping along the ground in torrents, and the wind dashed it against the window-panes in fitful gusts. It needed all our strength to close the door after us against the storm, and it was only after several trials that we succeeded in doing

so. The hollow sound of the oak door smote upon my heart as it closed behind me; in an instant the sense of banishment —of utter destitution—was present to my mind. I turned my eyes to gaze upon the old house—to take my last farewell of it forever. Gloomy as my prospect was, my sorrow was less for the sad future than for the misery of the moment.

"No, Master Tom—no, you must go back," said Darby, who watched with a tender interest the sickly paleness of my cheek, and the tottering uncertainty of my walk.

"No, Darby," said I, with an effort at firmness, "I'll not look round any more." And bending my head against the storm, I stepped out boldly beside my companion. We walked on without speaking, and soon left the neglected avenue and ruined gate-lodge behind us, as we reached the high road that led to Athlone.

Darby, who only waited to let my first burst of sorrow find its natural vent, no sooner perceived from my step, and the renewed color of my cheek, that I had rallied my courage once more, than he opened all his stores of agreeability, which, to my inexperience in such matters, were by no means inconsiderable. Abandoning at once all high-flown phraseology—which Mister M'Keown, I afterward remarked, only retained as a kind of gala suit for great occasions—he spoke freely and naturally; lightening the way with many a story—now grave, now gay—he seemed to care little for the inclemency of the weather, and looked pleasantly forward to a happy evening as an ample reward for the present hardship.

"And the Captain, Master Tom, you say he's an agreeable man?" said Darby, alluding to my late companion on the coach, whose merits I was never tired of recapitulating.

"Oh, delightful! He has traveled everywhere, and seems to know everybody and everything. He's very rich, too—I forget how many houses he has in England, and elephants without number in India."

"Faix, you were in luck to fall in with him!" observed Darby.

"Yes, that I was! I'm sure he'll do something for me; and for you too, Darby, when he knows you have been so kind to me."

"Me! What did I do, darling? and what could I do, a poor piper like me? Wouldn't it be honor enough for me, if a gentleman's son would travel the road with me? Darby M'Keown's a proud man this day to have you beside him."

A ruined cabin in the road, whose blackened walls and charred timbers denoted its fate, here attracted my companion's attention. He stopped for a second or two to look on it, and then kneeling down, he muttered a short prayer for the eternal rest of some one departed, and taking up a stone, he threw it on a heap of similar ones which lay near the door side.

"What happened there, Darby?" said I, as he resumed his way.

"They wor out in the thrubles," was his only reply, as he cast a glance behind, to perceive if any one had remarked him.

Though he made no further allusion to the fate of those who once inhabited the cabin, he spoke freely of his own share in the eventful year of Ninety-eight; justifying, as it then seemed to me, every step of the patriotic party, and explaining the causes of their unsuccess so naturally and so clearly, that I could not help following with interest every detail of his narrative, and joining in his regrets for the unexpected and adverse strokes fortune dealt upon them. As he warmed with his subject, he spoke of France with an enthusiasm that I soon found contagious; he told me of the glorious career of the French armies in Italy and Austria, and of that wonderful man of whom I then heard for the first time, as spreading a halo of victory over his nation; contrasting, as he went on, the rewards which awaited heroism and bravery in that service, with the purchased promotion in ours, artfully illustrating his position by a reference to myself, and what my fortunes would have been if born under that happier sky. "No elder brother there," said he, "to live in affluence, while the younger ones are turned out to wander on the wide world, houseless and penniless; and all these things we might have done, had we been but true to ourselves."

I drank in all he said with avidity; the bearing of his arguments on my own fortunes gave them an interest and an apparent truth my young mind eagerly devoured; and when he ceased to speak, I pondered over all he told me in a spirit that left its impress on my whole future life.

It was a new notion to me to connect my own fortunes with anything in the political condition of the country, and while it gave my young heart a kind of martyred courage, it set my brain a-thinking on a class of subjects which never before possessed any interest for me; there was a flattery, too, in the thought that I owed my straitened circumstances less to any demerits of my own, than to political disabilities. The time was well chosen by my companion to

instill his doctrines into my heart—I was young, ardent, enthusiastic—my own wrongs had taught me to hate injustice and oppression—my condition had made me feel, and feel bitterly, the humiliation of dependence; and if I listened with eager curiosity to every story and every incident of the bygone rebellion, it was because the contest was represented to me as one between tyranny on one side and struggling liberty on the other. I heard the names of those who sided with the insurgent party extolled as the great and good men of their country—their ancient families and hereditary claims furnishing a contrast to many of the opposite party, whose recent settlement in the island and newborn aristocracy were held up in scoff and derision. In a word, I learned to believe that the one side was characterized by cruelty, oppression, and injustice, the other conspicuous only for endurance, courage, patriotism, and truth. What a picture was this to a mind like mine! and at a moment, too, when I seemed to realize, in my own desolation, an example of the very sufferings I heard of.

If the portrait M'Keown drew of Ireland was sad and gloomy, he painted France in colors the brightest and most seductive. Dwelling less on the political advantages which the revolution had won for the popular party, he directed my entire attention to the brilliant career of glory the French army had followed—the triumphant success of the Italian campaign—the war in Germany, and the splendor of Paris, which he represented as a very paradise on earth; but, above all, he dwelt on the character and achievements of the First Consul, recounting many anecdotes of his early life, from the period when he was a schoolboy at Brienne, to the hour when he dictated the conditions of peace to the oldest monarchies of Europe, and proclaimed war with the voice of one who came as an avenger.

I drank in every word he spoke with avidity—the very enthusiasm of his manner was contagious—I felt my heart bound with rapturous delight at some hardy deed of soldier-like daring, and conceived a kind of wild idolatry for the man who seemed to have infused his own glorious temperament into the mighty thousands around him, and converted a whole nation into heroes.

Darby's information on all these matters—which seemed to me something miraculous—had been obtained at different periods from French emissaries who were scattered through Ireland, many of them old soldiers, who had served in the campaigns of Egypt and Italy.

"But sure, if you'd come with me, Master Tom, I could bring you where you'll see them yourself, and you could talk to them of the battles and skirmishes, for I suppose you spake French."

"Very little, Darby. How sorry I am now that I don't know it well."

"No matter, they'll soon teach you, and many a thing beside. There's a captain I know of, not far from where we are this minute, could learn you the small sword—in style, he could. I wish you saw him in his green uniform with white facings, and three elegant crosses upon it that General Bonaparte gave him with his own hands; he had them on one Sunday, and I never see'd anything equal to it."

"And are there many French officers hereabouts?"

"Not now; no, they're almost all gone. After the rising they went back to France, except a few. Well, there'll be call for them again, please God."

"Will there be another rebellion, then, Darby?"

As I put this question fearlessly, and in a voice loud enough to be heard at some distance, a horseman, wrapped up in a loose cloth cloak, was passing; he suddenly pulled up short, and turning his horse round, stood exactly opposite to the piper.

Darby saluted the stranger respectfully, and seemed desirous to pass on, but the other, turning round in his saddle, fixed a stern look on him, and he cried out,

"What! at the old trade, M'Keown. Is there no curing you, eh?"

"Just so, Major," said Darby, assuming a tone of voice he had not made use of the entire morning; "I'm conveying a little instrumental recreation."

"None of your d—d gibberish with me. Who's that with you?"

"He's a son of a neighbor of mine, your honor," said Darby, with an imploring look at me not to betray him. "His father's a schoolmaster—a philomath, as one might say."

I was about to contradict this statement bluntly, when the stranger called out to me,

"Mark me, young sir, you're not in the best of company this morning, and I recommend you to part with your friend as soon as may be. And you," said he, turning to Darby, "let me see you in Athlone at ten o'clock to-morrow. D'ye hear me?"

The piper grew pale as death as he heard this command, to which he only responded by touching his hat in silence; while the

horseman, drawing his cloak around, dashed his spurs into his beast's flanks, and was soon out of sight. Darby stood for a moment or two, looking down the road where the stranger had disappeared; a livid hue colored his cheek, and a tremulous quivering of his under lip gave him the appearance of one in ague.

"I'll be even with ye yet," muttered he between his clenched teeth; "and when the hour comes—"

Here he repeated some words in Irish with a vehemence of manner that actually made my blood tingle; then suddenly recovering himself, he assumed a kind of sickly smile. "That's a hard man, the Major."

"I'm thinking," said Darby, after a pause of some minutes—I'm thinking it's better for you not to go into Athlone with me; for if Basset wishes to track you out, that'll be the first place he'll try; besides, now that the Major has seen you, he'll never forget you."

Having pledged myself to adopt any course my companion recommended, he resumed:

"Ay, that's the best way. I'll lave you at Ned Malone's in the Glen; and when I've done with the Major in the morning, I'll look after your friend the Captain, and tell him where you are."

I readily assented to this arrangement, and only asked what distance it might yet be to Ned Malone's, for already I began to feel fatigue.

"A good ten miles," said Darby, "no less; but we'll stop here above, and get something to eat, and then we'll take a rest for an hour or two, and you'll think nothing of the road after."

I stepped out with increased energy at the cheering prospect; and although the violence of the weather was nothing abated, I consoled myself with thinking of the rest and refreshment before me, and resolved not to bestow a thought upon the present. Darby, on the other hand, seemed more depressed than before, and betrayed in many ways a state of doubt and uncertainty as to his movements—sometimes pushing on rapidly for half a mile or so, then relapsing into a slow and plodding pace, often looking back, too, and more than once coming to a perfect stand-still, talking the whole time to himself in a low, muttering voice.

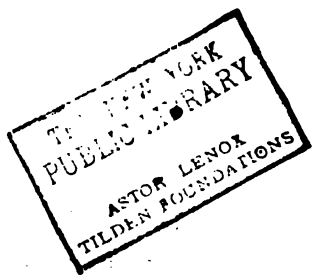
In this way we proceeded for above two miles, when at last I descried through the beating rain the dusky gable of a small cabin in the distance, and eagerly asked if that were to be our halting-place.

"Yes," said Darby, "that's Peg's cabin; and though it's not very remarkable in the way of cookery or the like, it's the only house within seven miles of us."

As we came nearer, the aspect of the building became even less enticing. It was a low mud hovel, with a miserable roof of sods, or scraws, as they are technically called; a wretched attempt at a chimney occupying the gable, and the front to the road containing a small square aperture, with a single pane of glass as a window, and a wicker contrivance in the shape of a door, which, notwithstanding the severity of the day, lay wide open to permit the exit of the smoke, which rolled more freely through this than through the chimney. A filthy pool of stagnant, green-covered water stood before the door, through which a little causeway of earth led. Upon this a thin, lank-sided sow was standing to be rained on, her long, pointed snout turned meditatively toward the luscious mud beside her. Displacing this important member of the family with an unceremonious kick, Darby stooped to enter the low doorway, uttering as he did so the customary "God save all here!" As I followed him in, I did not catch the usual response to the greeting, and, from the thick smoke which filled the cabin, could see nothing whatever around me.

"Well, Peg," said Darby, "how is it with you the day?"

A low grunting noise issued from the foot of a little mud wall beside the fireplace. I turned and beheld the figure of a woman of some seventy years of age, seated beside the turf embers; her dark eyes, bleared with smoke and dimmed with age, were still sharp and piercing, and her nose, thin and aquiline, indicated a class of features by no means common among the people. Her dress was the blue frieze coat of a laboring man, over the woolen gown usually worn by women. Her feet and legs were bare, and her head was covered with an old straw bonnet, whose faded ribbon and tarnished finery betokened its having once belonged to some richer owner. There was no vestige of any furniture—neither table, nor chair, nor dresser, nor even a bed, unless some straw laid against the wall in one corner could be thus called; a pot suspended over the wet and sodden turf by a piece of hay rope, and an earthen pipkin with water stood beside her. The floor of the hovel, lower in many places than the road without, was cut up into sloppy mud by the tread of the sow, who ranged at will through the premises. In a word, more dire and wretched poverty it was impossible to conceive.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"COME ALONG QUICK," SAID DARBY, WITH A LOOK OF TERROR, "SHE'S GOING TO CURSE YOU." (P. 247.)

Darby's first movement was to take off the lid and peer into the pot, when the bubbling sound of the boiling potatoes assured him that we should have at least something to eat: his next was, to turn a little basket upside down for a seat, to which he motioned me with his hand; then, approaching the old woman, he placed his hand to his mouth and shouted in her ear,

"What's the major after this morning, Peg?"

She shook her head gloomily a couple of times, but gave no answer.

"I'm thinking there's bad work going on at the town there," cried he, in the same loud tone as before.

Peg muttered something in Irish, but far too low to be audible.

"Is she mad, poor thing?" said I, in a whisper.

The words were not well uttered, when she darted on me her black and piercing eyes, with a look so steadfast as to make me quail beneath them.

"Who's that there?" said the hag, in a croaking, harsh voice.

"He's a young boy from beyond Loughrea."

"No!" shouted she, in a tone of passionate energy, "don't tell me a lie. I'd know his brows among a thousand; he's a son of Mat Burke's, of Cronmore."

"Begorra, she is a witch—devil a doubt of it," muttered Darby between his teeth. "You're right, Peg," continued he, after a moment. "His father's dead, and the poor child's left nothing in the world."

"And so ould Mat's dead," interrupted she. "When did he die?"

"On Tuesday morning, before day."

"I was dhraming of him that morning, and I thought he kem up here to the cabin door on his knees, and said, 'Peggy, Peggy M'Casky, I'm come to ax your pardon for all I done to you;' and I sat up in my bed, and cried out, 'Who's that?' and he said, ''Tis me—'tis Mister Burke—I'm come to give you back your lease.' 'I'll tell you what you'll give me back,' says I, 'give me the man whose heart you bruck with bad treatment—give me the two fine boys you transported for life—give me back twenty years of my own, that I spent in sorrow and misery.'"

"Peg, acushla! don't speak of it any more. The poor child here, that's fasting from daybreak, he isn't to blame for what his father did. I think the praties is done by this time."

So saying, he lifted the pot from the fire, and carried it to the door to strain off the water. The action seemed to rouse the old woman, who rose rapidly to her legs, and, hastening to the door, snatched the pot from his hand, and pushed him to one side.

"'Tis two days since I tasted bit or sup. 'Tis God himself knows when and where I may have it again; but if I never broke my fast I'll not do it with the son of him that left me a lone woman this day, that brought the man that loved me to the grave, and my children to shame for ever."

As she spoke, she dashed the pot into the road with such force as to break it into fifty pieces; and then, sitting down on the outside of the cabin, she wrung her hands and moaned piteously, in the very excess of her sorrow.

"Let us be going," said Darby, in a whisper. "There's no spaking to her when she's one of them fits on her."

We moved silently from the hovel, and gained the road. My heart was full to bursting — shame and abasement overwhelmed me, and I dared not look up.

"Good-by, Peg. I hope we'll be better friends when we meet again," said Darby, as he passed out.

She made no reply, but entered the cabin, from which, in an instant after she emerged, carrying a lighted sod of turf in a rude wooden tongs.

"Come along quick," said Darby, with a look of terror, "she's going to curse you."

I turned round, transfixed and motionless. If my life depended on it, I could not have stirred a limb. The old woman by this time had knelt down on the road, and was muttering rapidly to herself.

"Come along, I say," said Darby, pulling me by the arm.

"And now," cried the hag, aloud, "may bad luck be your shadow wherever you walk, with sorrow behind and bad hopes before you—may you never taste happiness nor ease, and, like this turf, may your heart be always burning here, and—"

I heard no more, for Darby, tearing me away by main force, dragged me along the road, just as the hissing turf embers had fallen at my feet, where the hag had thrown them.

CHAPTER IV.

MY WANDERINGS.

I CANNOT deny it, the horrible imprecation I had heard uttered against me seemed

to fill up the cup of my misery. An outcast, without home, without a friend, this alone was wanting to overwhelm me with very wretchedness; and, as I covered my face with both hands, I thought my heart would break.

"Come, come, Master Tom," said Darby, "don't be afeared, it'll never do you harm, all she said. I made the sign of the cross on the road between you and her with the end of my stick, and you're safe enough this time. Faix, she's a quare divil when she's roused—to destroy an illigint pot of praties that way; but sure she had hard provocation. Well, well, you warn't to blame, any how: Tony Basset will have a sore reckoning some day for all this."

The mention of that name recalled me in a moment to the consideration of my own danger if he were to succeed in overtaking me, and I eagerly communicated my fear to Darby.

"That's thrue," said he; "we must leave the high road, for Basset will be up at the house by this, and will lose no time in following you out. If you had a bit of something to eat."

"As to that, Darby," said I, with a sickly effort to smile, "Peg's curse took away my appetite, full as well as her potatoes would have done."

"'Tis a bad way to breakfast, after all," said Darby. "Do you ever take a shaugh of the pipe, Master Tom?"

"No," said I, laughing, "I never learned to smoke yet."

"Well," replied he, a little piqued by the tone of my answer, "'tis worse you might be doin' than that same. Tobacco's a fine thing for the heart! Many's the time, when I'm alone, if I hadn't the pipe I'd be lone and sorrowful—thinking over the hard times and the like; but when I've filled my dudeen, and do be watching the smoke curling up, I begin dhraming about sitting round the fire with pleasant companions, chatting away, and discoorsing, and telling stories; and then I invint the stories to myself about quare devils of pipers traveling over the country, making love here and there, and playing dhroll tunes out of their own heads; and then I make the tunes to them: and after that, maybe, I make words, and sometimes lay down the pipe and begin singing to myself; and often I take up the bagpipes and play away with all my might, till I think I see the darlingest little fairies ever you seen dancing before me, setting to one another, and turning round, and capering away—down the middle and up again: small chaps, with three-cornered hats, and wigs, and little red coats, all slashed with goold; and beautiful little craytures houlding their petticoats this way, to show a nate leg and foot; and I do be calling out to them—'Hands round'—'That's your sowl'—'Look at the green fellow, 'tis himself can do it'—'Rise the jig, hoo!' and faix 'tis sorry enough I'm when they go, and lave me all alone by myself."

"And how does all that come into your head, Darby?"

"Troth, 'tis hard to tell," said Darby, with a sigh; "but my notion is, that the poor man that has neither fine houses, nor fine clothes, nor horses, nor sarvants to amuse him, that Providence is kind to him in another way, and fills his mind with all manner of dhroll thoughts, and quare stories, and bits of songs, and the like; and lets him into many a sacret about fairies, and the good people, that the rich has no time for: and sure you must have often remarked it, that the quality has never a bit of fun in them at all, but does be always coming to us for something to make them laugh. Did you never lave the parlor, when the company was sitting with lashings of wine and fruit, and every convaniency, and go down stairs to the kitchen, where maybe there was nothing but a salt herrin' and a jug of punch, and if you did, where was the most fun, I wondher? Arrah, when they bid me play a tune for them, and I look at their sorrowful pale faces, and their dim eyes, and the stiff way they sit upon their chairs, I never put heart in it; but when I rise 'Dirty James,' or 'The Little Bould Fox,' or 'Kiss my Lady,' for the boys and girls, sure 'tis my whole sowl does be in the bag, and I squeeze the notes out of it with all my might."

In this way did Darby converse until we reached a cross road, when, coming to a halt, he pointed with his finger to the distance, and said:

"Athlone is down beyond that low mountain. Now, Ned Malone's is only six short miles from this. You keep this by-road till you reach the smith's forge, then turn off to the lift, across the fields, till you come to an ould ruin, lave that to your right hand, and follow the boreen straight, 'twill bring you to Ned's doore."

"But I don't know him," said I.

"What signifies that—sure 'tis no need you have—tell him you'll stop there till Darby the Blast comes for you; and see, now, here's all you have to do—put your right thumb in the palm of your lift hand, this way, and then kiss the other thumb, then you have it; but mind you don't do that

till you're alone with him—'tis a token between ourselves."

"I wish you were coming with me, Darby—I'd rather not leave you!"

"'Tis myself mislikes it, too," said Darby with a sigh; "but I daren't miss going to Athlone, the Major would soon ferret me out—and it's worse it would be for me."

"And what am I to do if Mr. Basset comes after me?"

"If he hasn't a throop of horse at his back, you may laugh at him in Ned Malone's. And now good-by, acushla; and don't let your heart be low—you'll be a man soon, you know."

The words of encouragement could not have been more happily chosen to raise my drooping spirits. The sense of opening manhood was already stirring within me, and waited but for some direct occasion to elicit it in full vigor.

I shook Darby's hand with a firm grasp, and, assuming the easiest smile I could accomplish, set out on the path before me with all the alacrity in my power.

The first thought that shot across my mind when I parted with my companion was the utter loneliness of my condition; the next—and it followed immediately on the other—was the bold consciousness of personal freedom. I enjoyed, at the moment, the untrammeled liberty to wander, without let or control. All memory of Tony Basset was forgotten, and I only remembered the restraint of school and the tyranny of my master. My plan—and already I had formed a plan—was to become a farmer's servant—to work as a daily laborer. Ned Malone would probably accept of me, young as I was, in that capacity; and I had no other ambition than such as secured my independence.

As I traveled along I wove within my mind a whole web of imaginary circumstances—of days of peaceful toil; of nights of happy and contented rest; of friendship formed with those of my own age and condition; of the long summer evenings, when I should ramble alone to commune with myself on my humble but happy lot; on the red hearth in winter, around which the merry faces of the cottagers were beaming, as some pleasant tale was told; and as I asked myself, would I exchange a life like this for all the advantages of fortune my brother's position afforded him, my heart replied, No. Even then the words of the piper had worked upon me, and already had I connected the possession of wealth with oppression and tyranny, and the lowly fortunes of the poor man as alone securing high-souled liberty of thought, and freedom of speech and action.

I trudged along through the storm, turning from time to time to see that I was not pursued; for as the day waned, my fear of being overtaken increased, and in every moaning of the wind, and every rustle of the branches, I thought I heard Tony Basset summoning me to stop and surrender myself his prisoner. This dread gradually gave way, as the loneliness of the road was unbroken by a single traveler, the wild half-tilled fields presented no living object far or near, the thick rain swooped along the swampy earth, and, in its misty darkness, shut out all distant prospect, and a sadder picture eye never rested on.

At length I reached the ruined church Darby spoke of, and following the track he indicated, soon came out upon the boreen, where for the first time some little shelter existed.

It was only at nightfall, when fatigue and hunger had nearly obtained the victory over me, that I saw, at some short distance in front, the long roof of a well-thatched cabin; as I came nearer, I could perceive that it contained several windows, and that the door was sheltered by a small porch—marks of comfort by no means common among the neighboring farmers; lights moved here and there through the cabin, and the voices of people driving in the cows, and the barking of dogs, were welcome sounds to my ear. A half-clad urchin, of some seven years old, armed with a huge bramble, was driving a flock of turkeys before him as I approached; but instead of replying to my question, "If this were Ned Malone's?" the little fellow threw down his weapon, and ran for his life. Before I could recover from my surprise at his strange conduct the door opened, and a large, powerful-looking man, in a long blue coat, appeared. He carried a musket in his hand, which, as soon as he perceived the figure before him, he laid down within the porch, calling out to some one inside,

"Go back, Maurice—it's nothing. Well, sir," continued he, addressing me, "do you want anybody hereabouts?"

"Is this Ned Malone's, may I ask?" said I.

"It is," answered he, "and I am Ned Malone, at your service; and what then?"

There was something in the cold, forbidding tone in which he spoke, as well as in the hard severity of his look, that froze all my resolution to ask a favor, and I would gladly have sought elsewhere for shelter for the night, had I known where to look.

The delay this indecision on my part created caused him to repeat his question, while he fixed his eyes on me with a dark and piercing expression.

"Darby the Blast told me," said I, with a great effort to seem at ease, "that you would give me shelter to-night. To-morrow morning he's to come here for me."

"And who are you?" said he, harshly, "that I'm to take into my house? In these troublesome times a man may ask the name of his lodger."

"My name is Burke. My father's name was Burke, of Cremore, but he's dead now."

"'Tis you that Basset is after all day, is it?"

"I can't tell, but I fear it may be."

"Well, some one told him that you took the Dublin road, and another sent him up here, and the boys here sent him to Durrah. And what are you after, young gentleman? Do you dislike Tony Basset? Is that it?"

"Yes," said I, "I'm resolved never to go home and live with him. He made my father hate me, and through him I have been left a beggar."

"There's more than you has a score to settle with Tony. Come into the house and get your clothes dried. But stop, I have a bit of caution to give you. If you see anything or anybody while you're under my roof that you didn't expect——"

"Trust me there," interrupted I, eagerly, and making the sign the piper had taught me.

"What!" cried Malone in astonishment, "are you one of us? Is a son of Matt Burke's going to redress the wrongs his father and grandfather before him inflicted? Give me your hand, my brave boy; there's nothing in this house isn't your own from this minit."

I grasped his strong hand in mine, and, with a proud and swelling heart, followed him into the cabin.

A whisper crept round the various persons that sat and stood about the kitchen fire as I appeared among them; and the next moment one after another pressed anxiously forward to shake hands with me.

"Help him off with his wet clothes, Maurice," said Malone, to a young man of some twenty years; and in a few seconds my wet garments were hung on chairs before the blaze, and I myself, accommodated with a frieze coat that would make a waistcoat for an elephant, sat basking before the cheerful turf fire. The savory steam of a great mess of meat and potatoes induced me to peep into the large pot over the fire; a hearty burst of laughing from the whole party acknowledged their detection of my ravenous hunger, and the supper was smoking on the board in a few minutes after. Unhappily, a good number of years have rolled over my head since that night; but I still hesitate to decide whether to my appetite or to Mrs. Malone's cookery I should attribute it, but certainly my performance on that occasion called forth unqualified admiration.

I observed, during the supper, that one of the girls carried a plateful of the savory dish into a small room at the end of the kitchen, carefully closing the door after her as she entered, and, when she came out, exchanging with Malone a few hurried words, to which the attention of the others was evidently directed. The caution I had already received, and my own sense of propriety, prevented my paying any attention to this, and I conversed with those about me, freely narrating the whole circumstances of my departure from home, my fear of Basset, and my firm resolve—come what might—never to become an inmate of his house and family. Not all the interest they took in my fortunes, nor even the warm praises of what they called my courage and manliness, could ward off the tendency to sleep, and my eyes actually closed as I lay down in my bed, and, notwithstanding the noise of voices and the sounds of laughter so near me, sank into the heaviest slumber.

CHAPTER V.

THE CABIN.

BEFORE day broke, the stir and bustle of the household awoke me, and, had it not been for the half-open door, which permitted a view of the proceedings in the kitchen, I should have been sadly puzzled to remember where I was. The cheerful turf fire, the happy faces, and the pleasant voices, all reminded me of the preceding night, and I lay pondering over my fortunes, and revolving within myself many a plan for the future.

In all the day-dreams of ambition in which youth indulges, there is this advantage over the projects of mature years—the past never mingles with the future. In after life our by-gone existence is ever tinging the time to come; the expectations friends have formed of us, the promises we have made to our own hearts, the hopes we have created, seem to pledge us to something which, if unattained, sounds like

failure: but, in earlier years, the budding consciousness of our ability to reach the goal does but stimulate us, and never chills our efforts by the dread of disappointment. We have, as it were, only bound ourselves in recognisances with our own hearts—the world has not gone bail for us, and our falling short involves not the ruin of others, nor the loss of that self-respect which is but the reflex of the opinion of society. I felt this strongly; and, the more I ruminated on it, the more resolutely bent was I to adopt some bold career—some enterprising path, where ambition should supply to me the pleasures and excitements that others found among friends and home.

I now perceived how unsuitable would be to me the quiet monotony of a peasant's life—how irksome the recurrence of the same daily occupations—the routine of ceaseless labor—the intercourse with those whose views and hopes strayed not beyond their own hedge-rows. A soldier's life appeared to realize all that I looked for; but then, the conversation of the piper recurred to me, and I remembered how he painted these men to me as mere hireling bravos, to whom glory or fame was nothing, merely actuated by the basest of passions, the slaves of tyranny. All the atrocities he mentioned of the military in the past year came up before me, and with them the brave resistance of the people in their struggle for independence. How my heart glowed with enthusiasm as I thought over the bold stand they had made, and how I panted to be a man, and linked in such a cause. Every gloomy circumstance in my own fate seemed as the result of that grinding oppression under which my country suffered, even to the curse vented on me by one whose ruin and desolation lay at my own father's door. My temples throbbed, and my heart beat painfully against my side, as I revolved these thoughts within me; and when I rose from my bed that morning I was a rebel with all my soul.

The day, like the preceding one, was stormy and inclement. The rain poured down without ceasing, and the dark, lowering sky gave no promise of better things. The household of the cottage remained all at home, and betook themselves to such occupations as in-door permitted. The women sat down to their spinning-wheels—some of the men employed themselves in repairing their tools, and others in making nets for fishing; but all were engaged. Meanwhile, amid the sounds of labor was mixed the busy hum of merry voices, as they chatted away pleasantly, with many a story and many a song lightening the long hours of the dark day. As for me, I longed impatiently for Darby's return; a thousand half-formed plans were flitting through my mind, and I burned to hear whether Basset was still in pursuit of me—what course he was adopting to regain me within his control—if Darby had seen my friend Bubbleton, and whether he showed any disposition to befriend and protect me. These and such like thoughts kept passing through my mind; and, as the storm would shake the rude door, I would stand up with eagerness, hoping every moment to see him enter. But the day moved on, and the dusky half-light of a wintry afternoon was falling, and Darby made not his appearance. When I spoke of him to the others, they expressed no surprise at his absence, merely remarking that he was always uncertain—no one knew when to expect him—that he rarely came when they looked for him, and constantly dropped in when no one anticipated it.

"There he is now, then," said one of the young men, springing up and opening the door; "I hear his voice in the glen."

"Do you see him, Maurice?" cried Malone. "Is it him?"

The young man stepped back, his face pale as death, and his mouth partly open. He whispered a word in the old man's ear, to which the other responded:

"Where?" The youth pointed with his finger. "How many are they?" was his next question, while his dark eye glanced toward the old musket that hung on the wall above the fire.

"Too many—too many for us," said Maurice, bitterly.

The women, who had gathered around the speaker, looked at each other with an expression of utter wretchedness, when one of them, breaking from the others, rushed into the little inner room off the kitchen, and slammed the door violently behind her. The next instant the sound of voices was heard from the room, as if in altercation. Malone turned round at once, and, throwing the door wide open, called out:

"Be quiet, I say. There's not a moment to be lost. Maurice, put that gun away—Shamus, take up your net again—sit down, girls."

At the same instant he drew from his bosom a long horse pistol, and, having examined the loading and priming, replaced it within his waistcoat, and sat down on a chair beside the fire, his strongly marked countenance fixed on the red blaze, while his lips muttered rapidly some words to himself.

"Are ye ready there?" he cried, as his eyes were turned toward the small door.

"In a minit," said the woman from within.

At the same instant the sounds of voices and the regular tramp of men marching were heard without.

"Halt! stand at ease!" called out a deep voice, and the clank of the muskets as they fell to the ground was heard through the cabin. Meanwhile, every one within had resumed his previous place and occupation, and the buzz of voices resounded through the kitchen, as though no interruption whatever had taken place. The latch was now lifted, and a sergeant, stooping to permit his tall feather to pass in, entered, followed by a man in plain clothes.

The latter was a short, powerfully-built man, of about fifty; his hair, of a grizzly gray, contrasted with the deep purple of his countenance, which was swollen and bloated—the mouth, its most remarkable feature, was large and thick-lipped—the under lip projecting considerably forward, and having a strange, convulsive motion when he was not speaking.

"It's a hard day, Mister Barton," said Malone, rising from his seat, and stroking down his hair with one hand. "Won't ye come over and take an air at the fire?"

"I will, indeed, Ned," said he, taking the proffered seat and stretching out his legs to the blaze. "It's a severe season we have. I don't know how the poor are to get in the turf; the bogs are very wet entirely."

"They are, indeed, sir; and the harvest 'ill be very late getting in now," said one of the young men, with a most obsequious voice. "Won't ye sit down, sir?" said he to the sergeant.

A nod from Mister Barton in acquiescence decided the matter, and the sergeant was seated.

"What's here, Mary?" said Barton, striking the large pot that hung over the fire with his foot.

"It's the boys' dinner, sir," said the girl.

"I think it wouldn't be a bad job if we joined them," replied he, laughingly—"eh, sergeant?"

"There 'ill be enough for us all," said Malone, "and I'm sure ye're welcome to it."

The table was quickly spread, the places next the fire being reserved for the strangers; while Malone, unlocking a cupboard, took down a bottle of whisky, which he placed before them, remarking, as he did so—

"Don't be afeard, gentlemen—'tis Parliament."

"That's right, Malone. I like a man to be loyal in these bad times; there's nothing like it. Faith, Mary, you're a good cook—that's as savory a stew as ever I tasted. Where's Patsey now? I haven't seen him for some time."

The girl's face grew dark red, and then became as suddenly pale; when, staggering back, she lifted her apron to her face, and leaned against the dresser.

"He's transported for life," said Malone, in a deep, sepulchral voice, while all his efforts to conceal agitation were fruitless.

"Oh, I remember," said Barton, carelessly, "he was in the dock with the Hogans. I'll take another bone from you, Ned. Sergeant, that's a real Irish dish, and no bad one either."

"What's doing at the town to-day?" said Malone, affecting an air of easy indifference.

"Nothing remarkable, I believe; they have taken up that rascal, Darby the Blast, as they call him. The Major had him under examination this morning for two hours; and they say he'll give evidence against the Dillons—a little more fat, if ye please—money, you know, Ned, will do anything these times."

"You ought to know that, sir," said Maurice, with such an air of assumed innocence, as actually made Barton look ashamed. In an instant, however, he recovered himself and pretended to laugh at the remark. "Your health, sergeant—Ned Malone, your health—ladies, yours, and boys the same." A shower of "thank ye, sir's," followed this piece of unlooked-for courtesy. "Who's that boy there, Ned?" said he, pointing to me, as I sat with my eyes riveted upon him.

"He's from this side of Banagher, sir," said Malone, evading the question.

"Come over here, younker. What's his name?"

"Tom, sir.

"Come over, Tom, till I teach you a toast. Here's a glass, my lad—hold it steady, till I fill you a bumper. Did you ever hear tell of the croppies?"

"No, never."

"Never heard of the croppies! Well, you're not long in Ned Malone's company, anyhow—eh? ha! ha! ha! Well, my man, the croppies is another name for the rebels, and the toast I'm going to give you is about them. So mind you finish it at one pull—here now, are you ready?"

"Yes, quite ready," said I, as I held the brimming glass straight before me.

"Here's it then:

'May every croppy taste the rope,
And find some man to bang them;
May Bagnal Harvey and the Pope
Have Heppenstal to hang them.'"

I knew enough of the meaning of his words to catch the allusion, and dashing the glass with all my force against the wall, I smashed it in a hundred pieces. Barton sprang from his chair, his face dark with passion, clutching me by the collar with both hands, he cried out, "Holloa there without, bring in the handcuffs here! As sure as my name's Sandy Barton, we'll teach you that toast practically, and that ere long."

"Take care what you do there," said Malone, fiercely; "that young gentleman is a son of Matthew Burke of Cremore; his relatives are not the kind of people to figure in your riding-house."

"Are you a son of Matthew Burke?"

"I am."

"What brings you here, then?—why are you not at home?"

"By what right do you dare to ask me? I have yet to learn how far I am responsible for where I go to a thief-catcher."

"You hear that, sergeant, you heard him use a word to bring me into contempt before the people, and excite them to use acts of violence toward me."

"No such thing, Mister Barton," said Malone, coolly; "nobody here has any thought of molesting you. I told you that young gentleman's name and condition, to prevent you making any mistake concerning him; for his friends are not the people to trifle with."

This artfully-put menace had its effect; Barton sat down again, and appeared to reflect for a few minutes, then taking a roll of paper from his pocket, he began leisurely to peruse it. The silence at this moment was something horribly oppressive.

"This is a search-warrant, Mr. Malone," said Barton, laying down the paper on the table, "empowering me to seek for the body of a certain French officer, said to be concealed in these parts. Informations on oath state that he passed, at least, one night under your roof. As he has not accepted the amnesty granted to the other officers in the late famous attempt against the peace of this country, the law will deal with him as strict justice may demand; at the same time, it is right you should know that harboring or sheltering him, under these circumstances, involves the person or persons so doing in his guilt. Mr. Malone's well-known and tried loyalty," continued Barton, with a half grin of most malicious meaning, "would certainly exculpate him from any suspicion of this nature; but sworn informations are stubborn things, and it is possible that, in ignorance of the danger such a proceeding would involve——"

"I thought the thrubbles was over, sir," interrupted Malone, wiping his forehead with the back of his hand, "and that an honest, industrious man, that minded his own business, had nothing to fear from any one."

"And you thought right," said Barton, slowly and deliberately, while he scanned the other's features with a searching look; "and that is the very fact I'm come to ascertain; and now, with your leave, we'll first search the house and offices; and then I'll put a little interrogatory to such persons as I think fit, touching this affair."

"You're welcome to go over the cabin whenever you like," said Malone, rising, and evidently laboring to repress his passionate indignation at Barton's coolness.

Barton stood up at the same moment, and giving a wink at the sergeant to follow, walked toward the small door I've already mentioned. Malone's wife at this started forward, and, catching Barton's arm, whispered a few words in his ear.

"She must be a very old woman by this time," said Barton, fixing his sharp eyes on the speaker.

"Upwards of ninety, sir, and bedridden for twelve years," said the woman, wiping a tear away with her apron.

"And how comes it she's so afraid of the soldiers, if she's doting?"

"Arrah! they used to frighten her so much, coming in at night, and firing shots at the doors, and drinking and singing songs, that she never got over it, and that's the rayson. I'll beg of your honor not to bring in the sergeant, and to disturb her only as little as you can, for it sets her raving about battles and murders, and it's maybe ten days before we'll get her mind at ease again."

"Well, well, I'll not trouble her," said he, quickly. "Sergeant, step back for a moment."

With this he entered the room, followed by the woman, whose uncertain step and quiet gesture seemed to suggest caution.

"She's asleep, sir," said she, approaching the bed. "It's many a day since she had as fine a sleep as that. 'Tis good luck you brought us this morning, Mister Barton."

"Draw aside the curtain a little," said

Barton, in a low voice, as if fearing to awake the sleeper.

"'Tis rousing her up, you'll be, Mister Barton. She feels the light at wanst."

"She breathes very long for so old a woman," said he, somewhat louder, "and has a good broad shoulder, too. I'd like, if it was only for curiosity, just to see her face a little closer. I thought so! Come, Captain, it's no use—"

A scream from the woman drowned the remainder of the speech, while at the same instant one of the young men shut to the outside door, and barred it. The sergeant was immediately pinioned with his hands behind his back, and Malone drew his horse-pistol from his bosom, and, holding up his hand, called out:

"Not a word—not a word! If ye spake, it will be the last time ever you'll do so!" said he to the sergeant.

At the same moment, the noise of a scuffle was heard in the inner room, and the door burst suddenly open, and Barton issued forth, dragging in his strong hands the figure of a young, slightly-formed man. His coat was off, but his trowsers were braided with gold, in military fashion; and his black moustache denoted the officer. The struggle of the youth to get free was utterly fruitless; Barton's grasp was on his collar, and he held him as though he were a child.

Malone stooped down toward the fire, and, opening the pan of his pistol, examined the priming; then, slapping it down again, he stood erect.

"Barton," said he, in a tone of firm determination I heard him use for the first time—"Barton, it's bad to provoke a man with the halter round his neck! I know what's before me well enough now. But, see, let him escape—give him two hours to get away—and here I'll surrender myself your prisoner, and follow you where you like."

"Break in the door, there, blast ye!" was the reply to this offer, as Barton shouted to the soldiers at the top of his voice. Two of the young men darted forward as he spoke, and threw themselves against it. "Fire through it!" cried Barton, stamping with passion.

"You will have it, will you, then?" said Malone, as he ground his teeth in anger; then, raising his pistol, he sprang forward, and holding it within a yard of Barton's face, shouted out, "There!" The powder flashed in the lock, and, quick as its own report, Barton hurled the Frenchman round to protect him from the ball, but only in time to receive the shot in his right arm as he held it uplifted. The arm fell powerless to his side, while Malone, springing on him like a tiger, grasped him in his powerful grip, and they both rolled upon the ground in terrible conflict. The Frenchman stood for an instant like one transfixed, then, bursting from the spot, dashed through the kitchen to the small room I had slept in. One of the young men followed him. The crash of glass, and the sounds of breaking woodwork were heard among the other noises, and at the same moment the door gave way in front, and the soldiers with fixed bayonets entered at a charge.

"Fire on them! fire on them!" shouted Barton, as he lay struggling on the ground; and a random volley rang through the cabin, filling it with smoke. A yell of anguish burst forth at the moment, and one of the women lay stretched upon the hearth, her bosom bathed in blood. The scene was now a terrible one; for, although overpowered by numbers, the young men rushed on the soldiers, and, regardless of wounds, endeavored to wrest their arms from them. The bayonets glanced through the blue smoke, and shouts of rage and defiance rose up amid frightful screams of suffering and woe. A bayonet-stab in the side, received I know not how, sent me half fainting into the little room, through which the Frenchman had escaped. The open window being before me, I did not deliberate a second, but, mounting the table, crept through it, and fell heavily on the turf outside. In a moment after I rallied, and, staggering onward, reached a potato-field, where, overcome by pain and weakness, I sank into one of the furrows, scarcely conscious of what had occurred.

Weak and exhausted as I was, I could still hear the sounds of the conflict that raged within the cabin. Gradually, however, they grew fainter and fainter, and at last subsided altogether. Yet I feared to stir; and although night was now falling, and the silence continued unbroken, I lay still, hoping to hear some well-known voice, or even the footstep of some one belonging to the house; but all was calm, and nothing stirred. The very air, too, was hushed: not a leaf moved in the thin, frosty atmosphere. The dread of finding the soldiers in possession of the cabin made me fearful of quitting my hiding-place, and I did not move. Some hours had passed over ere I gained courage enough to raise my head and look about me.

My first glance was directed toward the distant high-road, where I expected to have seen some of the party who attacked the

cabin; but, far as my eye could reach, no living thing was to be seen; my next was toward the cabin, which, to my horror and amazement, I soon perceived was enveloped in a thick, dark smoke, that rolled lazily from the windows and doorway, and even issued from the thatched roof. As I looked, I could hear the crackling of timber and the sound of wood burning. These continued to increase; and then a red, forked flame shot through one of the casements, and, turning upward, caught the thatch, where, passing rapidly across the entire roof, it burst into a broad sheet of fire, which died out again as rapidly, and left the gloomy smoke triumphant.

Meanwhile, a roaring sound, like that of a furnace, was heard from within; and at last, with an explosion like a mortar, the roof burst open, and the bright blaze sprang forth; the rafters were soon enveloped in fire, and the heated straw rose into the air, and floated in thin streaks of flame through the black sky. The door-cases and the window-frames were all burning, and marked their outlines against the dark walls; and, as the thatch was consumed, the red rafters were seen like the ribs of a skeleton, but they fell in one by one, sending up in their descent millions of red sparks into the dark air. The back wall of the cabin had given way to the heat, and through its wide fissure I could see the interior, now one mass of undistinguishable ruin: nothing remained, save the charred and blackened walls.

I sat gazing at this sad sight like one entranced. Sometimes it seemed to me as a terrible dream; and then the truth would break upon me with fearful force, and my heart felt as though it would bust far beyond my bosom. The last flickering flame died away; the hissing sounds of the fire were stilled; and the dark walls stood out against the bleak background in all their horrible deformity, as I rose and entered the cabin. I stood within the little room where I had slept the night before, and looked out into the kitchen, around whose happy hearth the merry voices were so lately heard. I brought them up before me, in imagination, as they sat there. One by one I marked their places in my mind, and thought of the kindness of their welcome to me, and the words of comfort and encouragement they spoke. The hearth was now cold and black; the pale stars looked down between the walls, and a chill moonlight flickered through the gloomy ruin. My heart had no room for sorrow, but another feeling found a place within it—a savage thirst for vengeance—vengeance upon those who had desecrated a peaceful home, and brought blood and death among its inmates! Here was the very realization before my eyes of what M'Keown had been telling me; here the horrible picture he had drawn of tyranny and outrage. In the humble cottagers I saw but simple-minded peasants, who had opened their doors to some poor unfriended outcast—one who, like myself, had neither house nor home. I saw them offering their hospitality to him who sought it, freely and openly; and at last, adventuring all they possessed in the world, rather than betray him—and their reward was this! Oh, how my heart revolted at such oppression! how my spirit fired at such indignity! I thought a life passed in opposition to such tyranny were too short a vengeance, and I knelt me down beside that blackened hearth, and swore myself its enemy to the death.

CHAPTER VI.

MY EDUCATION.

As I thought over the various incidents the last few days of my life had presented, I began to wonder with myself whether the world always went on thus; and if the same scenes of misery and woe I had witnessed were in the ordinary course of nature. The work of years seemed to me to have been accomplished in a few brief hours. Here, where I stood, but yesterday, a happy family were met together; and now, death and misfortune had laid waste the spot; and, save the cold walls, nothing marked it as a human habitation. What had become of them? Where had they gone to? Had they fled from the blood-stained hands of the cruel soldiery, or were they led away to prison? These were the questions constantly recurring to my mind. And the French officer, too—what of him? I felt the deepest interest in his fate. Poor fellow! he looked so pale and sickly; and yet there was something both bold and manly in his flashing eye and compressed lip. He was doubtless one of those Darby alluded to. What a lot was his; and how little did my own sorrows seem, as I compared them with his houseless, friendless condition! As my thoughts thus wandered on, a dark shadow fell across the gleam of moonlight that lit up the ruined cabin. I turned suddenly, and saw the figure of a man leaning against the door-post. For a second or two fear was uppermost in my mind, but rallying soon, I called out, "Who's there?"

"'Tis me, Darby M'Keown," said a well-known voice, but in a tone of deepest sorrow. "I came over to have a look at the ould walls once more."

"You heard it all, then, Darby?"

"Yes. They wor bringing the prisoners into Athlone as I left the town; and I thought to myself you'd maybe be hiding somewhere hereabouts. Is the captain away—is he safe?"

"The French officer—yes—he escaped early in the business. I know he must be far off by this time. Heaven knows which way though."

"Maybe I could guess," said Darby, quietly. "Well, well, it's hard to know what's best. Sometimes it would seem the will of God that we aren't to succeed; and, if we hadn't right on our side, it would not be easy to bear up against such misfortunes as these."

There was a silence on both sides after these words, during which I pondered them well in my mind.

"Come, Master Tom," said Darby, suddenly; "'tis time we were moving. You're not safe here no more nor others. Basset is looking for you everywhere, and you'll have to leave the neighborhood for awhile, at least. Your friend, the Captain, too, is gone; his regiment marched yesterday; so now make up your mind what to do."

"That's easily done, Darby," said I, attempting to seem at ease; "whichever is your road shall be mine, if you let me."

"Let you—yes, with a hearty welcome, too, my darling; but the first thing is to get you some clothes that won't discover on you. Here's a hat I squeezed into my own that'll just fit you, and I've a coat here that's about your size—that's enough for the present, and as we go along, I'll teach you your part, how you are to behave, and he'll be no fool that'll find you out after ten days or a fortnight."

My change of costume was soon effected, and my wound, which turned out to be a trifling one, looked after; I took a farewell look at the old walls, and stepped after my companion down the boreen.

"If we make haste," said Darby, "we'll be beyond Shannon harbor before day; and then, when we're on the canal, we'll easy get a lift in some of the boats going to Dublin."

"And are you for Dublin?" inquired I, eagerly.

"Yes. I'm to be there on the twenty-fourth of this month, please God. There's a meeting of the friends of Ireland to be then, and some resolutions will be taken about what's to be done. There's bad work going on in the Parliament."

"Indeed, Darby! what is it?"

"Oh! you couldn't understand it well: but it's just as if we warn't to have anything to say to governing ourselves, only be made slaves of, and sent abroad to fight for the English, that always hate us and abuse us."

"And are we going to bear with this?" cried I, passionately.

"No," said Darby, laying his hand on my shoulder—"no, not at least if we had twenty thousand like you, my brave boy. But you'll hear everything yourself soon; and now, let me attend to your education a bit, for we're not out of the enemy's country."

Darby now commenced his code of instruction to me, by which I learned that I was to perform a species of second to him in all minstrelsy—not exactly on the truest principles of harmony, but merely alternating with him in the verses of his songs. These, which were entirely of his own composition, were all to be learned, and orally, too, for Mr. M'Keown was too jealous of his copyright ever to commit them to writing, and especially charged me never to repeat any lyric in the same neighborhood.

"It's not only the robbery I care for," quoth Darby, "but the varmint desthroys my poethry completely—sometimes changing the words, injuring the sentiments, and even altering the tune. Now it's only last Tuesday I heerd 'Behave politely' to the tune of 'Look how he sarved me.'"

Besides the musical portion of my education, there was another scarcely less difficult to be attended to: this was, the skillful adaptation of our melodies not only to the prevailing tastes of the company, but to their political and party bearings—Darby supplying me with various hints how I was to discover at a moment the peculiar bias of any stranger's politics.

"The boys," said Darby, thereby meaning his own party, "does be always sly and careful, and begin by asking, maybe, for 'Do you incline?' or 'Crows in the barley,' or the like. Then they'll say, 'Have you anything new, Mr. M'Keown, from up the counthry?' 'Something sweet, is it?' says I. 'Av, or sour, av ye have it,' they'll say. 'Maybe ye'd like Vinegar-hill, then,' says I. Arrah, you'd see their faces redden up with delight, and how they'll beat time to every stroke of the tune—it's a pleasure to play for them. But the yeos (meaning the yeomen) will call

ly—'Piper—holloa there, piper, the Boyne water, or Croppies

of course, you refuse, Darby?"
—refuse, is it—and get a bayo-
! Devil a bit, my dear. I'll play
all the spirit I can; and nod
o the tune, and beat the time
eel and toe; and, maybe, if I see
, I fasten this to the end of the
nd that does the business en-

arby took from the lining of his
ch of orange ribbon, whose faded
owed it had done long and active
the cause of loyalty.
ss Darby's influence over me did
any accession of power by this
owal of his political expediency;
old assertion of a nation's wrongs,
at first he won over my enthusi-
med sadly at variance with this
; policy. He was quick-sighted
o perceive what was passing in my
d at once remarked:
a hard part we're obliged to play,
Tom, but one comfort we have—
a short time we'll need it. You
e song?"
e broke into the popular tune of
:

nd the French will come again,
Says the Shan van vaugh,
nd they'll bring ten thousand men,
Says the Shan van vaugh,
d, with powder and with ball,
r our rights we'll loudly call;
n't you think they'll hear us then?
Says the Shan van vaugh.'

must larn that air, Master Tom;
now, the yeos is as fond of it as
, only remember to put their own
o it; and devil a harm in that
en one's not in earnest. See, now,
it's a natural pleasure for an Irish-
be humbugging somebody; and,
en there's nobody by, he'd rather
g a rise out of himself than doing
. It's the way that's in us, God
! Sure it's that same makes us
orites with the ladies, and gives
d of native janius for coortin':

'Tis the look of his eye,
And a way he can sigh,
s Paddy a darlin' wherever he goes.
With a sugary brogue,
Ye'd hear the rogue
t the girls before their nose.'

hy not?—Don't they like to be
when they're sure to win after all
—to win a warm heart and a stout arm to fight for them?"

This species of logic I give as a specimen of Mister M'Keown's power of, if not explaining away a difficulty, at least, getting out of all reach of it—an attribute almost as Irish as the cause it was employed to defend.

As we journeyed along, Darby maintained a strict reserve as to the event which had required his presence in Athlone, nor did he allude to the Major but passingly, observing that—

"He didn't know how it happened that a Dublin magistrate should have come up to these parts, though, to be sure, he's a great friend of the Right Honorable."

"And who is he?" asked I.

"The Right Honorable! Don't you know, then? Why, I didn't think there was a child in the county couldn't tell that. Sure, it's Denis Browne himself."

The name seemed at once to suggest a whole flood of recollections, and Darby expatiated for hours long on the terrible power of a man, by whose hands life and death were distributed, without any aid from judge or jury—thus opening to me another chapter of the lawless tyranny to which he was directing my attention, and by which he already saw my mind was greatly influenced.

About an hour after daybreak we arrived at a small cabin, which served as a lock-house on the canal-side. It needed not the cold, murky sky, nor the ceaseless pattering of the rain, to make this place look more comfortless and miserable than anything I had ever beheld. Around, for miles in extent, the country was one unbroken flat, without any trace of wood, or even a single thorn hedge, to relieve the eye. Low, marshy meadows, where the rank flaggers and reedy grass grew tall and luxuriant, with here and there some stray patches of tillage, were girt round by vast plains of bog, cut up into every variety of trench and pit. The cabin itself, though slated and built of stone, was in bad repair, the roof broken in many places, and the window mended with pieces of board, and even straw. As we came close, Darby remarked that there was no smoke from the chimney, and that the door was fastened on the outside.

"That looks bad," said he, as he stopped short about a dozen paces from the hovel, and looked steadily at it; "they've taken him too."

"Who is it, Darby?" said I. "What did he do?"

M'Keown paid no attention to my ques-

tion, but unfastening the hasp which attached the door, without any padlock, entered. The fire was yet alive on the hearth, and a small stool, drawn close to it, showed where some one had been sitting; there was nothing unusual in the appearance of the cabin; the same humble furniture and cooking utensils lying about, as were seen in any other. Darby, however, scrutinized everything most carefully, looking everywhere, and into everything, till, at last, reaching his hand above the door, he pulled out from the straw of the thatch a small piece of dirty and crumpled paper, which he opened with the greatest care and attention; and then flattening it out with his hand, began to read it over to himself, his eye flashing, and his cheek growing redder, as he pored over it. At last he broke silence with,

"'Tis myself never doubted ye, Tim, my boy. Look at that, Master Tom—but sure, you wouldn't understand it, after all. The yeos took him up last night. 'Tis something about cutting the canal, and attacking the boat, that's again him; and he left that there—that bit of paper—to give the boys courage that he wouldn't betray them. That's the way the cause will prosper—if we'll only stick by each other. For many a time, when they take a man up, they spread it about that he's turned informer against the rest, and then the others gets careless, and don't mind whether they're taken or not."

Darby replaced the piece of paper carefully, and then, listening for a moment, exclaimed,

"I hear the boat coming; let's wait for it outside."

While he employed himself in getting his pipes into readiness, I could not help ruminating on the strength of loyalty to each other the poor people observed amid every temptation and every seduction; how, in the midst of such misery as theirs, neither threats nor bribery seemed to influence them, was a strong testimony in favor of their truth, and to such a reasoner as I was, a no less cogent argument for the goodness of the cause that elicited such virtues.

As the boat came alongside, I remarked that the deck was without a passenger; heaps of trunks and luggage littered it the entire way; but the severity of the weather had driven every one under cover, except the steersman and the captain, who, both of them wrapped up in thick coats of frieze, seemed like huge bears standing on their hind-quarters.

"How are you, Darby?" shouted the skipper; "call out that lazy rascal to open the lock."

"I don't think he's at home, sir," said Darby, as innocently as though he knew nothing of the reason for his absence.

"Not at home!—the scoundrel, where can he be, then? Come youngster," cried he, addressing me, "take the key there, and open the lock."

Until this moment, I forgot the character which my dress and appearance assigned to me; but a look from the piper recalled me at once to recollection; and, taking up the iron key, I proceeded, under Darby's instructions, to do what I was desired, while Darby and the captain amused themselves by wondering what had become of Tim, and speculated on the immediate consequences his absence would bring down on him.

"Are you going with us, Darby?" said the captain.

"Faix, I don't know, sir," said he, as if hesitating; "av there was any gentleman that liked the pipes——"

"Yes, yes, come along, man," rejoined the skipper; "is the boy with you?—very well—come in, youngster."

We were soon under weigh again; and Darby, having arranged his instrument to his satisfaction, commenced a very spirited voluntary to announce his arrival. In an instant the cabin-door opened, and a red-faced, coarse-looking fellow, in uniform, called out,

"Holloa, there! is that a piper?"

"Yes, sir," said Darby, without turning his face round, while, at the same time, he put a question, in Irish, to the skipper, who answered it with a single word.

"I say, piper, come down here!" cried the yeoman, for such he was—"come down here, and let's have a tune!"

"I'm coming, sir," cried Darby, standing up; and holding out his hand to me, he called out, "Tom, alannah, lead me down stairs."

I looked up in his face, and, to my amazement, perceived that he had turned up the white of his eyes, to represent blindness, and was groping with his hand, like one deprived of sight.

As any hesitation on my part might have betrayed him at once, I took his hand, and led him along, step by step, to the cabin-door. I had barely time to perceive that all the passengers were habited in uniform, when one of them called out,

"We don't want the young fellow; let him go back. Piper, sit down here."

The motion for my exclusion was passed without a negative, and I closed the door,

and sat down by myself among the trunks on deck.

For the remainder of the day I saw nothing of Darby; the shouts of laughter and clapping of hands below stairs occasionally informing me how successful were his efforts to amuse his company; while I had abundant time to think over my own plans, and make some resolutions for the future.

CHAPTER VII.

KEVIN STREET.

How this long, melancholy day wore on I cannot say; to me it was as gloomy in reverie as in its own dismal aspect; the very sounds of mirth that issued from the cabin beneath grated harshly on my ear; and the merry strains of Darby's pipes and the clear notes of his rich voice seemed like treachery from one, who so lately had spoken in terms of heart-breathing emotion of his countrymen and their wrongs. While, therefore, my estimation for my companion suffered, my sorrow for the cause that demanded such sacrifices deepened at every moment, and I panted with eagerness for the moment when I might take my place among the bold defenders of my country, and openly dare our oppressors to the battle. All that M'Keown had told me of English tyranny and oppression was connected in my mind with the dreadful scene I had so lately been a witness to, and for the cause of which I looked no further than an act of simple hospitality. From this I wandered on to the thought of those brave allies who had deserted their career of continental glory to share our almost hopeless fortunes here; and how I burned to know them, and learn from them something of a soldier's ardor.

Night had fallen, when the fitful flashing of lamps between the tall elms that lined the banks announced our approach to the capital. There is something dreadfully depressing in the aspect of a large city to the poor, unfriended youth, who, without house or home, is starting upon his life's journey. The stir, the movement, the onward tide of population, intent on pleasure or business, are things in which he has no part. The appearance of wealth humiliates, while the sight of poverty affrights him; and, while every one is animated by some purpose, he alone seems like a waif thrown on the shores of life, unclaimed, unlooked for. Thus did I feel among that busy crowd who now pressed to the deck, gathering together their luggage, and preparing for departure. Some home awaited each of these—some hearth, some happy faces to greet their coming; but I had none of these. This was a sorrowful thought; and as I brooded over it, my head sank upon my knees, and I saw nothing of what was going forward about me.

"Tom," whispered a low voice in my ear—"Master Tom, don't delay, my dear; let us slip out here. The soldiers want me to go with them to their billets, and I have promised; but I don't mean to do it."

I looked up. It was Darby, buttoned up in his coat, his pipes unfastened for the convenience of carriage.

"Slip out after me at the lock here. It's so dark, we'll never be seen."

Keeping my eye on him, I elbowed my way through the crowded deck, and sprang out just as the boat began her forward movement.

"Here we are, all safe," said Darby, patting me on the shoulder; "and now that I've time to ask you, did you get your dinner, my child?"

"Oh, yes; the captain brought me something to eat."

"Come, that's right, anyhow. Glory be to God! I ate heartily of some bacon and greens; though the blackguards—bad luck to them for the same—made me eat an orange-lily whole, afraid the *greens*, as they said, might injure me."

"I wonder, Darby," said I, "that you haven't more firmness than to change this way at every moment."

"Firmness, is it? Faith, it's firm enough I'd be, and stiff too, if I didn't. Sure it's the only way now at all. Wait, my honey, till the time comes round for ourselves, and, faith, you'll never accuse me of coorting their favor; but now, at this moment, you perceive, we must do it to learn their plans. What do you think I got to-night? I learned all the signs the yeos have when they're drinking together, and what they say at each sign. There's a way they have of gripping the two little fingers together that I'll not forget soon."

For some time we walked on at a rapid pace, without exchanging more than an occasional word. At last we entered a narrow, ill-lighted street, which led from the canal harbor to one of the larger and wider thoroughfares.

"I almost forget the way here," said Darby, stopping, and looking about him. At last, unable to solve the difficulty, he leaned over the half-door of a shop, and

called out to a man within, "Can you tell where is Kevin street?"

"No. 39?" said the man, after looking at him steadily for a moment.

Darby stroked down one side of his face with his hand slowly, a gesture immediately imitated by the other man.

"What do you know?" said Darby.

"I know 'U.,'" replied the man.

"And what more?"

"I know 'N.'"

"That'll do," said Darby, shaking hands with him cordially. "Now, tell me the way, for I have no time to spare."

"Begorra! you're in as great haste as if ye were Darby the Blast himself. Ye'll come in and take a glass?"

Darby only laughed; and again excusing himself, he asked the way, which having learned, he wished his newly-made friend good-night, and we proceeded.

"They know you well hereabouts, by name, at least," said I, when we had walked on a little.

"That they do," said Darby, proudly. "From Wexford to Belfast there's few doesn't know me; and they'll know more of me, av I'm right, before I die."

This he spoke with more of determination than I ever heard him use previously.

"Here's the street, now. There's the lamp—that one with the two burners there. Faix, we've made good track since morning, anyhow."

As he spoke we entered a narrow passage, through which the street-lamp threw a dubious half-light. This conducted us to a small paved court, crossing which we arrived at the door of a large house. Darby knocked in a peculiar manner, and the door was speedily opened by a man, who whispered something, to which M'Keown made answer in the same low tone.

"I'm glad to see you again," said the man, louder, as he made way for him to pass.

I pushed forward to follow, when suddenly a strong arm was stretched across my breast, and a gruff voice asked,

"Who are you?"

Darby stepped back, and said something in his ear; the other replied, sturdily, in the negative. And although Darby, as it appeared, used every power of persuasion he possessed, the man was inexorable. At last, when the temper of both appeared nearly giving way, Darby turned to me, and said,

"Wait for me a moment, Tom, where you are, and I'll come for you."

So saying, he disappeared, and the door closed at the same time, leaving me in darkness on the outside. My patience was not severely taxed—ere five minutes the door opened, and Darby, followed by another person, appeared.

"Mr. Burke," said this latter, with the tone of voice that at once bespoke a gentleman, "I am proud to know you." He grasped my hand warmly as he spoke, and shook it affectionately. "I esteem it an honor to be your sponsor here. Can you find your way after me? This place is never lighted; but I trust you'll know it better ere long."

Muttering some words of acknowledgment, I followed my unseen acquaintance along the dark corridor.

"There's a step here," cried he, "and now mind the stairs."

A long and winding flight conducted us to a landing, where a candle was burning in a tin sconce. Here my conductor turned round.

"Your Christian name is Thomas, I believe," said he; at the same moment, as the light fell on me, he started suddenly back, with an air of mingled astonishment and chagrin. "Why, M'Keown, you told me—" The rest of the sentence was lost in a whisper.

"It's a disguise I made him wear," said Darby; "he'd no chance of escaping the country without it."

"I'm not speaking of that," retorted the other angrily. "It is his age, I mean—he's only a boy. How old are you, sir?" continued he, addressing me, but with far less courtesy than before.

"Old enough to live for my country, or die for it either, if need be," said I haughtily.

"Bravo, my darling," cried the piper, slapping me on the shoulder with enthusiasm.

"That's not exactly my question," said the stranger, smiling good-naturedly; "I want to know your age."

"I was fourteen in August," said I.

"I had rather you could say twenty," responded he thoughtfully. "This is a sad mistake of yours, Darby. What dependence can be placed on a child like this? He's only a child after all."

"He's a child I'll go bail for with my head," said Darby.

"Your head has fully as much on it as it is fit to carry," said the other, in a tone of rebuke. "Have you told him anything of the object and intentions of this society? But of course you have revealed everything. Well, I'll not be a party to this business. Young gentleman," continued he, in a voice of earnest and impressive accent, "all I know of you is the few particulars this man has stated respecting your un-

friended position, and the cruelty to which you fear to expose yourself in trusting to the guardianship of Mr. Basset. If these reasons have induced you, from recklessness and indifference, to risk your life, by association with men who are actuated by high and noble principles, then, I say, you shall not enter here. If, however, aware of the object and intentions of our union, you are desirous to aid us, young though you be, I shall not refuse you."

"That's it," interrupted Darby, "if you feel in your heart a friend to your country—"

"Silence!" said the other harshly; "let him decide for himself."

"I neither know your intentions, nor even guess at them," said I, frankly. "My destitution, and the poor prospect before me, make me, as you suppose, indifferent to what I embark in, provided that it be not dishonorable. It is not danger will deter me, that's all I can promise you."

"I see," said the stranger, "this is but another of your pranks, Mr. M'Keown. The young gentleman was to be kidnapped amongst us. One thing," said he, turning to me, "I feel assured of, that anything you have witnessed here is safe within your keeping, and now we'll not press the matter further; in a few days you can hear, and make up your mind on all these things, and, as you are not otherwise provided, let us make you our guest in the meanwhile."

Without giving me time to reply, he led me down-stairs again, and, unlocking a door on the second floor, passed through several rooms, until he reached one comfortably fitted up like a study.

"You must be satisfied with a sofa here for to-night, but to-morrow I will make you more comfortable."

I threw my eyes over the well-filled bookshelf with delight, and was preparing to thank him for all his kindness to me, when he added,

"I must leave you now, but we'll meet to-morrow; so good-night. Come along, M'Keown, we shall want you presently."

I would gladly have detained Darby to interrogate him about my new abode and its inhabitants, but he was obliged to obey, and I heard the door locked, as they closed it, on the outside; and shortly after the sounds of their feet died away, and I was left in silence.

Determined to con over, and, if possible, explain to myself the mystery of my position, I drew my sofa toward the fire and sat down, but fatigue, stronger than all my curiosity, had the mastery, and I was soon sound asleep.

CHAPTER VIII.

NO. 39, AND ITS FREQUENTERS.

WHEN my eyes opened the following morning, it was quite pardonable in me if I believed I was still dreaming. The room, which I had scarcely time to look at the previous evening, now appeared handsomely, almost richly furnished. Books in handsome bindings covered the shelves, prints in gilded frames occupied the walls, and a large mirror filled the space above the chimney. Various little articles of taste, in bronze and marble, were scattered about, and a silver tea equipage, of antique pattern, graced a small table near the fire. A pair of splendidly mounted pistols hung at one side of the chimney glass, and a gorgeously gilt sabre occupied the other.

While I took a patient survey of all these, and was deliberately examining myself as to how and when I had first made their acquaintance, a voice from an adjoining room, the door of which lay open, exclaimed,

"*Sacristi! quel mauvais temps!*" and then broke out into a little French air, to which, after a minute, the singer appeared to move, in a kind of dancing measure. "*Oui, c'est ça!*" exclaimed he, in rapture, as he whirled round in a pirouette, overturning a dressing-table and its contents with a tremendous crash upon the floor.

I started up, and, without thinking of what I was doing, rushed in.

"*Ha! bon jour,*" said he, gayly, stretching out two fingers of a hand almost concealed beneath a mass of rings; and then suddenly changing to English, which he spoke perfectly, saving with a foreign accent, "How did you sleep? I suppose the *tintamarre* awoke you."

I hastened to apologize for my intrusion, which he stopped at once by asking if I had passed a comfortable night, and had a great appetite for breakfast.

Assuring him of both facts, I retreated into the sitting-room, where he followed me, laughing heartily at his mishap, which he confessed he had not patience to remedy. "And what's worse," added he, "I have no servant. But here's some tea and coffee—let us chat while we eat."

I drew over my chair at his invitation, and found myself, before half an hour went by, acted on by that strange magnetism which certain individuals possess, to detail to my new friend the principal events of my simple story, down to the very moment in which we sat opposite to

each other. He listened to me with the greatest attention, occasionally interposing a question, or asking an explanation of something which he did not perfectly comprehend; and when I concluded, he paused for some minutes, and then, with a slight laugh, said:

"You don't know how you disappointed the people here. Your traveling companion had given them to understand that you were some other Burke, whose alliance they have been long desiring. In fact, they were certain of it; but," said he, starting up hastily, "it is far better as it is. I suspect, my young friend, the way in which you have been entrapped. Don't fear; we are perfectly safe here. I know all the hackneyed declamations about wrongs and slavery that are in vogue, and I know, too, how timidly they shrink from every enterprise by which their cause might be honorably, boldly asserted. I am myself another victim to the assumed patriotism of this party. I came over here two years since to take a command. A command—but in what an army! An undisciplined rabble, without arms, without officers, without even clothes—their only notion of warfare a midnight murder, or a reckless and indiscriminate slaughter. The result could not be doubtful—utter defeat and discomfiture. My countrymen, disgusted at the scenes they witnessed, and ashamed of such *confrérie*, accepted the amnesty, and returned to France. I—"

Here he hesitated, and blushed slightly; after which he resumed:

"I yielded to a credulity for which there was neither reason nor excuse. I remained. Promises were made me, oaths were sworn, statements were produced to show how complete the organization of the insurgents really was, and to what purpose it might be turned. I drew up a plan of a campaign, corresponded with the different leaders, encouraged the wavering, restrained the headstrong, confirmed the hesitating, and, in fact, for fourteen months held them together, not only against their opponents, but their own more dangerous disunion; and the end is—what think you? I only learned it yesterday, on my return from an excursion in the west, which nearly cost me my life. I was concealed in a cabin in woman's clothes—"

"At Malone's, in the Glen?"

"Yes; how did you know that?"

"I was there. I saw you captured, and witnessed your escape."

"*Diantre!* How near it was!"

He paused for a second, and I took the opportunity to recount to him the dreadful issue of the scene, with the burning of the cabin. He grew sickly pale as I related the circumstance; then flushing as quickly, he exclaimed,

"We must look to this; these people must be taken care of. I'll speak to Dalton—you know him?"

"No; I know not one here."

"It was he who met you last night; he is a noble fellow. But stay, there's a knock at the door."

He approached the fireplace, and, taking down the pistols which hung beside it, walked slowly toward the door.

"'Tis Darby, sir—Darby the Blast, coming to speak a word to Mister Burke," said a voice from without.

The door was opened at once, and Darby entered. Making a deep reverence to the French officer, in whose presence he seemed by no means at his ease, Darby dropped his voice to its most humble cadence, and said,

"Might I be so bould as to have a word with ye, Master Tom?"

There was something in the way this request was made that seemed to imply a desire for secrecy—so, at least, the Frenchman understood it—and turning hastily round, he said,

"Yes, to be sure; I'll go into my dressing-room; there is nothing to prevent your speaking here."

No sooner was the door closed, than Darby drew a chair close to me, and, bending down his head, whispered,

"Don't trust him—not from here to that window; they're going to do it without him—Mahony told me so himself: but my name was not drawn, and I'm to be off to Kildare this evening. There's a meeting of the boys at the Curragh, and I want you to come with me."

The state of doubt and uncertainty which had harassed my mind for the last twenty-four hours was no longer tolerable; so I boldly asked M'Keown for an explanation as to the people in whose house I was, their objects and plans, and how far I was myself involved in their designs.

In fewer words than I could convey it, Darby informed me that the house was the meeting-place of the United Irishmen, who still cherished the hope of reviving the scenes of '98; that, conscious the failure before was attributable to their having taken the field as an army when they should have merely contented themselves with secret and indirect attacks, they had resolved to adopt a different tactique. It was, in fact, determined that every political opponent to their party should be

marked—himself, his family, and his property; that no opportunity was to be lost of injuring him or his, and, if need be, of taking away his life; that various measures were to be propounded to Parliament by their friends, to the maintenance of which threats were to be freely used to the Government members; and, with respect to the great measure of the day—the Union—it was decided that on the night of the division a certain number of people should occupy the gallery above the ministerial benches, armed with hand-grenades and other destructive missiles; that, on a signal given, these were to be thrown amongst them, scattering death and ruin on all sides.

"It will be seen, then," said Darby, with a fiendish grin, "how the enemies of Ireland pay for their hatred of her. Maybe they'll vote away their country after that!"

Whether it was the tone, the look, or the words that suddenly awoke me from my dreamy infatuation, I know not; but coming so soon after the Frenchman's detail of the barbarism of the party, a thorough disgust seized me, and the atrocity of this wholesale murder lost nothing of its blackness from being linked with the cause of liberty.

With ready quickness Darby saw what my impression was, and hastily remarked,

"We'll be all away out of this, Master Tom, you know, before that. We'll be up in Kildare, where we'll see the boys exercising and marching; that's what 'ill do your heart good to look at. But, before we go, you'll have to take the oath; for I'm answerable for you all this time with my own head; not that I care for that same, but others might mistrust ye."

"Holloa!" cried the Frenchman, from within, "I hope you have finished your conference there; for you seem to forget there's no fire in this room."

"Yes, sir; and I beg a thousand pardons," said Darby servilely: "and Master Tom only wants to bid you good-by before he goes."

"Goes! goes where? Are you so soon tired of me?" said he in an accent of most winning sweetness.

"He's obliged to be at the Curragh, at the meeting there," said Darby, answering for me.

"What meeting? I never heard of it."

"It's a review, sir, of the throops, that's to be by moonlight."

"A review!" said the Frenchman, with a scornful laugh. "And do you call this midnight assembly of marauding savages a review?"

Darby's face grew dark with rage, and for a second I thought he would have sprung on his assailant, but with a fawning, shrewd smile he lisped out,

"It's what they call it, Captain; sure the poor boys knows no better."

"And are you going to this *review*?" said the Frenchman, with an ironical pronunciation of the word.

"I scarce know where to go, or what to do," said I, in a tone of despairing sadness; "any certainty would be preferable to the doubts that harass me."

"Stay with me," said the Frenchman, interrupting me, and laying his hand on my shoulder; "we shall be companions to each other: your friend here knows I can teach you many things that may be useful to you hereafter, and perhaps, with all humility I may say, your stay will be as profitable as at the *camp* yonder."

"I should not like to desert one who has been so kind to me as Darby, and if he wishes—"

Before I could finish my sentence, the door was opened by a key from without, and Dalton, as he was called, stood amongst us.

"What, Darby!" said he, in a voice of something like emotion, "not gone yet! you know I forbid you coming up here; I suspected what you would be at. Come, lose no more time, we'll take care of Mr. Burke for you."

Darby hung his head sorrowfully and left the room without speaking, followed by Dalton, whose voice I heard in a tone of anger, as he descended the stairs.

There was a certain openness, an easy air of careless freedom in the young Frenchman, which made me feel at home in his company almost the very moment of our acquaintance; and when he asked some questions about myself and my family, I hesitated not to tell him my entire history, with the causes which had first brought me into Darby's society, and led me to imbibe his doctrines and opinions. He paused when I finished, and, after reflecting for some minutes, he looked me gravely in the face, and said,

"But you are aware of the place you are now in!"

"No," said I; "further than the fact of my having enjoyed a capital night's rest and eaten an excellent breakfast, I know nothing about it."

A hearty burst of laughter from my companion followed this very candid acknowledgment on my part.

"Then, may I ask, what are your intentions for the future?—have you any?"

"At least one hundred," said I, smiling; "but every one of them has about as many objections against it. I should like much, for instance, to be a soldier—not in the English service though. I should like to belong to an army, where neither birth nor fortune can make nor mar a man's career. I should like, too, to be engaged in some great war of liberty, where with each victory we gained the voices of the liberated people would fall in blessings upon us; and then I should like to raise myself to high command by some great achievement."

"And then," said the Frenchman, interrupting, "to come back to Ireland, and cut off the head of this terrible Monsieur Basset. *N'est-ce pas*, Tom?"

I could not help joining in his laugh against myself, although in good truth I had felt better pleased if he had taken up my enthusiasm in a different mood.

"So much for mere dreaming," said I, with half a sigh, as our laughter subsided.

"Not so," said he, quickly—"not so; all you said is far more attainable than you suspect. I have been in such a service myself—I won my 'grade' as officer at the point of my sword, when scarcely your age; and before I was fifteen received this."

He took down the sword that hung over the chimney as he said these words, and drawing it from the scabbard, pointed to the inscription which, in letters of gold, adorned the blade—"Rivoli," "Arcole;" then turning the reverse, I read—"Au Lieutenant Charles Gustave de Meudon, 3me Cuirassiers."

"This, then, is your name?" said I, repeating it half aloud.

"Yes," replied he, as he drew himself up, and seemed struggling to repress a feeling of pride that sent the blood rushing to his cheek and brow.

"How I should like to be you," was the wish that burst from me at that moment, and which I could not help uttering in words.

"*Hélas, non!*" said the Frenchman, sorrowfully, and turning away to conceal his agitation. "I have broken with fortune many a day since."

The tone of bitter disappointment in which these words were spoken left no room for reply, and we were both silent.

Charles—for so I must now call him to my reader, as he compelled me to do so with himself—Charles was the first to speak.

"Not many months ago my thoughts were very like your own; but since then how many disappointments—how many reverses!"

He walked hurriedly up and down the room as he said this; then, stopping suddenly before me, laid his hand on my shoulder, and, with a voice of impressive earnestness, said:

"Be advised by me—join not with these people; do not embark with them in their enterprise. Their enterprise!" repeated he, scornfully; "they have none. The only men of action here are they with whom no man of honor, no soldier could associate—their only daring some deed of rapine and murder. No, liberty is not to be achieved by such hands as these; and the other—the men of political wisdom, who prate about reform and the people's rights, who would gladly see such as me adventure in the cause they do not dare themselves to advocate—they are all false alike. Give me," cried he, with energy, and stamping his foot upon the ground, "give me a demi-brigade of ours, some squadrons of Milhaud's cavalry, and '*trois bouches à feu*,' to open the way before us. But why do I speak of this? Some midnight burning, some savage murder, some cowardly attack on unarmed and defenseless people—these are our campaigns here; and shall I stain this blade in such a conflict?"

"But you will go back to France?" said I, endeavoring to say something that might rally him from his gloom.

"Never," replied he, firmly—"never. I alone, of all my countrymen, maintained that to leave the people here at such a crisis was unfair and unmanly. I alone believed in the representations that were made of extended organization, of high hopes, and ardent expectations. I accepted the command of their army—their army! what a mockery! When others accepted the amnesty, I refused, and lived in concealment, my life hanging upon the chance of being captured; for fourteen months I have wandered from county to county, endeavoring to rally the spirit I had been taught to think only needed restraint to hold back its impetuous daring. I have spent money largely, for it was largely placed at my disposal; I have distributed places and promises; I have accepted every post where danger offered; and in return, I hoped that the hour was approaching when we should test the courage of our enemies by such an outbreak as would astonish Europe—and what think you has all ended in? But my cheek burns at the very thought—an intended attack on the Government Members of Parliament—an act of base assassination—a cowardly murder; and for what, too? to prevent a political union with England!

Have they forgotten that our cause was total rupture! independence! open enmity with England! But, *c'est fini*, I have given them my last resolve. Yesterday evening I told the delegates the only chance that, in my opinion, existed of their successfully asserting their own independence. I gave them the letters of French officers, high in command and station, concurring with my own views; and I have pledged myself to wait one month longer, if they deem my plans worthy of acceptance, to consider all the details, and arrange the mode of proceeding. If they refuse, then I leave Ireland forever within a week. In America, the cause I glory in is still triumphant; and there, no prestige of failure shall follow me to damp my own efforts, nor discourage the high hopes of such as trust me. But you, my poor boy—and how have I forgotten you in all this sad history—I will not suffer you to be misled by false representations and flattering offers. It may be the only consolation I shall carry with me from this land of anarchy and misfortune—but even that is something—if I rescue one untried and uncorrupted heart from the misery of such associates. You shall be a soldier—be my companion here while I stay; I'll arrange everything for your comfort; we'll read and talk together; and I will endeavor to repay the debt I owe to France, by sending back there one better than myself to guard her eagles."

The tears ran fast down my cheek as I heard these words, but not one syllable could I utter.

"You do not like my plan; well—"

Before he could conclude, I seized his hand with rapture within both of mine, and pressed it to my lips.

"It is a bargain, then," said he, gayly; "and now let us lose no more time; let us remove this breakfast-table, and begin at once."

Another table was soon drawn over to the fire, upon which a mass of books, maps, and plates were heaped by my companion, who seemed to act in the whole affair with all the delight of a schoolboy in some exploit of amusement.

"You are aware, Tom, that this place is a prison to me, and, therefore, I am not altogether disinterested in this proposal. You, however, can go out when you please; but until you understand the precautions necessary to prevent you from being traced here, it is better not to venture into the city."

"I have no wish whatever to leave this," said I, quickly, while I ranged my eye with delight over the pile of books before me, and thought of all the pleasure I was to draw from their perusal.

"You must tell me so three weeks hence, if you wish to flatter me," replied Charles, as he drew over his chair, and pointed with his hand to another.

It needed not the pleasing and attractive power of my teacher to make my study the most captivating of all amusements. Military science, even in its gravest forms, had an interest for me such as no other pursuit could equal. In its vast range of collateral subjects, it opened an inexhaustible mine to stimulate industry and encourage research. The great wars of the world were the great episodes in history, wherein monarchs and princes were nothing, if not generals. With what delight, then, did I hang over the pages of Carnot and Jomini; with what an anxious heart would I read the narrative of a siege, where, against every disadvantage of numbers and munitions of war, some few resisted all the attacks of the adverse forces, with no other protection save that of consummate skill. With what enthusiasm did I hear of Charles XII., of Wallenstein, of the Prince Eugene; and how oftentimes did I ask myself in secret, why had the world none such as these to boast of now? till at last the name of Bonaparte burst from my companion's lips, as, with a torrent of long restrained devotion, he broke forth into an eloquent and impassioned account of the great general of his age.

That name once heard, I could not bear to think or speak of any other. How I followed him, from the siege of Toulon, as he knelt down beside the gun which he pointed with his own hand, to the glorious battle-fields of Italy, and heard, from one who listened to his shout of "*Suivez-moi*" on the bridge of Lodi, the glorious heroism of that day! I tracked him across the pathless deserts of the East, beneath the shadow of the Pyramids, whose fame seems, somehow, to have revived in the history of that great man; and then I listened to the stories—and how numerous were they—of his personal daring, the devotion and love men bore him, the magic influence of his presence, the command of his look; the very short and broken sentences he addressed to his generals were treasured up in my mind and repeated over and over to myself. Charles possessed a miniature of the First Consul, which he assured me was strikingly like him, and for hours long I could sit and gaze upon that cold, unimpassioned brow, where greatness seemed to sit enthroned. How I longed to look upon

the broad and massive forehead—the deep-set, searching eye—the mouth, where sweetness and severity seemed tempered—and that finely rounded chin, that gave his head so much the character of antique beauty. His image filled every avenue of my brain; his eye seemed on me in my waking moments, and I thought I heard his voice in my dream. Never did lover dwell more rapturously on the memory of his mistress, than did my boyish thoughts on Bonaparte. What would I not have done to serve him? What would I not have dared, to win one word, one look of his, in praise? All other names faded away before his; the halo around him paled every other star; the victories I had thought of before with admiration I now only regarded as trifling successes, compared with the overwhelming torrent of *his* conquests. Charles saw my enthusiasm, and ministered to it with eager delight. Every trait in his beloved leader that could stimulate admiration, or excite affection, he dwelt on with all the fondness of a Frenchman for his idol, till at last the world seemed to my eyes but the theatre of his greatness, and men the mere instruments of that commanding intellect that ruled the destinies and disposed of the fortunes of nations.

In this way days, and weeks, and even months rolled on, for Charles's interest in my studies had induced him to abandon his former intention of departure, and he now scarcely took any part in the proceedings of the delegates, and devoted himself almost exclusively to me. During the day-time we never left the house, but when night fell we used to walk forth—not into the city, but by some country road, often along the canal-side—our conversation on the only topic wherein we felt interested; and these rambles still live within my memory with all the vivid freshness of yesterday; and while my heart saddens over the influence they shed upon my after life, I cannot help the train of pleasure with which, even yet, I dwell upon their recollection. How guarded should he be who converses with a boy, forgetting with what power each word is fraught, by the mere force of years; how the flattery of equality destroys judgment, and saps all power of discrimination; and, more than all, how dangerous it is to graft upon the tender sapling the ripe fruits of experience, not knowing how, in such, they may grow to very rankness. Few are there who cannot look back to their childhood for the origin of opinions that have had their influence over all their latter years; and when these have owed their birth to those we loved, is it wonderful that we should cling to faults which seemed hallowed by friendship?

Meanwhile, I was becoming a man, if not in years, at least in spirit and ambition. The pursuits natural to my age were passed over for the studies of more advanced years. Military history had imparted to me a soldier's valor, and I could take no pleasure in anything save as it bore upon the one engrossing topic of my mind.

Charles, too, seemed to feel all his own ambition revived in mine, and watched with pride the progress I was making under his guidance.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FRENCHMAN'S STORY.

WHILE my life slipped thus pleasantly along, the hopes of the insurgent party fell daily and hourly lower; disunion and distrust pervaded all their councils, jealousies and suspicions grew up among their leaders. Many of those whose credit stood highest in their party became informers to the Government, whose persevering activity increased with every emergency; and finally, they who would have adventured everything but some few months before, grew lukewarm and indifferent. A dogged carelessness seemed to have succeeded to their outbreak of enthusiasm, and they looked on at the execution of their companions, and the wreck of their party, with a stupid and stolid indifference.

For some time previous the delegates met at rare and irregular intervals, and finally ceased to assemble altogether. The bolder portion of the body, disgusted with the weak and temporizing views of the others, withdrew first; and the less determined formed themselves into a new society, whose object was merely to get up petitions and addresses unfavorable to the great project of the Government—a legislative union with England.

From the turn events had taken, my companion, as it may be supposed, took no interest in their proceedings. Affecting to think that all was not lost—while in his heart he felt bitterly the disappointment of his hopes—a settled melancholy, unrelieved even by those flashes of buoyancy which a Frenchman rarely loses in any misfortune, now grew upon him. His cheek grew paler, and his frame seemed wasting away, while his impaired strength and tottering step betrayed that something more than sorrow was at work within him. Still he

persevered in our course of study, and, notwithstanding all my efforts to induce him to relax in his labors, his desire to teach me grew with every day. For some time, a short, hacking cough, with pain in his chest, had seized on him, and, although it yielded to slight remedies, it returned again and again. Our night walks were, therefore, obliged to be discontinued, and the confinement to the house preyed upon his spirits, and shook his nerves. Boy as I was, I could not look upon his altered face and attenuated figure without a thrilling fear at my heart lest he might be seriously ill. He perceived my anxiety quickly, and endeavored, with many a cheering speech, to assure me that these were attacks to which he had been long accustomed, and which never were either lasting or dangerous; but the very hollow accents in which he spoke robbed these words of all their comfort to me.

The winter, which had been unusually long and severe, at length passed away, and the spring, milder and more genial than is customary in our climate, succeeded; the sunlight came slanting down through the narrow court, and fell in one rich yellow patch upon our floor. Charles started, his dark eyes, hollow and sunk, glowed with unwonted brightness, and his haggard and hollow cheek suddenly flushed with a crimson glow.

"*Mon cher*," said he, in a voice tremulous with emotion, "I think if I were to leave this I might recover."

The very possibility of his death, until that moment, had never even crossed my mind, and in the misery of the thought I burst into tears. From that hour the impression never left my mind, and every accent of his low, soft voice, every glance of his mild, dark eye, sank into my heart, as though I heard and saw them for the last time. There was nothing to fear now, so far as political causes were concerned, in our removing from our present abode, and it was arranged between us that we should leave town, and take up our residence in the county of Wicklow. There was a small cottage at the opening of Glenmalure which my companion constantly spoke of; he had passed two nights there already, and left it with many a resolve to return and enjoy the delightful scenery of the neighborhood.

The month of April was drawing to a close, when one morning, soon after sunrise, we left Dublin. A heavy mist, such as often in northern climates ushers in a day of unusual brightness, shrouded every object from our view for several miles of the way. Charles scarcely spoke; the increased exertion seemed to have fatigued and exhausted him, and he lay back in the carriage, his handkerchief pressed to his mouth, and his eyes half closed.

We had passed the little town of Bray, and entered upon that long road which traverses the valley between the two Sugar Loaves, when suddenly the sun burst forth; the lazy mists rolled heavily up the valley and along the mountain sides, disclosing as they went patches of fertile richness, or dark masses of frowning rock. Above this, again, the purple heath appeared glowing, like a gorgeous amethyst, as the red sunlight played upon it, or sparkled on the shining granite that rose through the luxuriant herbage. Gradually the ravine grew narrower; the mountains seemed like one vast chain, severed by some great convulsion; their rugged sides appeared to mark the very junction; trunks of aged and mighty trees hung threateningly above the pass; and a hollow, echoing sound arose, as the horses trod along the causeway. It was a spot of wild and gloomy grandeur, and as I gazed on it intently, suddenly I felt a hand upon my shoulder. I turned round: it was Charles's, his eyes riveted on the scene, his lips parted with eagerness; he spoke at length, but at first his voice was hoarse and low, by degrees it grew fuller and richer, and at last rolled on, in all its wonted strength and roundness.

"See there—look!" cried he, as his thin, attenuated finger pointed to the pass. "What a ravine to defend! The column, with two pieces of artillery in the road; the cavalry to form behind, where you see that open space, and advance between the open files of the infantry; the tirailleurs scattered along that ridge where the furze is thickest, or down there among those masses of rock. *Sacristi!*—what a volume of fire they'd pour down. See how the blue smoke and the ring of the musket would mark them out as they dotted the mountain side, and yet were unapproachable to the enemy; and think then of the rolling thunder of the eighteen-pounders shaking these old mountains, and the long, clattering crash of the platoon following after, and the dark shakos towering above the smoke; and then the loud '*Viva!*' I think I hear it."

His cheek became purple as he spoke, his veins swollen and distended; his voice, though loud, lost nothing of its musical cadence, and his whole look betokened excitement, almost bordering on madness. Suddenly his chest heaved, a tremendous fit of coughing seized him, and he fell for-

ward upon my shoulder. I lifted him up, and what was my horror to perceive that all his vest and cravat were bathed in florid blood, which issued from his mouth. He had burst a blood-vessel in his wild transport of enthusiasm, and now lay pale, cold, and senseless in my arms.

It was a long time before we could proceed with our journey, for, although fortunately the bleeding did not continue, fainting followed fainting for hours after. At length we were enabled to set out again, but only at a walking pace. For the remainder of the day his head rested on my shoulder, and his cold hand in mine, as we slowly traversed the long, weary miles toward Glenmalure.

The night was falling as we arrived at our journey's end. Here, however, every kindness and attention awaited us; and I soon had the happiness of seeing my poor friend in his bed, and sleeping with all the ease and tranquillity of a child.

From that hour every other thought was merged in my fears for him. I watched, with an agonizing intensity, every change of his malady. I scanned, with an aching heart, every symptom day by day. How many times has the false bloom of hectic shed happiness over me. How often, in my secret walks, have I offered up my prayer of thankfulness, as the deceitful glow of fever colored his wan cheek, and lent a more than natural brilliancy to his sunk and filmy eye. The world to me was all nothing, save as it influenced him. Every cloud that moved above, each breeze that rustled, I thought of for him; and when I slept his image was still before me, and his voice seemed to call me oftentimes in the silence of the night, and when I awoke and saw him sleeping, I knew not which was the reality.

His debility increased rapidly; and although the mild air of summer, and the shelter of the deep valley seemed to have relieved his cough, his weakness grew daily more and more. His character, too, seemed to have undergone a change as great and as striking as that in his health. The high and chivalrous ambition, the soldier-like heroism, the ardent spirit of patriotism that at first marked him, had given way to a low and tender melancholy—an almost womanish tenderness—that made him love to have the little children of the cabin near him, to hear their innocent prattle, and watch their infant gambols. He talked, too, of home, of the old château in Provence, where he was born, and described to me its antiquated terraces and quaint, old-fashioned alleys, where as a boy he wandered with his sister.

"*Pauvre Marie!*" said he, as a deep blush covered his pale cheek, "how have I deserted you!" The thought seemed full of anguish for him, and for the remainder of the day he scarcely spoke.

Some days after his first mention of his sister, we were sitting together in front of the cabin, enjoying the shade of a large chestnut tree, which already had put forth its early leaves, and tempered, if it did not exclude, the rays of the sun.

"You heard me speak of my sister," said he, in a low and broken voice. "She is all that I have on earth near to me. We were brought up together as children; learned the same plays; had the same masters; spent not one hour in the long day asunder, and at night we pressed each other's hands, as we sunk to sleep. She was to me all that I ever dreamed of girlish loveliness, of woman's happiest nature; and I was her ideal of boyish daring, of youthful boldness, and manly enterprise. We loved each other—like those who felt they had no need of other affection, save such as sprang from our cradles, and tracked us on through life. Hers was a heart that seemed made for all that human nature can taste of happiness; her eye, her lip, her blooming cheek knew no other expression than a smile; her very step was buoyancy; her laugh rang through your heart as joy-bells fill the air; and yet! and yet! I brought that heart to sorrow, and that cheek I made pale, and hollow, and sunken as you see my own. My cursed ambition, that rested not content with my own path in life, threw its baleful shadow across hers. The story is a short one, and I may tell it to you.

"When I left Provence, to join the army of the south, I was obliged to leave Marie under the care of an old and distant relative, who resided some two leagues from us on the Loire. The chevalier was a widower, with one son about my own age, of whom I knew nothing, save that he had never left his father's house—had been educated completely at home—and had obtained the reputation of being a sombre, retired book-worm, who avoided the world, and preferred the lonely solitude of a provincial château to the gay dissipations of Paris.

"My only fear in intrusting my poor sister in such hands was the dire stupidity of the *séjour*, but as I bid her good-by, I said, laughingly, '*Prenez garde, Marie*, don't fall in love with Claude de Lauzan.'

"'Poor Claude!' said she, bursting into a fit of laughter; 'what a sad affair that would be for him!' So saying, we parted.

"I made the campaign of Italy, where, as I have perhaps too often told you, I had some opportunities of distinguishing myself, and was promoted to a squadron on the field of Arcole. Great as my boyish exultation was at my success, I believe its highest pleasure arose from the anticipation of Marie's delight when she received my letter with the news. I wrote to her nearly every week, and heard from her as frequently; at the time I did not mark, as I have since done, the altered tone of her letters to me. How gradually the high, ambitious daring that animated her early answers became tamed down into half regretful fears of a soldier's career; her sorrows for those whose conquered countries were laid waste by fire and sword; her implied censure of a war, whose injustice she more than hinted at; and lastly, her avowed preference for those peaceful paths in life that were devoted to the happiness of one's fellows, and the worship of Him who deserved all our affection. I did not mark, I say, this change; the bustle of the camp, the din of arms, the crash of mounted squadrons, are poor aids to reflection; and I thought of Marie but as I left her.

"It was after a few months of absence I returned to Provence, the *croix d'honneur* on my bosom, the sabre I won at Lodi by my side. I rushed into the room bursting with impatience to clasp my sister in my arms, and burning to tell her all my deeds and all my dangers; she met me with her old affection, but how altered in its form! her gay and girlish lightness, the very soul of buoyant pleasure, was gone; and in its place a mild, sad smile played upon her lip, and a deep, thoughtful look was in her dark brown eye. She looked not less beautiful; no, far from it, her loveliness was increased tenfold; but the disappointment smote heavily on my heart. I looked about me like one seeking for some explanation, and there stood Claude—pale, still, and motionless before me; the very look she wore reflected in his calm features, her very smile was on his lips. In an instant the whole truth flashed across me; she loved him. There are thoughts which rend us, as lightning does the rock, opening new surfaces that lay hid since the Creation, and tearing our fast-knit sympathies asunder like the rent granite—mine was such. From that hour I hated him; the very virtues that had, under happier circumstances, made us like brothers, but added fuel to the flame. My rival, he had robbed me of my sister—he had left me without that one great prize I owned on earth; and all that I had dared and won seemed poor, and barren, and worthless, since she no longer valued it.

"That very night I wrote a letter to the First Consul; I knew the ardent desire he possessed to attach to Josephine's suite such members of the old aristocracy as could be induced to join it. He had more than once hinted to me that the fame of my sister's beauty had reached the Tuileries; that with such pretensions as hers, the seclusion of a château in Provence was ill-suited to her. I stated at once my wish that she might be received as one of the ladies of the Court, avowing my intention to afford her any sum that might be deemed suitable to maintain her in so exalted a sphere. This, you are not aware, is the mode by which the members of a family express to the Consul that they surrender all right and guardianship in the individual given, tendering to him full power to dispose of her in marriage, exactly as though he were her own father.

"Before day broke my letter was on its way to Paris; in less than a week came the answer accepting my proposal in the most flattering terms, and commanding me to repair to the Tuileries with my sister, and take command of a regiment *d'élite* then preparing for service.

"I may not dwell on the scene that followed. The very memory of it is too much for my weak and failing spirits. Claude flung himself at my feet, and confessed his love; he declared his willingness to submit to any or everything I should dictate: he would join the army; he would volunteer for Egypt. Poor fellow! his trembling accents and bloodless lip comported ill with the heroism of his words. Only promise that in the end Marie should be his, and there was no danger he would not dare; no course in life, however unsuited to him, he would not follow at my bidding. I know not whether my heart could have withstood such an appeal as this, had I been free to act; but now the die was cast. I handed him the First Consul's letter; he opened it with a hand trembling like palsy, and read it over; he leaned his head against the chimney when he finished, and gave me back the letter without a word. I could not bear to look on him, and left the room.

When I returned he was gone. We left the château the same evening for Paris. Marie scarcely spoke one word during the journey; a fatuous, stupid indifference to everything and every one had seized her, and she seemed perfectly careless whither we went. This gradually yielded to a settled melancholy, which never left her. On our arrival in Paris, I did not dare to pre-

sent myself with her at the Tuileries; so, feigning her ill-health as an excuse, I remained some weeks at Versailles, to endeavor by affection and care to overcome this sad feature of her malady. It was about six weeks after this that I read in the *Journal des Débats* an announcement that 'Claude de Lauzan had accepted holy orders, and was appointed *curé* of La Flèche, in Brittany.' At first the news came on me like a thunder-clap, but after a while's reflection I began to believe it was, perhaps, the very best thing could have happened; and under this view of the matter I left the paper in Marie's way.

"I was right. She did not appear the next morning at breakfast, nor the entire day after. The following day the same; but in the evening came a few lines written with a pencil, saying she wished to see me. I went—but I cannot tell you. My very heart is bursting as I think of her, as she sat up in her bed—her long, dark hair falling in heavy masses over her shoulders, and her darker eyes flashing with a brightness that seemed like wandering intellect. She fell upon my neck and cried; her tears ran down my cheek, and her sobs shook me. I know not what I said, but I remember that she agreed to everything I had arranged for her; she even smiled a sickly smile as I spoke of what an ornament she would be to the *'belle cour,'* and we parted.

"That was the last good-night I ever wished her. The next day she was received at Court, and I was ordered to Normandy, thence I was sent to Boulogne, and soon after to Ireland."

"But you have written to her—you have heard from her?"

"Alas! no. I have written again and again, but either she has never received my letters, or she will not answer them."

The tone of sorrow he concluded in left no room for any effort at consolation, and we were silent; at last he took my hand in his, and as his feverish fingers pressed it, he said,

"'Tis a sad thing when we work the misery of those for whose happiness we would have shed our heart's blood."

CHAPTER X.

THE CHURCHYARD.

THE excitement caused by the mere narration of his sister's suffering weighed heavily on De Meudon's weak and exhausted frame; his thoughts would flow in no other channel; his reveries were of home and long-past years; and a depression far greater than I had yet witnessed settled down upon his jaded spirits.

"Is not my present condition like a just retribution on my ambitious folly?" was his continued reflection: and so he felt it. With a Frenchman's belief in destiny, he regarded the failure of all his hopes, and the ruin of the cause he had embarked in, as the natural and inevitable consequences of his own ungenerous conduct; and even reproached himself for carrying his evil fortune into an enterprise which, without him, might have been successful. These gloomy forebodings, against which reason was of no avail, grew hourly upon him, and visibly influenced his chances of recovery.

It was a sad spectacle to look on one who possessed so much of good—so many fair and attractive qualities—thus wasting away without a single consolation he could lay to his bruised and wounded spirit. The very successes he once gloried to remember now only added bitterness to his fallen estate; to think of what he had been, and look on what he was, was his heaviest affliction, and he fell into a deep, brooding melancholy, in which he scarcely spoke, but sat looking at vacancy, waiting as it were for death.

I remember it well. I had been sitting silently by his bedside; for hours he had not spoken, but an occasional deep-drawn sigh showed he was not sleeping. It was night, and all in the little household were at rest; a slight rustling of the curtain attracted me, and I felt his hand steal from the clothes and grasp my own.

"I have been thinking of you, my dear boy," said he, "and what is to become of you when I'm gone. There, do not sob; the time is short now, and I begin to feel it so; for, somehow, as we approach the confines of eternity, our mental vision grows clearer and more distinct—doubts that have long puzzled us seem doubts no longer. Many of our highest hopes and aspirations—the day-dreams that made life glorious—pass before our eyes, and become the poor and empty pageants of the hour. Like the traveler who, as he journeys along, sees little of the way, but at the last sits down upon some grassy bank, and gazes over the long line of road; so, as the close of life draws near, we throw a backward glance upon the past. But how differently does all seem to our eyes—how many of those we envied once do we pity now; how many of those who appeared

and humble, whose thoughts seemed ed to earth, do we now recognize as ing aloft, high above their fellow-men, creatures of some other sphere!" He sed; then in a tone of greater earnest- added, "You must not join these ple, Tom. The day is gone by when thing great or good could have been ac- plished. The horrors of civil war will r prevent good men from uniting them- es to a cause which has no other road e through bloodshed; and many wise en, who weigh well the dangers, see it peless. France is your country—there, erty has been won; there lives one great an, whose notice, were it but passingly stowed, is fame. If life were spared me, could have served you there—as it is, I n do something."

He paused for a while, and then drawing ne curtain gently to one side, said,

"Can it be moonlight, it is so very right?"

"Yes," said I; "the moon is at the ull."

He sat up as I spoke, and looked eagerly ut through the little window.

"I have got a fancy—how strange, too, it is one I have often smiled at in others, but I feel it strongly now—it is to choose some spot where I shall be laid when I am dead. There is a little ruin at the bottom of this glen; you must remember it well. If I mistake not, there is a well close be- side it. I remember resting there one hot and sultry day in July. It was an eventful day, too—we beat the king's troops, and took seventy prisoners; and I rode from Arklow down here to bring up some ammunition that we had secreted in one of the lead-mines. Well I recollect falling asleep beside that well, and having such a delightful dream of home, when I was a child, and of a pony which Marie used to ride behind me, and I thought we were galloping through the vineyard, she grasping me round the waist, half laugh- ing, half in fear; and when I awoke I could not remember where I was. I should like to see that old spot again, and I feel strong enough now to try it."

I endeavored, with all my power of per- suasion, to prevent his attempting to walk such a distance, and in the night air too; but the more I reasoned against, the more bent was he on the project, and at last I was obliged to yield a reluctant consent, and assist him to rise and dress.

The energy which animated him at first soon sank under the effort, and before we had gone a quarter of a mile he grew faint and weary, still he persevered, and, leaning heavily on my arm, he tottered along.

"If I make no better progress," said he, smiling sadly, "there will be no need to assist me coming back."

At last we reached the ruin, which, like many of the old churches in Ireland, was a a mere gable, overgrown with ivy, and pierced with a single window, whose rudely formed arch betokened great antiquity. Vestiges of the side walls remained in part, but the inside of the building was filled with tombstones and grave-mounds, selected by the people as being a place of more than ordinary sanctity; among these the rank dock weeds and nettles grew luxuriantly, and the tall grass lay heavy and matted. We sat for some time looking on this sad spot: a few garlands were withering on some rude crosses of stick, to mark the latest of those who sought their rest there, and upon these my companion's eyes were bent with a melancholy meaning.

How long we sat there in silence I know not, but a rustling of the ivy behind me was the first thing to attract my attention. I turned quickly round, and in the window of the ruin beheld the head of a man bent eagerly in the direction we were in; the moonlight fell upon him at the moment, and I saw that the face was blackened.

"Who's that?" I called aloud, as with my finger I directed De Meudon to the spot. No answer was returned, and I repeated my question yet louder, but still no reply, while I could mark that the head was turned slightly round, as if to speak with some one without. The noise of feet, and the low murmur of several voices, now came from the side of the ruin, and at the same instant some dozen men, their faces blackened, and wearing a white badge on their hats, stood up as if out of the very ground around us.

"What are you doing here at this time of night?" said a hard voice, in tones that boded but little kindliness.

"We are as free to walk the country, when we like it, as you are, I hope," was my answer.

"I know his voice well," said another of the crowd. "I told you it was them."

"Is it you that stop at Wild's, in the glen?" said the first speaker.

"Yes," replied I.

"And is it to get share of what's going that ye're come to join us now?" repeated he, in a tone of mockery.

"Be easy, Lanty—'tis the French officer that behaved so stout up at Ross: it's little he cares for money, as myself knows. I saw him throw a handful of goold among

the boys when they stopped to pillage, and bid them do their work first, and that he'd give them plenty after."

"Maybe he'd do the same now," said a voice from the crowd, in a tone of irony; and the words were received by the rest with a roar of laughter.

"Stop laughing," said the first speaker, in a voice of command; "we've small time for joking." As he spoke he threw himself heavily on the bank beside De Meudon, and, placing his hand familiarly on his arm, said, in a low, but clear voice, "The boys is come up here to-night to draw lots for three men to settle Barton, that's come down here yesterday, and stopping at the barrack there. We knew you warn't well lately, and we didn't trouble you; but now that you're come up of yourself among us, it's only fair and reasonable you'd take your chance with the rest, and draw your lot with the others."

"Arrah he's too weak—the man is dying," said a voice near.

"And if he is," said the other, "who wants his help, sure, isn't it to keep him quiet, and not bethray us."

"The devil a fear of that," said the former speaker; "he's thrue to the backbone; I know them that knows him well."

By this time De Meudon had risen to his feet, and stood leaning upon a tall headstone beside him; his foraging cap fell off in his effort to stand, and his long thin hair floated in masses down his pale cheeks and on his shoulders; the moon was full upon him, and what a contrast did his noble features present to the ruffian band that sat and stood around him.

"And is it a scheme of murder—of cold, cowardly assassination you have dared to propose to me?" said he, darting a look of fiery indignation on him who seemed the leader. "Is it thus you understand my presence in your country, and in your cause? Think ye it was for this that I left the glorious army of France—that I quitted the field of honorable war to mix with such as you! Ay, if it were the last word I were to speak on earth, I'd denounce you, wretches that stain with blood and massacre the sacred cause the best and boldest bleed for."

The click of a trigger sounded harshly on my ear, and my blood ran cold with horror; De Meudon heard it too, and continued:

"You do but cheat me of an hour or two, and I am ready."

He paused, as if waiting for the shot. A deadly silence followed, it lasted for some minutes, when again he spoke:

"I came here to-night not knowing of your intentions, not expecting you; I came here to choose a grave, where, before another week pass over, I hoped to rest; if you will it sooner, I shall not gainsay you."

Low murmurs ran through the crowd, and something like a tone of pity could be heard mingling through the voices.

"Let him go home, then, in God's name!" said one of the number; "that's the best way."

"Ay, take him home," said another, addressing me. "Dan Kelly's a hard man when he's roused."

The words were repeated on every side, and I led De Meudon forth leaning on my arm, for already, the excitement over, a stupid indifference crept over him, and he walked on by my side without speaking.

I confess it was not without trepidation, and many a backward glance toward the old ruin, that I turned homeward to our cabin. There was that in their looks at which I trembled for my companion, nor do I yet know why they spared him at that moment.

CHAPTER XI.

TOO LATE.

THE day which followed the events I have mentioned was a sad one to me. The fatigue and the excitement together brought on fever with De Meudon. His head became attacked, and before evening his faculties began to wander. All the strange events of his checkered life were mixed up in his disturbed intellect, and he talked on for hours about Italy, and Egypt, the Tuileries, La Vendée, and Ireland, without ceasing. The entire of the night he never slept, and the next day the symptoms appeared still more aggravated. The features of his insanity were wilder and less controllable. He lost all memory of me, and sometimes the sight of me at his bedside threw him into most terrific paroxysms of passion; while, at others, he would hold my hand for hours together, and seemed to feel my presence as something soothing. His frequent recurrence to the scene in the churchyard showed the deep impression it had made upon his mind, and how fatally it had influenced the worst symptoms of his malady.

Thus passed two days and nights. On the third morning exhaustion seemed to have worn him into a false calm. His wild, staring eye had become heavier; its movements less rapid; the spot of color had left

his cheek; the mouth was pinched up and rigid; and a flatness of the muscles of the face betokened complete depression. He spoke seldom, and with a voice hoarse and cavernous, but no longer in the tone of wild excitement as before. I sat by his bedside still and in silence, my own sad thoughts my only company. As it grew later, the sleepless days and nights I had passed, and the stillness of the sick-room, overcame me, and I slept.

I awoke with a start: some dreamy consciousness of neglect had flashed across me, and I sat up. I peeped into the bed, and started back with amazement. I looked again, and there lay De Meudon, on the outside of the clothes, dressed in his full uniform—the green coat and white facing, the large gold epaulettes, the brilliant crosses on the breast; his plumed chapeau lay at one side of him, and his sabre at the other. He lay still and motionless. I held the candle near his face, and could mark a slight smile that curled his cold lip, and gave to his wan and wasted features something of their former expression.

"*Oui, mon cher,*" said he, in a weak whisper, as he took my hand and kissed it, "*c'est bien moi;*" and then added, "it was another of my strange fancies to put on these once more before I died; and, when I found you sleeping, I arose and did so. I have changed something since I wore this last: it was at a ball at Cambacérès."

My joy at hearing him speak once more, with full possession of his reason, was damped by the great change a few hours had worked in his appearance. His skin was cold and clammy; a gluey moisture rested on his cheek, and his teeth were dark and discolored. A slimy froth, too, was ever rising to his lips as he spoke, while at every respiration his chest heaved and waved like a stormy sea.

"You are thirsty, Charles," said I, stooping over him to wet his lips.

"No," said he, calmly, "I have but one thing which wants relief; it is here."

He pressed his hand to his heart as he spoke, while such a look of misery as crossed his features I never beheld.

"Your heart—"

"Is broken," said he, with a sigh.

For some minutes he said nothing, then whispered,

"Take my pocket-book from beneath my pillow—yes, that's it. There is a letter you'll give my sister—you'll promise me that; well, the other is for Lecharlier, the *chef* of the Polytechnique at Paris—that is for you—you must be *un élève* there. There are some five or six thousand francs—it's all I have now—they are yours. Marie is already provided for—tell her—but no, she has forgiven me long since—I feel it. You'll one day win your grade—high up; yes, you must do so. Perhaps it may be your fortune to speak with General Bonaparte; if so, I beg you say to him that, when Charles de Meudon was dying—in exile—with but one friend left of all the world, he held this portrait to his lips, and, with his last breath, he kissed it."

The fervor of the action drew the blood to his face and temples, which as suddenly became pale again; a shivering ran through his limbs—a quick heaving of his bosom—a sigh—and all was still. He was dead.

The stunning sense of deep affliction is a mercy from on high. Weak human faculties, long strained by daily communing with grief, would fall into idiocy, were their acuteness not blunted, and their perception rendered dull. It is for memory to trace back through the mazes of misery the object of our sorrow, as the widow searches for the corpse of him she loved amid the slain upon the battle-field.

I sat benumbed with sorrow, a vague desire for the breaking day my only thought.

Already the indistinct glimmerings of morning were visible, when I heard the sounds of men marching along the road toward the house. I could mark, by the clank of their firelocks, and their regular step, that they were soldiers. They halted at the door of the cabin, whence a loud knocking now proceeded.

"Holloa, there!" said a voice, whose tones seemed to sink into my very heart—"holloa, Peter! get up and open the door."

"What's the matter?" cried the old man, starting up, and groping his way toward the door.

The sound of several voices, and the noise of approaching footsteps drowned the reply; and the same instant the door of the little room in which I sat opened, and a sergeant entered.

"Sorry to disturb ye, sir," said he, civilly, "but duty can't be avoided. I have a warrant to arrest Captain de Meudon, a French officer that is concealed here. May I ask where is he?"

I pointed to the bed.

The sergeant approached, and by the half-light could just perceive the glitter of the uniform, as the body lay shaded by the curtain.

"I arrest you, sir, in the King's name!" said he. "Holloa, Kelly! this is your prisoner, isn't he?"

A head appeared at the door as he spoke, and, as the eyes wandered stealthily round the chamber, I recognized, despite the change of color, the wretch who led the party at the churchyard.

"Come in, d—n ye," said the sergeant impatiently; "what are you afraid for? Is this your man? Holloa! sir," said he, shaking the corpse by the shoulder.

"You must call even louder yet," said I, while something like the fury of a fiend was working within me.

"What!" said the sergeant, snatching up the light and holding it within the bed. He started back in horror as he did so, and called out, "He is dead!"

Kelly sprang forward at the word, and seizing the candle, held it down to the face of the corpse; but the flame rose as steadily before those cold lips as though the breath of life had never warmed them.

"I'll get the reward, anyhow, sergeant, won't I?" said the ruffian, while the thirst for gain added fresh expression to his savage features.

A look of disgust was the only reply he met with, as the sergeant walked into the outer room, and whispered something to the man of the house. At the same instant the galloping of a horse was heard on the causeway. It came nearer and nearer, and ceased suddenly at the door, as a deep voice shouted out,

"Well, all right, I hope, sergeant. Is he safe?"

A whispered reply, and a low, muttered sound of two or three voices followed, and Barton—the same man I had seen at the fray in Malone's cabin—entered the room. He approached the bed, and drawing back the curtains rudely, gazed on the dead man, while over his shoulder peered the demoniac countenance of the informer, Kelly, his savage features working in anxiety lest his gains should have escaped him.

Barton's eye ranged the little chamber till it fell on me, as I sat still and motionless against the wall. He started slightly, and then advancing close, fixed his piercing glance upon me.

"Ha!" cried he, "*you* here! Well, that is more than I looked for this morning. I have a short score to settle with you. Sergeant, here's one prisoner for you, at any rate."

"Yes," said Kelly, springing forward, "he was at the churchyard with the other; I'll swear to that."

"I think we can do without your valuable aid in this business," said Barton, smiling maliciously. "Come along, young gentleman, we'll try and finish the education that has begun so prosperously."

My eyes involuntarily turned to the table where De Meudon's pistols were lying. The utter hopelessness of such a contest determined me not. I sprang toward them; but, as I did so, the strong hand of Barton was on my collar, and, with a hoarse laugh, he threw me back against the wall, as he called out,

"Folly, boy—mere folly; you are quite sure of the rope without that. Here, take him off."

As he spoke, two soldiers seized me on either side, and, before a minute elapsed, pinioned my arms behind my back. In another moment the men fell in, the order was given to march, and I was led away between the files, Kelly following at the rear; while Barton's voice might be heard issuing from the cabin, as he gave his orders for the burial of the body, and the removal of all the effects and papers to the barrack at Glencree.

We might have been about an hour on the road when Barton overtook us. He rode to the head of the party, and, handing a paper to the sergeant, muttered some words among which I could only gather the phrase, "Committed to Newgate;" then turning round in his saddle, he fixed his eyes on Kelly, who, like a beast of prey, continued to hang upon the track of his victim.

"Well, Dan," cried he, "you may go home again now. I am afraid you've gained nothing this time but character."

"Home!" muttered the wretch, in a voice of agony; "is it face home after this morning's work?"

"And why not, man? Take my word for it, the neighbors will be too much afraid to meddle with you now."

"Oh! Mister Barton—oh, darling! don't send me back there, for the love of Heaven! Take me with you," cried the miserable wretch, in tones of heart-moving misery. "Oh, young gentleman," said he, turning toward me, and catching me by the sleeve, "spake a word for me this day."

"Don't you think he has enough of troubles of his own to think of, Dan?" said Barton, with a tone of seeming kindliness. "Go back, man—go back; there's plenty of work before you in this very country. Don't lay your hand on me, you scoundrel; your touch would pollute a hangman."

The man fell back as if stunned at the sound of these words; his face became livid, and his lips white as snow. He staggered a pace or two, like a drunken man,

and then stood stock still, his eyes fixed upon the road.

"Quick march!" said the sergeant.

The soldiers stepped out again; and as we turned the angle of the road, about a mile further, I beheld Kelly still standing in the self-same attitude we left him. Barton, after some order to the sergeant, soon left us, and we continued our march till near nine o'clock, when the party halted to breakfast. They pressed me to eat with every kind entreaty, but I could taste nothing, and we resumed our road after half an hour; but, the day becoming oppressively hot, it was deemed better to defer our march till near sunset. We stopped, then, during the noon, in a shady thicket near the roadside, where the men, unbuckling their knapsacks and loosening their stocks, lay down in the deep grass, either chatting together or smoking. The sergeant made many attempts to draw me into conversation, but my heart was too full of its own sensations either to speak or listen; so he abandoned the pursuit with a good grace, and betook himself to his pipe at the foot of a tree, where, after its last whiff escaped, he sank into a heavy sleep.

Such of the party as were not disposed for sleep gathered together in a little knot on a small patch of green grass, in the middle of a beech clump, where, having arranged themselves with as much comfort as the place permitted, began chatting away over their life and its adventures pleasantly and freely. I was glad to seek any distraction from my own gloomy thoughts in listening to them, as I lay only a few yards off: but, though I endeavored with all my might to attend to, and take interest in, their converse, my thoughts always turned to him I had lost forever—the first, the only friend I had ever known.

All care for myself and what fortune awaited me was merged in my sorrow for him. If not indifferent to my fate, I was at least unmindful of it, and although the words of those near me fell upon my ear, I neither heard nor marked them. From this dreamy lethargy I was at last suddenly aroused by the hearty bursts of laughter that broke from the party, and a loud clapping of hands that denoted their applause of something, or somebody then before them.

"I say, George," said one of the soldiers, "he's a queer un too, that piper."

"Yes.—he's a droll chap," responded the other, solemnly, as he rolled forth a long curl of smoke from the angle of his mouth.

"Can you play 'Rule Britannia,' then?" asked another of the men.

"No, sir," said a voice I at once knew to be no other than my friend Darby's—"no, sir; but av the 'Fox's Lament,' or 'Mary's Dream' wasn't uncongenial to your sentiments, it would be a felicity to me to expatiate upon the same before yez."

"Eh, Bell," cried a rough voice, "does that beat you now?"

"No," said another, "not a bit; he means he'll give us something Irish instead; he don't know 'Rule Britannia!'"

"Not know 'Rule Britannia!' why where the devil were you ever bred or born, man—eh?"

"Kerry, sir, the kingdom of Kerry, was the nativity of my father. My maternal progenitrix emanated from Clare. Maybe you've heard the adage—

'From Kerry his father, from Clare came his mother,
He's more rogue nor fool on one side and the other.'

Not but that, in my humble individuality, I am an exceptious illustration of the proverbial catastrophe."

Another shout of rude laughter from his audience followed this speech, amid the uproar of which Darby began tuning his pipes, as if perfectly unaware that any singularity on his part had called forth the mirth.

"Well, what are we to have, old fellow, after all that confounded squeaking and grunting?" said he who appeared the chief spokesman of the party.

"'Tis a trifling production of my own muse, sir—a kind of biographical, poetical, and categorical dissertation of the delights, devices, and daily doings of your obaydient servant, and ever submissive slave, Darby the Blast."

Though it was evident very little of this eloquent announcement was comprehended by the party, their laughter was not less ready, and a general chorus proclaimed their attention to the song.

Darby accordingly assumed his wonted dignity of port, and having given some half dozen premonitory flourishes, which certainly had the effect of astonishing and overawing the audience, he began to the air of "The Night before Larry was stretched," the following ditty:—

DARBY THE BLAST.

Oh! my name it is Darby the Blast,
My country is Ireland all over,
My religion is never to fast,
But live, as I wander, in clover;

To make fun for myself every day,
The ladies to plaze when I'm able,
The boys to amuse, as I play,
An make the jugs dance on the table.
Oh! success to the chanter, my dear.

Your eyes on each side you may cast,
But there isn't a house that is near ye
But they're glad to have Darby the Blast,
And they'll tell ye 'tis he that can cheer ye.
Oh! 'tis he can put life in a feast,
What music lies under his knuckle,
As he plays "Will I send for the Priest?"
Or a jig they call "Cover the Buckle."
Oh! good luck to the chanter, your sowl.

But give me an audience in rags,
They're illigant people for list'ning;
'Tis they that can humor the bags,
As I rise a fine tune at a christ'ning.
There's many a weddin' I make
Where they never get further nor sighing;
And when I perform at a wake,
The corpse looks delighted at dying.
Oh! success to the chanter, your sowl.

"Eh! what's that?" cried a gruff voice; "the corpse does what?"

"'Tis a rhetorical amplification, that means, he would if he could," said Darby, stopping to explain.

"I say," said another, "that's all gammon and stuff; a corpse couldn't know what was doing—eh! old fellow?"

"'Tis an Irish corpse I was describin'," said Darby, proudly, and evidently, while sore pushed for an explanation, having a severe struggle to keep down his contempt for the company that needed it.

An effort I made at this moment to obtain a nearer view of the party, from whom I was slightly separated by some low brushwood, brought my hand in contact with something sharp; I started and looked round, and to my astonishment saw a clasp-knife, such as gardeners carry, lying open beside me. In a second I guessed the meaning of this. It had been so left by Darby, to give me an opportunity of cutting the cords that bound my arms, and thus facilitating my escape. His presence was doubtless there for this object, and all the entertaining powers he displayed only brought forth to occupy the soldiers' attention while I effected my deliverance. Regret for the time lost was my first thought, my second, more profitable, was not to waste another moment; so kneeling down I managed with the knife to cut some of my fastenings, and after some little struggle freed one arm; to liberate the other was the work of a second, and I stood up untrammeled. What was to be done next? for although at liberty, the soldiers lay about me on every side, and escape seemed impossible; besides, I knew not where to turn, where to look for one friendly face, nor any one who would afford me shelter. Just then I heard Darby's voice raised above its former pitch, and evidently intended to be heard by me.

"Sure there's Captain Bubbleton, of the Forty-fifth Regiment, now in Dublin, in George's-street Barracks. Ay, in George's-street Barracks," said he, repeating the words as if to impress them on me. "'Tis himself could tell you what I say is thrue; and if you wouldn't put confidential authentification on the information of a poor leather-squeezing, timber-ticking crayture like myself, sure you'd have reverential obaydience to your own commissioned captain."

"Well, I don't think much of that song of yours, anyhow, old Blow, or Blast, or whatever your name is. Have you nothing about the service—eh? 'The British Grenadiers,' give us that."

"Yes; 'The British Grenadiers,' that's the tune!" cried a number of the party together.

"I never heard them play but onst, sir," said Darby, meekly, "and they were in sich a hurry that day, I couldn't pick up the tune."

"A hurry! what d'you mean?" said the corporal.

"Yes, sir, 'twas the day but one after the French landed; and the British Grenadiers that you were talking of was running away toward Castlebar."

"What's that you say there?" cried out one of the soldiers, in a voice of passion.

"'Tis that they wor running away, sir," replied Darby, with a most insulting coolness: "and small blame to thim for that same, av they wor frightened."

In an instant the party sprang to their legs, while a perfect shower of curses fell upon the luckless piper, and fifty humane proposals to smash his skull, break his neck and every bone in his body, were mooted on all sides. Meanwhile, M'Keown remonstrated in a spirit which in a minute I perceived was not intended to appease their irritation; on the contrary, his apologies were couched in very different guise, being rather excuses for his mishap in having started a disagreeable topic, than any regret for the mode in which he treated it.

"And sure, sir," continued he, addressing the corporal, "'twasn't my fault av they tuck to their heels; wouldn't any one run for his life av he had the opportunity."

He raised his voice once more at these words with such significance, that I resolved to profit by the counsel if the lucky moment should offer. I had not long to wait

—the insulting manner of Darby, still more than his words, had provoked them beyond endurance, and one of the soldiers, drawing his bayonet, drove it through the leather bag of his pipes; a shout of rage from the piper, and a knock-down blow that leveled the offender, replied to the insult. In an instant the whole party were upon him—their very numbers, however, defeated their vengeance; as I could hear from the tone of Darby's voice, who, far from declining the combat, continued to throw in every possible incentive to battle, as he struck right and left of him. "Ah, you got that—well done—'tis brave you are—ten against one—devil fear you!"

The scuffle by this time had brought the sergeant to the spot, who in vain endeavored to ascertain the cause of the tumult, as they rolled over one another on the ground, while caps, belts, and fragments of bagpipes, were scattered about on every side. The uproar had now reached its height, and Darby's yells and invectives were poured forth with true native fluency. The moment seemed propitious to me. I was free—no one near: the hint about Bubbleton was evidently intended for my guidance. I crept stealthily a few yards beneath the brushwood, and emerged safely upon the road. The sounds of the conflict, amid which Darby's own voice rose pre-eminent, told me that all were too busily engaged to waste a thought on me. I pressed forward at my best pace and soon reached the crest of a hill, from which the view extended for miles on every side; my eyes, however, were bent in but one direction—they turned westward, where a vast plain stretched away toward the horizon, its varied surface presenting all the rich and cultivated beauty of a garden, villas and mansions surrounded with large parks, waving corn-fields and orchards, in all the luxuriance of blossom. Toward the east lay the sea, the coast line broken into jutting promontories and little bays, dotted with white cottages, with here and there some white-sailed skiff, scarce moving in the calm air. But amid all this outspread loveliness of view, my attention was fixed upon a dense and heavy cloud that seemed balanced in the bright atmosphere far away in the distance; thither my eyes turned, and on that spot was my gaze riveted, for I knew that beneath that canopy of dull smoke lay Dublin. The distant murmur of the angry voices still reached me as I stood. I turned one backward look, the road was lonely, not a shadow moved upon it; before me the mountain road descended in a zigzag course till it reached the valley; I sprang over the low wall that skirted the wayside, and with my eyes still fixed upon the dark cloud I hurried on—my heart grew lighter with every step, and when at length I reached the shelter of a pine wood, and perceived no sign of being pursued, my spirits rose to such a pitch of excitement that I shouted for very joy.

For above an hour my path continued within the shelter of the wood, and when at last I emerged, it was not without a sense of sudden fear that I looked back upon the mountains which frowned above me, and seemed still so near. I thought, too, I could mark figures on the road, and imagined I could see them moving backward and forward, like persons seeking for something, and then I shuddered to think that they too might be at that very moment looking at me; the thought added fresh speed to my flight, and for some miles I pressed forward without even turning once.

It was late in the evening as I drew near the city; hungry and tired as I was, the fear of being overtaken was uppermost in my thoughts, and as I mingled in the crowds that strolled along the roads enjoying the delicious calmness of a summer's eve, I shrank from every eye like something guilty, and feared that every glance that fell on me was detection itself.

It was not until I entered the city, and found myself traversing the crowded and narrow streets that formed the outskirts, that I felt at ease, and inquiring my way to George's-street Barracks, I hurried on, regardless of the strange sights and sounds about. At that hour, the humbler portion of the population was all astir; their daily work ended, they were either strolling along with their families for an evening walk, or standing in groups around the numerous ballad-singers, who delighted their audience with diatribes against "the Union," and ridiculous attacks on the ministry of the day. These, however, were not always unmolested, for, as I passed on, I saw more than one errant minstrel seized on by the soldiery, and hurried off to the guard-house to explain some uncivil or equivocal allusion to Lord Castlereagh or Mr. Cook, such evidences of arbitrary power being sure to elicit a hearty groan or shout of derision from the mob, which in turn was replied to by the soldiers; these scolding matches gave an appearance of tumult to the town, which on some occasions did not stop short at mere war of words.

In the larger and better streets such scenes were unfrequent—but here patrols of mounted dragoons or police passed from time to time, exchanging as they went

certain signals as to the state of the city; while crowds of people thronged the pathways, and conversed in a low tone, which broke forth now and then into a savage yell as often as some interference on the part of the military seemed to excite their angry passions. At the Castle gates the crowd was more dense, and apparently more daring, requiring all the efforts of the dragoons to keep them from pressing against the railings, and leave a space for the exit of carriages, which from time to time issued from the Castle yard. Few of these, indeed, went forth unnoticed. Some watchful eye would detect the occupant as he lay back to escape observation—his name would be shouted aloud, as an inevitable volley of hisses and execrations showered upon him; and in this way were received the names of Mr. Bingham, Colonel Loftus, the Right Hon. Denis Browne, Isaac Corry, and several others who happened that day to be dining with the Lord-Lieutenant, and were now on their way to the House of Commons.

Nothing struck me so much in the scene as the real or apparent knowledge possessed by the mob of all the circumstances of each individual's personal and political career; and thus the price for which they had been purchased—either in rank, place, or pounds sterling, was cried aloud amid shouts of derision and laughter, or the more vindictive yells of an infuriated populace.

"Ha! Ben, what are you to get for Baltinglass? Boroughs is up in the market.—Well, Dick, you won't take the place—nothing but hard cash.—Don't be hiding, Jemmy.—Look at the Prince of Orange, boys.—A groan for the Prince of Orange!" here a fearful groan from the mob echoed through the streets. "There's Luke Fox—ha! stole away!" here followed another yell.

With difficulty I elbowed my way through the densely-packed crowd, and at last reached the corner of George's street, where a strong police force was stationed, not permitting the passage of any one either up or down that great thoroughfare. Finding it impossible to penetrate by this way, I continued along Dame street, where I found the crowd to thicken as I advanced. Not only were the pathways, but the entire streets filled with people—through whom the dragoons could with difficulty force a passage for the carriages, which continued at intervals to pass down. Around the statue of King William the mob was in its greatest force. Not merely the railings around the statue, but the figure itself was surmounted by persons, who, taking advantage of their elevated and secure position, hurled their abuse upon the police and military with double bitterness. These sallies of invective were always accompanied by some humorous allusion, which created a laugh among the crowd beneath, to which, as the objects of the ridicule were by no means insensible, the usual reply was by charging on the people, and a command to keep back—a difficult precept when pressed forward by some hundreds behind them. As I made my way slowly through the moving mass, I could see that a powerful body of horse patrolled between the mob and the front of the College, the space before which and the iron railings being crammed with students of the University, for so their caps and gowns bespoke them. Between this party and the others a constant exchange of abuse and insult was maintained, which even occasionally came to blows whenever any chance opportunity of coming in contact, unobserved by the soldiery, presented itself.

In the interval between these rival parties each member's carriage was obliged to pass, and here each candidate for the honors of one and the execrations of the other, met his bane and antidote.

"Ha! broken beak, there you go! bad luck to you! Ha! old vulture, Flood."

"Three cheers for Flood, lads!" shouted a voice from the College, and in the loud cry the yells of their opponents were silenced, but only to break forth the next moment into further license.

"Here he comes, here he comes," said the mob; "make way there, or he'll take you flying. It's himself can do it. God bless your honor, and may you never want a good baste under ye!"

This civil speech was directed to a smart, handsome-looking man of about five-and-forty, who came dashing along on a roan thoroughbred, perfectly careless of the crowd, through which he rode with a smiling face and a merry look. His leathers and tops were all in perfect jockey style, and even to his long-lashed whip he was in everything a sportsmanlike figure.

"That's George Ponsonby," said a man beside me, in answer to my question; "and I suppose you know who that is?"

A perfect yell from the crowd drowned my reply, and amid the mingled curses and execrations of the mass, a dark-colored carriage moved slowly on; the coachman evidently fearful at every step lest his horses should strike against some of the crowd and thus license the outbreak that seemed only waiting an opportunity to burst forth.

"Ha! Bladderchops, Bloody Jack, are you there?" shouted the savage ringleaders, as they pressed up to the very glasses of the carriage, and stared at the occupant.

"Who is it?" said I, again.

"John Toler, the Attorney-General."

Amid deafening cries of vengeance against him the carriage moved on, and then rose the wild cheers of the College men to welcome their partisan. A hurrah from the distant end of Dame street now broke on the ear, which, taken up by those nearer, swelled into regular thunder, and at the same moment the dragoons cried out to keep back, a lane was formed in a second, and down it came six smoking thoroughbreds; the postilions in white and silver, cutting and spurring with all their might. Never did I hear such a cheer as now burst forth; a yellow chariot, its panels covered with emblazonry, came flying past; a hand waved from the window in return to the salutation of the crowd, and the name of Tom Conolly of Castletown rent the very air; two outriders in their rich liveries followed, unable to keep their place through the thick mass that wedged in after the retiring equipage.

Scarcely had the last echo of the voices subsided when a cheer burst from the opposite side, and a waving of caps and handkerchiefs proclaimed that some redoubted champion of Protestant ascendancy was approaching. The crowd rocked to and fro as question after question poured in.

"Who is it, who is coming?" But none could tell, for as yet the carriage, whose horses were heard at a smart trot, had not turned the corner of Grafton street; in a few moments the doubt seemed resolved, for scarcely did the horses appear in sight when a perfect yell rose from the crowd and drowned the cheers of their opponents. I cannot convey anything like the outbreak of vindictive passion that seemed to convulse the mob, as a splendidly-appointed carriage drove rapidly past and made toward the colonnade of the Parliament-house. A rush of the people was made at the moment, in which, as in a wave, I was borne along in spite of me. The dragoons, with drawn sabres, pressed down upon the crowd, and a scene of frightful confusion followed; many were sorely wounded by the soldiers, some were trampled under foot, and one poor wretch in an effort to recover himself from stumbling, was supposed to be stooping for a stone, and cut through the skull without mercy. He lay there insensible for some time, but at last a party of the crowd braving everything, rushed forward and carried him away to an hospital. During this, I had established myself on the top of a lamp-post, which gave me a full view, not only of all the proceedings of the mob, but of the different arrivals as they drew up at the door of the house. The carriage whose approach was signalized by all these disasters, had now reached the colonnade. The steps were lowered, and a young man of the very handsomest and most elegant appearance descended slowly from the chariot; his dress was in the height of the reigning fashion, but withal had a certain negligence that bespoke one who less paid attention to toilet, than that his costume was a thing of course, which could not but be, like all about him, in the most perfect taste. In his hand he held a white handkerchief, which, as he carelessly shook, the perfume floated over the savage-looking, half-naked crowd around; he turned to give some directions to his coachman, and at the same moment a dead cat was hurled by some one in the crowd and struck him on the breast, a cry of exultation rending the very air in welcome of this ruffian act: as for him, he slowly moved his face round toward the mob, and as he brushed the dirt from his coat with his kerchief he bestowed on them one look, so full of immeasurable heartfelt contempt, that they actually quailed beneath it; the cry grew fainter and fainter, and it was only as he turned to enter the House that they recovered self-possession enough to renew their insulting shout. I did not need to ask the name, for the yell of bloody Castlereagh shook the very air.

"Make way there—make way, boys!" shouted a rough voice from the crowd, and a roar of laughter, that seemed to burst from the entire street, answered the command, and the same instant a large burly figure advanced through a lane made for him in the crowd, mopping his great bullet-head with a bright scarlet handkerchief.

"Long life to you, Mr. Egan!" shouted one.

"Three cheers for Bully Egan, boys!" cried another, and the appeal was responded to at once.

"Make way, you blackguards, make way, I say," said Egan, affecting to be displeased at this display of his popularity, "don't you see who's coming?" Every eye was turned at once toward Daly's clubhouse, in which direction he pointed; but it was some minutes before the dense crowd would permit anything to be seen. Suddenly, however, a cheer arose wilder and louder than any I had yet heard; from the

street to the very housetops the cry was caught up and repeated, while a tumultuous joy seemed to rock the crowd as they moved to and fro.

At this moment the excitement was almost maddening; every neck was strained in one direction, every eye pointed thither, while the prolonged cheering was sustained with a roar as deafening as the sea in a storm. At last the crowd were forced back, and I saw three gentlemen advancing abreast: the two outside ones were holding between them the weak and trembling figure of an old and broken man, whose emaciated form and withered face presented the very extreme of lassitude and weakness; his loose coat hung awkwardly on his spare and shrunken form, and he moved along in a shuffling, slip-shod fashion. As they mounted the steps of the Parliament-house, the cheering grew wilder and more enthusiastic, and I wondered how he who was evidently the object, could seem so indifferent to the welcome thus given him, as with bent-down head he pressed on, neither turning right nor left. With seeming difficulty he was assisted up the steps, when he slowly turned round, and, removing his hat, saluted the crowd. The motion was a simple one, but in its very simplicity was its power. The broad white forehead, across which some scanty hair floated; the eye that now beamed proudly forth, was turned upon them, and never was the magic of a look more striking; for a second all was hushed, and then a very thunder of applause rolled out, and the name of Henry Grattan burst from every tongue. Just then one of the mob, exasperated by a stroke from the flat of a dragoon's sabre, had caught the soldier by the foot and flung him from his saddle to the ground; his comrades flew to his rescue at once, and charged the crowd, which fell back before them. The College men, taking advantage of this, sprang forward on the mob, armed with their favorite weapons, their hurdles of strong oak; the street was immediately torn up behind, and a shower of paving stones poured in upon the luckless military, now completely hemmed in between both parties. Yells of rage and defiance rose on either side, and the cheers of the victors and cries of the wounded were mixed in mad confusion. My lamp-post was no longer an enviable position, and I slipped gently down toward the the ground; in doing so, however, I unfortunately kicked off a soldier's cap. The man turned on me at once and collared me, and notwithstanding all my excuses insisted on carrying me off to the guard-house. The danger of such a thing at once struck me, and I resisted manfully. The mob cheered me, at which the soldier only became more angry; and ashamed, too, at being opposed by a mere boy, he seized me rudely by the throat. My blood rose at this, and I struck boldly at him, my fist met him in the face, and before he could recover himself the crowd were upon him. Down he went, while a rush of the mob, escaping from the dragoons, flowed over his body; at the same moment the shout, "Guard, turn out!" was heard from the angle of the Bank, and the clattering of arms and the roll of a drum followed. A cheer from the mob seemed to accept the challenge, and every hand was employed tearing up the pavement and preparing for the fray. Whether by my own self-appointment, or by common consent, I cannot say, but I at once took the leadership, and having formed the crowd into two parties, directed them, if hard pressed, to retreat either by College street or Westmoreland street. Thus one party could assist the other by enfilading the attacking force, unless they were in sufficient strength to pursue both together. We had not long to wait the order of battle. The soldiers were formed in a second, and the word was given to advance at a charge. The same instant I stepped forward and cried, "Fire!" Never was an order so obeyed—a hundred paving stones showered down on the wretched soldiers, who fell here and there in the ranks. "Again!" I shouted to my second battalion, that stood waiting for the word, and down came another hail-storm, that rattled upon their caps and muskets, and sent many a stout fellow to the rear. A wild cheer from the mob proclaimed the victory, but at the same instant a rattling of ramrods, and a clank of firelocks, was heard in front; and from the rear of the soldiers a company marched out in *échelon*, and drew up as if on parade. All was stilled, not a man moved in the crowd, indeed our tactics seemed now at an end, when suddenly the word, "Make ready—present!" was called out, and the same instant a ringing discharge of musketry tore through the crowd. Never did I witness such a scene as followed. All attempts to retreat were blocked up by the pressure from behind; and the sight of the wounded, who fell by the discharge of the soldiers, seemed to paralyze every effort of the mob. One terrified cry rose from the mass, as they shrank from the muskets. Again the ramrods were heard clinking in the barrels. I saw there was but one moment, and cried out, "Courage, lads, and

lown upon them!" and with that I dashed nadly forward, followed by the mob that, ike a mighty mass, now rolled heavily af-er me. The soldiers fell back as we came on; their bayonets were brought to the charge, the word "Fire low!" was passed along the line, and a bright sheet of flame flashed forth, and was answered by a scream of anguish that drowned the crash of the fire. In the rush backward I was thrown on the ground, and at first believed I had been shot, but I soon perceived I was safe and sprang to my legs; but the same moment a blow on the head from the butt-end of a musket smote me to the earth, and I neither saw nor heard of anything very clearly afterward. I had, indeed, a faint, dreamy recollection of being danced upon and trampled by some hundred heavy feet, and then experiencing a kind of swinging, rocking motion, as if carried on something; but these sensations are far too vague to reason upon, much less to chronicle.

CHAPTER XII.

A CHARACTER.

THERE must have been a very considerable interval from the moment I have last recorded to that in which I next became a responsible individual; but in what manner, in what place, or in what company it was passed, the reader must excuse my divulging for many important reasons, one of which is, I never clearly knew anything of the matter.

To date my recollections from my first consciousness, I may state that I found myself on my back in a very narrow bed, a table beside me covered with phials and small flasks, with paper cravats, some of which hung down, queue fashion, to an absurd extent. A few rush-backed and bottomed chairs lay along the walls, which were coarsely whitewashed. A window, of very unclean and unprepossessing aspect, was partly shaded by a faded scarlet curtain, while the floor was equally sparingly decked with a small and ragged carpet. Where was I? was the frequent but unsatisfactory query I ever put to myself. Could this be a prison—had I been captured on that riotous evening and carried off to a jail—or was I in Darby M'Keown's territory? for, somehow, a very general impression was on my mind that Darby's gifts of ubiquity were somewhat remarkable; or, lastly (and the thought was not a pleasant one), was this the domicile of Anthony Basset, Esq., Attorney-at-Law? To have resolved any or all of these doubts, by rising and taking a personal survey of the premises, would have been my first thought; but, unluckily, I found one of my arms bandaged, and inclosed in a brace of wooden splints; a very considerable general impression pervaded me of bruises and injuries all over my body; and, worse still, a kind of megrim accompanied every attempt to lift my head from the pillow, that made me heartily glad to lie down again, and be at rest.

That I had not fallen into unfriendly hands was about the extent to which my deductions led me, and with this consolatory fact, and a steady resolve to remain awake three days, if necessary, so as to interrogate the first visitor who should approach me, I mustered all my patience, and waited quietly. What hour of the day it was when first I awoke to even thus much of consciousness I cannot say; but I well remember watching what appeared to me twelve mortal hours in my anxious expectation; at last a key turned in an outer lock, a door opened, and I heard a heavy foot enter. This was shortly followed by another step, whose less imposing tread was, I suspected, a woman's.

"Where, in the devil's name, is the candle?" said a gruff voice, that actually seemed to me not unknown. "I left it on the table when I went out. Oh! my shin's broke—that infernal table!"

"Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!" screamed a female voice.

"Ah! you've caught it too," cried the other in glee; "did you think you saw a little blue flame before you when your shin was barked?"

"You're a monster," said the lady, in a tone of passionate indignation.

"Here it is—I have it," replied the other, not paying the slightest attention to the endearing epithet last bestowed; "and d—n me, if it's not burned down to the socket. Holloa there! Peter Dodd—you scoundrel—where are you?"

"Call him Saladin," said the lady, with a sneer, "and perhaps he'll answer."

"Imp of darkness, where are you gone to? Peter—Dodd—Dodd—Peter! Ah! you young blackguard, where were you all this time?"

"Asleep, sir; sure you know well, sir, it's little rest I get," said a thin, childish voice, in answer. "Wasn't it five o'clock this morning when I diviled the two kidneys ye had for supper for the four officers and had to borrey the Kian pepper over the way?"

"I'll bore a gimlet-hole through your

pineal gland, and stuff it with brass-headed nails, if you reply to me. Anna Maria, that was a fine thought, eh ?—glorious, by Jove ! There, put the candle there ; hand your mistress a chair ; give me my *robe de chambre.* Confound me, if it's not getting like the kingdom of Prussia on the map, full of very straggling dependencies. Supper, Saladin."

"The sorrow taste—"

"What ! thou piece of human ebony, what do you say ?"

"Me hab no—a—ting in de larder," cried the child, in a broken voice.

"Isn't there a back of a duck and two slices of cold bacon ?" asked the lady, in the tone of a cross-examining barrister.

"I poisoned the bacon for the rats, Miss ; and for the duck—"

"Let me strangle him with my own hands," shouted the man ; "let me tear him up into merry-thoughts. Look here, sirrah," said he, in a voice like John Kemble, "there may be nothing which man eats within these walls, there may not be wherewithal to regale a sickly fly—no, not enough for one poor spider to lunch upon ; but if you ever dare to reply to me, save in Oriental phrase, I'll throw you in a sack, call my mutes, and hurl you into the Bosphorus."

"Where, sir ?"

"The Dodder, you son of a burnt father. My hookah."

"My slippers," repeated the lady.

"My lute, and the sherbet," added the gentleman.

By the stir in the chamber, these arrangements, or something equivalent to them, seemed to have taken place, when again I heard,

"Dance a lively measure, Saladin ; my soul is heavy."

Here a most vile tinkling of a guitar was heard, to which, by the sounds of the feet, I could perceive Saladin was moving in a species of dance.

"Let the child go to bed, and don't be making a fool of yourself," said the lady, in a voice of bursting passion.

"Thank Heaven !" said I, half aloud, "*she* isn't mad."

"Tink, tink, a-tink-a-tink, tink-a-tink-a-dido," thrummed out her companion. "I say, Saladin, heat me a little porter, with an egg, and some sugar."

The door closed as the imp made his exit, and there was silence for some seconds, during which my uppermost thought was, "What infernal mischance has thrown me into a lunatic asylum ?" At length the man spoke :

"I say, Anna Maria, Cradock has this run of luck a long time."

"He plays better than you," responded the lady, sharply.

"I deny it," rejoined he, angrily. "I play whist better than any man that ever lived, except the Begum of Soutancantantarabad, who beat my father. They played for lacs of rupees on the points, and a territory on the rub ; five to two, first game against the loser, in white elephants."

"How you do talk," said Anna Maria ; "do you forget that all this rubbish doesn't go down with me."

"Well, I mean old Hickory, that had the snuff-shop in Bath, used only to give me one point in the rub, and we played for sixpence—damme, I'll not forget it—he cleaned me out in no time. Tink, tink, a-tink-a-tink, tink-a-tink-a-dido. Here, Saladin, bear me the spicy cup, ambrosial boy !"

"Ahem !" said the lady, in a tone that didn't sound exactly like concurrence.

"Eat a few dates, and then repose," said the deep voice.

"I wish I had them, av they were eatable," said Saladin, as he turned away.

"Wretch ! you have forgotten to salaam ; exit slowly. Tink, tink, a-tink-a-tink. Anna Maria, he's devilish good, now, for black parts. I think I'll make Jones bring him out. Wouldn't it be original to make Othello talk broken English ? 'Farewell de camp !' Eh ! by Jove, that's a fine thought. 'De spirit-stir a drum, de piercy pipe'—by Jove ! I like that notion."

Here the gentleman rose in a glorious burst of enthusiasm, and began repeating snatches from Shakespeare, in the pleasant travesty he had hit upon.

"Cradock revoked, and you never saw him," said the lady, dryly, interrupting the monologue.

"I did see it clearly enough, but I had done so twice the same game," said he, gayly ; "and, if the grave were to give up its dead, I, too, should be a murderer. Fine thought that, isn't it ?"

"He won seventeen-and-sixpence from you," rejoined she, pettishly.

"Two bad half-crowns—dowlas, filthy dowlas," was the answer.

"And the hopeful young gentleman in the next room, what profitable intentions, may I ask you, have you with respect to him ?"

"Burke ! Tom Burke ! Bless your heart, he's only son and heir to Burke of Mount Blazes, in the county Galway. His father keeps three packs of harriers, one of fox, and another of stag-hounds—a kind of brindled devils, three feet eight in height ;

he won't take them under. His father and mine were schoolfellows at Dundunderamud, in the Himalaya, and he—that is, old Burke—saved my father's life in a tiger-hunt; and am I to forget the heritage of gratitude my father left me?"

"You ought not, perhaps, since it was the only one he bequeathed," quoth the lady.

"What! Is the territory of Shamdoonah and Bunfunterabad nothing? Are the great suits of red emeralds and blue opal, that were once the crown-jewels of Saidh Sing Doolah, nothing? Is the scimitar of Hafiz, with verses of the Koran in letters of pure brilliants, nothing?"

"You'll drive me distracted with your insane folly," rejoined the lady, rising and pushing back her chair with violence. "To talk this way when you know you haven't got a five-pound note in the world."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed out the jolly voice of the other; "that's good, faith. If I only consented to dip my Irish property, I could raise fourteen hundred and seventy thousand pounds, so Mahony tells me. But I'll never give up the royalties—never. There, you have my last word on the matter: rather than surrender my tin-mine, I'd consent to starve on twelve thousand a year, and resign my claim to the title, which, I believe, the next session will give me; and when you are Lady Machinery—something or other—maybe they won't bite, eh? Ramskins *versus* wrinkles."

A violent bang of the door announced at this moment the exit of the lady in a rage, to which her companion paid no attention, as he continued to mumble to himself.

"Surrender the royalties—never. Oh, she's gone—well, she's not far wrong after all. I dare not draw a check on my own exchequer at this moment for a larger sum than—let me see—twenty-four, twenty-five, twenty-eight and tenpence; with twenty-nine shillings, the grand firm of Bubbleton and Co. must shut up and suspend their payments." So saying, he walked from the room in stately fashion, and closed the door after him.

My first thought, as I listened to this speech, was one of gratefulness that I had fallen into the friendly hands of my old coach companion, whose kindness still lived fresh in my memory; my next was, what peculiar form of madness could account for the strange outpouring I had just overheard, in which my own name was so absurdly introduced, coupled with family circumstances I knew never had occurred. Sleep was now out of the question with me; for whole hours long I could do nothing but revolve in my mind all the extraordinary odds and ends of my friend Bubbleton's conversation, which I remembered to have been so struck by at my first meeting with him. The miraculous adventures of his career, his hair-breadth 'scapes, his enormous wealth, the voluptuous ease of his daily life, and his habits of luxury and expenditure with which he then astounded me, had now received some solution—while, at the same time, there was something in his own common-sense observations to himself that puzzled me much, and gave a great difficulty to all my calculations concerning him.

To all these conflicting doubts and difficulties sleep at last succeeded; but better far for me it had not; for with it came dreams such as sick men only experience; all the distorted images that rose before my wandering faculties, mingling with the strange fragments of Bubbleton's conversation, made a phantasmagoria the most perplexing and incomprehensible; and which, even on waking, I could not banish, so completely had Saladin and his *pas seul*, the guitar, the hookah, and the suit of red emeralds taken hold of my erring intellect.

Candid, though not fair reader, have you ever been tipsy? Have you ever gone so far over the boundary line that separates the land of mere sobriety from its neighboring territory, the country of irresponsible impulses, that you actually doubted which was the way back, that you thought you saw as much good sense and good judgment on the one side of the frontier as the other, with only a strong balance of good-fellowship to induce a preference? If you know this state, if you have taken the precise quantum of champagne, or moselle mousseux, that induces it, and yet goes no farther, then do you perfectly understand all the trials and difficulties of my waking moments, and you can appreciate the arduous task I undertook in my effort to separate the real from the imaginary, the true types from their counterfeits; in a word, the wanderings of my own brain from those of Captain Bubbleton's.

In this agreeable and profitable occupation was I engaged, when the same imposing tread and heavy footstep I had heard the previous evening entered the adjoining room and approached my door. The lock turned, and the illustrious captain himself appeared; and here let me observe, that if grave censure be occasionally bestowed on persons who by the assumption of voice, look, or costume, seek to terrorize over infant minds, a no less

heavy sentence should be bestowed on all who lord it over the frail faculties of sickness by any absurdity in their personal appearance; and that I may not seem captious, let me describe my friend. The captain, who was somewhere about the forties, was a full-faced, chubby, good-looking fellow, of some five feet ten or eleven inches in height; his countenance had been intended by nature for the expression of such emotions as arise from the enjoyment of turtle, milk-punch, truffled turkeys, mulled port, mulligatawney, stilton, stout, and pickled oysters; a rich, mellow-looking pair of dark-brown eyes, with large bushy eyebrows, meeting above the nose, which latter feature was a little "on the snub, and off the Roman;" his mouth was thick-lipped, and had that peculiar mobility which seems inseparable, wherever eloquence or imagination predominate; in color, his face was of that uniform hue painters denominate as "warm," in fact, a rich sunset Claude-Lorrainish tint, that seemed a compound, the result of high-seasoned meats, plethora, punch, and the tropics; in figure, he was like a huge pudding-bag, supported on two short little dumpy pillars that, from a sense of the superincumbent weight, had wisely spread themselves out below, giving to his lower man the appearance of a stunted letter A; his arms were most preposterously short, and for the convenience of locomotion, he used them somewhat after the fashion of fins; as to his costume on the morning in question, it was a singularly dirty and patched dressing-gown of antique silk, fastened about the waist by a girdle, from which depended a scimitar on one side, and a meerschaum on the other; a well-worn and not over clean-looking shawl was fastened in fashion of a turban round his head; a pair of yellow buskins with faded gold tassels decorated legs which occasionally peeped from the folds of the *robe de chambre*, without any other covering.

Such was the outward man of him who suddenly stopped short at the doorway, while he held the latch in his hand, and called out,

"Burke! Tom Burke, don't be violent, don't be outrageous, you see I'm armed! I'd cut you down without mercy if you attempt to lift a finger! Promise me this—do you hear me?"

That any one even unarmed could have conceived fear from such a poor, weak object as I was, seemed so utterly absurd, that I laughed outright; an emotion on my part that seemingly imparted but little confidence to my friend the Captain, who retreated still closer to the door, and seemed ready for flight. The first use I could make of speech, however, was, to assure him that I was not only perfectly calm and sensible, but deeply grateful for kindness which I knew not how, nor to whom I became indebted.

"Don't roll your eyes there; don't look so d—d treacherous!" said he; "keep down your hands; keep them under the bed-clothes. I'd put a bullet through your skull if you stired!"

I again protested that any manifestation of quietness he asked for I would immediately comply with, and begged him to sit down beside me and tell me where I was and how I had come hither. Having established an outwork of a table and two chairs between us, and cautiously having left the door ajar, to secure his retreat, he drew the scimitar and placed it before him, his eyes being fixed on me the entire time.

"Well," said he, as he assumed a seat, and leaned his arm on the table, "so you are quiet at last. Lord! what a frightful lunatic you were. Nobody would approach your bed but me. The stoutest keeper of Swift's hospital fled from the spot, while I said, 'Leave him to me. The human eye is your true agent to humble the pride of maniacal frenzy.'"

With these words he fixed on me a look such as the chief murderer in a melodrama assumes at the moment he proceeds to immolate a whole family.

"You infernal young villain, how I subdued you—how you quailed before me!"

There was something so ludicrous in the contrast of this bravery with his actual terror, that again I burst out a-laughing, upon which he sprang up, and brandishing his sabre, vowed vengeance on me if I stirred. After a considerable time spent thus, I at last succeeded in impressing him with the fact, that if I had all the will in the world to tear him to pieces, my strength would not suffice to carry me to the door. An assurance which, however sorrowfully made by me, I perceived to afford him the most unmixed satisfaction.

"That's right, quite right," said he, "and mad should he be indeed who would measure strength with me. The red men of Tuscarora always called me the great buffalo. I used to carry a bark canoe with my squaw and nine little black devils under one arm, so as to leave the other free for my tomahawk. 'He, how, he!' that's the war step."

Here he stooped down to his knees, and then sprang up again, with a yell that actually made me start, and brought a new

actor on the scene in the person of Anna Maria, whose name I had so frequently heard the night before.

"What is the matter?" said the lady, a short, squab-like woman, of nearly the captain's age, but none of his personal attractions. "We can't have him screaming all day in that fashion."

"It isn't he, it was I who was performing the war dance. Come, now, let down your hair, and be a squaw—do. What trouble is it? and bring in Saladin; we'll get up a combat scene; devilish fine thought that!"

The indignant look of the lady in reply to this modest proposal again overpowered me, and I sank back in my bed exhausted with laughter, an emotion which I was forced to subdue as well as I might on beholding the angry countenance with which the lady regarded me.

"I say, Burke," cried the captain, "let me present you to my sister, Miss Anna Maria Bubbleton."

A very dry recognition on Miss Anna Maria's part replied to the effort I made to salute her, and as she turned on her heel she said to her brother, "Breakfast's ready," and left the room.

Bubbleton jumped up at this, rubbed his mouth pleasantly with his hand, smacked his lips, and then dropping his voice to a whisper, muttered:

"Excuse me, Tom, but if I have a weakness it is for Yarmouth bloaters, and anchovy toast, milk chocolate, marmalade, hot rolls, and reindeer tongue, with a very small glass of pure white brandy, as a qualifier." So saying, he whisked about and made his exit.

While my host was thus occupied I was visited by the regimental surgeon, who informed me that my illness had now been of some weeks' duration; severe brain fever, with various attending evils, and a broken arm, being the happy results of my evening's adventure at the Parliament-house.

"Bubbleton is an old friend of yours," continued the doctor; and then, without giving me time to reply, added, "capital fellow, no better; a little given to the miraculous—eh! but nothing worse."

"Why he does indeed seem to have a strong vein for fiction," said I, half timidly.

"Bless your heart, he never ceases; his world is an ideal thing, full of impossible people and events, where he has lived at least some centuries, enjoying the intimacies of princes, statesmen, poets, and warriors; he has, in his own estimation, unlimited wealth and unbounded resources, the want of which he is never convinced of till pressed for five shillings to buy his dinner."

"And his sister," said I, "what of her?"

"Just as strange a character in the opposite direction. She is as matter-of-fact as he is imaginative. To all his flights she as resolutely enters a dissentient; and he never inflates his balloon of miracles without her stepping forward to punch a hole in it. But here they come."

"I say, Pepper, how goes your patient? Spare no pains, old fellow—no expense; only get him round. I've left a check for you for five hundred in the next room. This is no regimental case—come, come, it's *my* way, and I insist upon it."

Pepper bowed with an air of the deepest gratitude, and actually looked so overpowered by the liberality, that I began to suspect there might be less truth in his account of Bubbleton than I thought a few minutes before.

"All insanity has left him—that's pleasant. I say, Tom, you must have had glorious thoughts, eh? When you were mad, did you ever think you were an anaconda bolting a goat, or the Eddystone lighthouse when the foundation began to shift?"

"No, never."

"How odd! I remember being once thrown on my head off a drag. I was breaking in a pair of young unicorns for the Queen of—"

"No!" said Anna Maria, in a voice of thunder, holding up her finger, at the same moment, in token of reproof.

The captain became mute on the instant, and the very word he was about to utter stuck in his throat, and he stood with his mouth open, like one in enchantment.

"You said a little weak tea, I think," said Miss Bubbleton, turning toward the doctor.

"Yes, and some dry toast, if he liked it; and, in a day or two, a half glass of wine-and-water."

"Some of that tokay old Pippo Esterhazy sent us."

"No," said the lady again, in the same tone of menace.

"And, perhaps, after a week, the open air and a little exercise in a carriage."

"The barouche and the four ponies," interrupted Bubbleton.

"No," repeated Miss Anna Maria, but in such a voice of imperious meaning, that the poor captain actually fell back, and only muttered to himself,

"What would be the use of wealth, if one couldn't contribute to the enjoyment of one's friends?"

"There's the drum for parade," cried the doctor; "you'll be late, and so shall I."

They both bustled out of the room together, while Miss Anna Maria, taking her work out of a small bag she carried on her arm, drew a chair to the window and sat down, having quietly intimated to me that, as conversation was deemed injurious to me, I must not speak one syllable.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN UNLOOKED-FOR VISITOR.

All my endeavors to ascertain the steps by which I came to occupy my present abode were fruitless, inasmuch as Captain Bubbleton contrived to surround his explanation with such a mist of doubtful, if not impossible, circumstances, that I gave up the effort in despair, and was obliged to sit down satisfied with the naked fact, that it was by some soldiers of his company I was captured, and by them brought to the guard-house. Strangely enough, too, I found that, in his self-mystification, the worthy captain had invested me with all the honors of a staunch loyalist who had earned his cracked skull in defense of the soldiery against the mob; and this prevailing impression gave such a tone to his narrative, that he not only set to work to trace back a whole generation of Burkes famed for their attachment to the House of Hanover, but also took a peep into the probable future, where he saw me covered with rewards for my heroism and gallantry.

Young as I was, I hesitated long how far I dare trust him with the real state of the case. I felt that in so doing I should either expose him to the self-reproach of having harbored one he would deem a rebel—or, by withdrawing from me his protection, give him, perhaps, greater pain by compelling him to such an ungracious act. Yet how could I receive attention and kindness under these false colors? This was a puzzling and difficult thing to resolve; and a hundred times a day I wished I had never been rescued by him, but taken my chance of the worst fortune had in store for me.

While, therefore, my strength grew with every day, these thoughts harassed and depressed me. The continual conflict in my mind deprived me of all ease; and scarcely a morning broke in which I had not decided on avowing my real position and my true sentiments; and still, when the moment came, the flighty uncertainty of Bubbleton's manner—his caprice and indiscretion—all frightened me, and I was silent. I I hoped, too, that some questioning on his part might give me a fitting opportunity for such a disclosure; but here again I was deceived. The jolly captain was far too busy inventing his own history of me, to think of asking for mine; and I found out from the surgeon of the regiment, that according to the statement made at the mess-table, I was an only son, possessed of immense estates—somewhat incumbered, to be sure (among other debts, a large jointure to my mother)—that I had come up to town to consult the Attorney-General about the succession to a title long in abeyance in my family, and was going down to the House in Lord Castlereagh's carriage, when, fired by the ruffianism of the mob, I sprang out, and struck one of the ringleaders, etc., etc.

How this visionary history had its origin, or whether it had any, save in the wandering fancies of his brain, I knew not; but either by frequent repetition of it, or by the strong hold a favorite notion sometimes will take of a weak intellect, he so far believed it true, that he wrote more than one letter to Lord Castlereagh, to assure him that I was rapidly recovering, and would be delighted to receive him—which, whether from a knowledge of the captain's character, or his indifference as to my fate, the secretary certainly never took any notice of whatever.

Bubbleton had too much experience of similar instances of neglect to be either afflicted or offended at this silence; on the contrary, he satisfied his mind by an excuse of his own inventing, and went about saying, "I think we'll have Castlereagh down to-day to see Burke," until it became a cant on parade, and a jest at mess.

Meanwhile, his active mind was not lying dormant. Indignant that no inquiries had been made after me, and astonished that no aide-de-camp—not even a liveried menial of the Viceroy's household—had come down to receive the daily bulletin of my health, and somewhat piqued, perhaps, that his own important services regarding me remained unacknowledged, he set about springing a mine for himself which very nearly became my ruin.

After about ten days spent by me in this state of painful vacillation, my mind vibrating between two opposite courses, and seeing arguments for either, both in the matter-of-fact shortness of Miss Bubbleton's not over-courteous manner, and the splendidly liberal and vast conceptions of her brother, I went to my bed one night, resolved that on the very next morning I

would hesitate no longer; and as my strength would now permit of my being able to walk unassisted, I would explain freely to Bubbleton every circumstance of my life, and take my leave of him, to wander, I knew not where. This decision at length being come to, I slept more soundly than I had slept for many nights, nor awoke until the loud step and the louder voice of the captain had aroused me from my slumbers.

"Eh, Tom—a good night, my lad? How soundly you sleep! Just like the Lachigong Indians: they go to bed after the hunting season, and never wake till the bears come in next fall. I had the knack myself once, but then I always took six or seven dozen of strong Burton ale first—and that, they said, wasn't quite fair; but for a white man, I'd back myself for a thousand to-morrow. But what's this I have to tell you? Something or other was in my head for you. Oh, I have it! I say, Tom, old fellow, I think I have touched them up to some purpose. They didn't expect it—no, hang it! they little knew what was in store for them. They weren't quite prepared for it. By Jove, that they weren't!"

"Who are they?" said I sitting up in my bed, and somewhat curious to hear something of these astonished individuals.

"The Government, my lad!—the Castle—the Private Sec.—the Major—the Treasury—the Board of Green Cloth—the—what d'ye call them?—the Privy Council."

"Why, what has happened them?"

"I'll show you what's happened. Lie down again, and compose yourself. He won't be here before twelve o'clock; though, by-the-by, I promised on my honor not to say a word about his coming. But it's over now."

"Who is it?" said I eagerly.

"Oh, I can't tell now. You'll see him very soon, and right glad he'll be to see you, so he says. But here they are—here's the whole affair." So saying, he covered the bed with a mass of newspapers, and blotted, ill-written manuscripts, among which he commenced a vigorous search at once.

"Here it is. I've found it out. Listen to this: '*The Press*, Friday, August 10.—The magnificent ourang-outang that Captain Bubbleton is about to present to the Lady-Lieutenant—' No; that isn't it. It must be in Faulkner. Ay, here we have it: 'In Captain Bubbleton's forthcoming volume, which we have been favored with a private perusal of, a very singular account is given of the gigantic mouse found in Candia, which grows to the size of a common mastiff—' No; that's not it. You've heard of that, Tom, though, haven't you?"

"Never," said I, trying to repress a smile.

"I'm amazed at that. Never heard of my curious speculations about the Candian mouse? The fellow has a voice like a human being—you'd hear him crying in the woods, and you'd swear it was a child. I've a notion that the Greeks took their word 'mousikos' from this fellow; but that's not what I'm looking for. No; but here it is. This is squib No. 1: 'Tuesday morning.—We are at length enabled to state that the young gentleman who took such a prominent part in defending the military against the savage and murderous attack of the mob in the late riot in College green is now out of danger; being removed to Captain Bubbleton's quarters in George's street Barracks, he was immediately trepanned—"

"Eh? trepanned!"

"No, you weren't trepanned; but Pepper said you might have been though, and he'd just as soon do it as not; so I put in trepanned. 'The pia-mater was fortunately not cut through.' That you don't understand; but no matter—hem, hem! 'Congestion of—' hem, hem! 'In our next, we hope to give a still more favorable report.' Then here's the next: 'To the aide-de-camp sent to inquire after the "hero of College green," the answer this morning was—"Better—able to sit up."' Well, here we go. No. 3: 'His Excellency mentioned this morning at the Privy Council the satisfaction he felt at being able to announce that Mr. ——(from motives of delicacy we omit the name) is now permitted to take some barley-gruel, with a spoonful of old Madeira. The Bishop of Ferns and Sir Boyle Roach both left their cards yesterday at the barracks.' I waited a day or two after this; but—would you believe it?—no notice was taken; not even the opposition papers said a word, except some insolent rascal in *The Press* asks—'Can you tell your readers are we to have anything more from Captain Bubbleton?' So then I resolved to come out in force, and here you see the result: 'Friday, 20th.—It is now our gratifying task to announce the complete restoration of the young gentleman whose case has, for some weeks past, been the engrossing topic of conversation of all ranks and classes, from the table of the Viceroy to the humble denizen of Mud Island. Mr. Burke is the only son and heir to the late Matthew Burke, of Cremore, county of Galway. His family have been long distinguished for their steady,

uncompromising loyalty; nor is the hereditary glory of their house likely to suffer in the person of the illustrious youth, who, we learn, is now to be raised to the baronetcy, under the title of Sir Thomas Bubbleton Burke, the second name assumed to commemorate the services of Captain Bubbleton, whose—' Of course I dilated a little here to round the paragraph. Well, this did it. Here was the shell that exploded the magazine; for early this morning I received a polite note from the Castle; I won't tell you the writer though. I like a good bit of surprise; and, egad, now I think on't, I won't say anything more about the letter either, only that we're in luck, my lad, as you'll soon acknowledge. What's the hour now? Ah! a quarter to twelve. But wait, I think I hear him in the next room; jump up, and dress as fast as you can, while I do the honors."

With this the captain bustled out of the room; and, although he banged the door after him, I could hear his voice in the act of welcoming some new arrival.

In spite of the sea of nonsense and absurdity through which I had waded in the last half-hour, the communication he had made me excited my curiosity to the utmost, and in some respect rendered me uneasy. It was no part whatever of my object to afford any clue to Basset by which he might trace me, and, although much of the fear I had formerly entertained of that dreaded personage had evaporated with increased knowledge of the world, yet old instincts preserved their influence over me, and I felt as though Tony Basset would be a name of terror to me for my life long. It was quite clear, however, that the application from the Castle to which he alluded could have no reference to the honest attorney; and with this comforting reflection, which I confess came somewhat late, I finished my dressing, and prepared to leave my room.

"Oh! here he comes," cried Bubbleton, as he flung open my door, and announced my approach. "Come along, Tom, and let us see if your face will let you be recognized."

I scarcely had crossed the threshold when I started back with affright, and, had it not been for the wall against which I leaned, must have fallen. The stranger, whose visit was to afford me so much of pleasure, was no other than Major Barton; there he stood, his arm leaning on the chimney-piece, the same cool malicious smile playing about the angles of his mouth, which I noticed the first day I saw him in the glen. His sharp eyes shot on me one quick, searching glance, and then turned to the door, from which again they were directed to me, as if some passing thought had moved them.

Bubbleton was the first to speak, for, not noticing either the agitation I was under or the stern expression of Barton's features, he ran on:

"Eh, Major! that's your friend—isn't it? Changed a bit, I suppose—a little blanched; but in a good cause, you know, —that's the thing. Come, Tom, you don't forget your old friend, Major —— what's the name?"

"Barton," repeated the other, dryly.

"Yes, Major Barton; he's come from his Excellency. I knew that last paragraph would do it—eh, Major?"

"You were quite right, sir," said Barton, slowly and distinctly, "that paragraph did do it; and very fortunate you may esteem yourself, if it will not do *you* also."

"Eh, what! how *me?* What do you mean?"

"How long, may I beg to ask," continued Barton, in the same quiet tone of voice, "have you known this young gentleman?"

"Burke—Tom Burke?—bless your heart, since the height of that fender. His father and mine were schoolfellows. I'm not sure he wasn't my godfather, or, at least, one of them; I had four." Here the captain began counting on his fingers. "There was the Moulah, one; the Cham, two—"

"I beg your pardon for the interruption," said Barton, with affected politeness; "how long has he occupied these quarters? That fact may possibly not be too antiquated for your memory."

"How long?" said Bubbleton, reflectingly. "Let me see: here we are in August—"

"Three weeks on Tuesday last," said I, interfering, to prevent any further drain on so lavish an imagination.

"Then you came here on the day of the riots?" said Barton.

"On that evening," was my reply.

"On that evening—just so. Before or after, may I ask?"

"I shall answer no further questions," said I, resolutely. "If you have any charge against me, it is for you to prove it."

"Charge against you!" said Bubbleton, laughing. "Bless your heart, boy, don't mistake him; they've sent him down to compliment you. Lord Castlereagh mentions in his note—where the devil did I throw that note?"

"It's of no consequence, Captain," said Barton, dryly; "his Lordship usually entrusts the management of these matters to

me. May I learn, is this young gentleman known in your regiment? Has he been at your mess?"

"Tom Burke known among us! Why, man, he's called nothing but 'Burke of Ours.' He's one of ourselves—not gazetted, you know, but all the same in fact. We couldn't get on without him; he's like the mess-plate, or the orderly-book, or the regimental snuff-box."

"I'm sincerely sorry, sir," rejoined Barton, slowly, "to rob you and the gallant Forty-fifth of one upon whom you place such just value; but 'Burke of Ours' must consent to be Burke of mine at present."

"To be sure, my dear Major, of course; anything convivial—nothing like good fellowship. We'll lend him to you for to-day—one day, mark me—we can't spare him longer; and, now I think of it, don't press him with his wine, he's been poorly of late."

"Have no fears on that score," said Barton, laughing outright; "our habits of life, in his circumstances, are rigidly temperate." Then, turning to me, he continued in an altered voice, "I need scarcely explain to *you*, sir, the reason of my visit. When last we parted I did not anticipate that our next meeting would have been in a royal barrack; but you may thank your friend here for my knowledge of your abode—"

Bubbleton attempted to interpose here a panegyric on himself, but Barton went on:

"Here is an order of the Privy Council for your apprehension, and here—"

"Apprehension!" echoed the captain, in a voice of wonderment and terror.

"Here, sir, is your committal to Newgate. I suppose you'll not give me the trouble of using force; I have a carriage in waiting below, and request that we may lose no more time."

"I am ready, sir," said I, as stoutly as I was able.

"To Newgate!" repeated Bubbleton, as, overcome with fright, he sank back in a chair, and crossed his arms on his breast. "Poor fellow! poor fellow! perhaps they'll bring it in manslaughter, eh?—or was it a bank robbery?"

Not even the misery before me could prevent my smiling at the worthy captain's rapidly-conceived narrative of me. I was in no merry mood, however; and, turning to him, grasped his hand.

"It may happen," said I, "that we never meet again. I know not—indeed, I hardly care—what is before me; but, with all my heart, I thank you for your kindness. Farewell."

"Farewell," said he, half mechanically, as he grasped my hand in both of his, and the large tears rolled down his cheeks. "Poor fellow! all my fault—see it now."

I hurried after Barton down-stairs, a nervous choking in my throat nearly suffocating me. Just as I reached the door the carriage drew up, and a policeman let down the steps. Already my foot was on them, when Bubbleton was beside me.

"I'll go with him, Major; you'll permit me, won't you?"

"Not at present, Captain," said Barton, significantly; "it may happen that we shall want you one of these days. Good-by."

He pushed me forward as he spoke, and entered the carriage after me. I felt the pressure of poor Bubbleton's hand as he grasped mine for the last time, and discovered he had slipped something into my palm at parting. I opened and found two guineas in gold, which the kind-hearted fellow had given me; perhaps they were his only ones in the world.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE JAIL.

From the moment the carriage-door closed upon us, Barton never addressed one word to me, but, leaning back, seemed only anxious to escape being recognized by the people, whose attention was drawn to the vehicle by seeing two mounted policemen ride at either side of it. We drove along the quays, and, crossing an old, dilapidated bridge, traversed several obscure and mean-looking streets, through which numbers of persons were hurrying in the same direction we were going. At length we arrived at a large open space, thronged with people, whose dress and appearance bespoke them from the country. They were all conversing in a low, murmuring tone, and looking up, from time to time, toward a massive building of dark granite, which I had only to glance at to guess was Newgate. Our pace slackened to a walk as we entered the crowd; and while we moved slowly along, I was struck by the eager and excited faces I saw on every side. It could be no common occasion which impressed that vast multitude with the one character of painful anxiety I beheld. As they stood gazing with upturned faces at the frowning portals of the jail, the deep, solemn tolling of a bell rung out at the moment, and as its sad notes vibrated through the air, it seemed to strike with a mournful power

on every heart in the crowd. In an instant, too, the windows of all the houses were thronged with eager faces—even the parapets were crowded—and, while every sound was hushed, each eye was turned in one direction. I followed with my own whither the others were bent, and beheld above my head the dark framework of the "drop," covered with black cloth, above which a piece of rope swung backward and forward with the wind. The narrow door behind was closed; but it was clear that each second that stole by was bringing some wretched criminal closer to his awful doom.

As we neared the entrance, the massive doors were opened on a signal from a policeman on the box of the carriage, and we drove inside the gloomy vestibule. It was only then, as the heavy door banged behind me, that my heart sank. Up to that moment a mingled sense of wrong, and a feeling of desperate courage had nerved me; but suddenly a cold chill ran through my veins, my knees smote each other, and fear, such as till then I never knew, crept over me. The carriage-door was now opened, the steps lowered, and Barton descending first, addressed a few words to a person near him, whom he called Mr. Gregg.

It was one of those moments in life in which every passing look, every chance word, every stir, every gesture, are treasured up, and remembered ever after; and I recollect now how, as I stepped from the carriage, a feeling of shame passed across me, lest the bystanders should mark my fear; and what a relief I experienced on finding that my presence was unnoticed; and then the instant after that very same neglect, that cold, cold indifference to me, smote as heavily on my spirits, and I looked on myself as one whose fate had no interest for any—in whose fortune none sympathized.

"Drive on!" cried a rough voice to the coachman; and the carriage moved through the narrow passage in which some dozen of persons were now standing. The next moment, a murmur of "They are coming!" was heard, and the solemn tones of a man's voice chanting the last offices of the Romish Church reached us, with the measured footfall of persons crossing the flagged court-yard. In the backward movement now made by those around me, I was brought close to a small arched doorway, within which a flight of stone steps ascended in a spiral direction, and toward this point I remarked that the persons who approached were tending. My eyes scarcely glanced on those who came first, but they rested with a fearful interest on the bare-headed priest, who, in all the trappings of his office, walked, book in hand, repeating with mournful impressiveness the litany for the dead. As he came nearer, I could see that his eyes were dimmed with tears, and his pale lips quivered with emotion, while his very cheek trembled with a convulsive agony. Not so he who followed. He was a young man, scarce four-and-twenty, dressed in loose white trowsers and shirt, but without coat, vest, or cravat; his head bare, and displaying a broad forehead, across which some straggling hairs of light brown were blown by the wind. His eye was bright and flashing, and in the center of his pale cheek a small crimson spot glowed with a hectic coloring. His step was firm, and as he planted it upon the ground, a kind of elasticity seemed to mark his footfall. He endeavored to repeat after the priest the words as they fell from him; but as he looked wildly around, it was clear his mind was straying from the subject which his lips expressed, and that thoughts far different were passing within him. Suddenly his eyes fell upon the Major, who stood close to where I was. The man started back, and for a second even that small spot of crimson left his cheek, which became nearly livid in its pallor. A ghastly smile, that showed his white teeth from side to side, crossed his features, and with a voice of terrible earnestness, he said,

"'Tis easy for you to look calm, sir, at your mornin's work, and I hope you're plazed at it." Then frowning fearfully, as his face grew purple, he added, "But, by the Eternal! you'd not look that way av we two stood by ourselves on the side of Sliebmish, and nothing but our own four arms between us."

The horrible expression of vengeance that lit up his savage face at these words seemed to awe even the callous and stern nature of Barton himself. All his efforts to seem calm and at ease were for the moment unavailing, and he shrank from the proud and flashing eye of the felon, as though he were the guilty one in the presence of his accuser.

Another stroke of the heavy bell rang out; the prisoner started, and, turning round his head, seemed to peer anxiously through the crowd behind him, when his eyes fell upon the figure of a man apparently a year or two younger than himself, and whose features, even in their livid coloring, bore a striking resemblance to his own.

"Come, Patsey," cried he—"come along

with us." Then turning to the jailer, while his face assumed a smile, and his voice a tone of winning softness, he added, "It is my brother, sir, he is come up nigh eighty miles to see me, and I hope you'll let him come upon the drop."

There was something in the quiet earnestness of his manner in such a moment that thrilled upon the heart more painfully than even the violent outbreak of his passion; and when I saw the two brothers hand in hand, march step by step along, and then disappear in the winding of the dark stair, a sick, cold feeling came over me, and even the loud shout that rent the air from the assembled thousands without scarce roused me from my stupor.

"Come, sir," cried a man, who in the dress of an official had been for some minutes carefully reading over the document of my committal, "after me, if you please."

I followed him across the court-yard in the direction of a small building which stood isolated and apart from the rest, when suddenly he stopped, and carefully examining the paper in his hand, he said,

"Wait a moment, I'll join you presently."

With these words he hurried back toward the gate, where Barton still stood with two or three others. What passed between them I could not hear, but I could distinctly mark that Barton's manner was more abrupt and imperious than ever; and that while the jailer—for such he was—expressed his scruples of one kind or another, the Major would not hear him with patience, but, turning his back upon him, called out loud enough to be heard even where I stood—

"I tell you I don't care—regular or irregular—if *you* refuse to take him in charge, on your own head be it. We have come to a pretty pass, Pollock," said he, turning to a person beside him, "when there is more sympathy for a rebel in his Majesty's jail, than respect for a Government officer."

"I'll do it, sir—I'll do it," cried the jailer; saying which he motioned me to follow, while he muttered between his teeth, "there must come an end to this, one day or other."

With that he unlocked a strongly barred gate, and led me along a narrow passage, at the extremity of which he opened a door into a small and rather comfortably furnished room.

"Here, sir," said he, "you'll be better than where I have my orders to put you, and, in any case, I trust that our acquaintance will be but a short one."

These were the first words of kindness I had heard for some time past. I turned to thank the speaker, but already the door had closed, and he was gone.

The quickly succeeding incidents of my life—the dark destiny that seemed to track me—had given a reflective character to my mind while I was yet a boy. The troubles and cares of life, that in manhood serve only to mold and fashion character, to call forth efforts of endurance, of courage, or ability, come upon us in early years with far different effect, and far different teaching. Every lesson of deceit and duplicity is a direct shock to some preconceived notion of faith and honor; every punishment, whose severity in after years we had forgotten in its justice, has, to the eyes of youth, a character of vindictive cruelty. Looking only to effects, and never to causes, our views of life are one-sided and imperfect; the better parts of our nature will as often mislead us by false sympathy, as will the worst ones by their pernicious tendency.

From the hour I quitted my father's house to the present, I had seen nothing but what to me appeared the sufferings of a poor, defenseless people at the hands of wanton tyranny and outrage. I had seen the peasant's cabin burned, because it had been a shelter to an outcast. I had heard the loud and drunken denunciations of a ruffianly soldiery against those who professed no other object, who acknowledged no other wish, than liberty and equality; and in my heart I vowed a rooted hate to the enemies of my country—a vow that lost nothing of its bitterness because it was made within the walls of a prison.

In reflections like these my evening passed on, and with it the greater part of the night also. My mind was too much excited to permit me to sleep, and I longed for daybreak with that craving impatience which sick men feel, who count the long hours of darkness, and think the morning must bring relief. It came at last, and the heavy, clanking sounds of massive doors opening and shutting—the mournful echoes that told of captivity and durance—sighed along the corridors, and then all was still.

There is a time in reverie when silence seems not to encourage thought, but rather, like some lowering cloud, to hang over and spread a gloomy insensibility around us. Long watching and much thinking had brought me now to this, and I sat looking upon the faint streak of sunlight that streamed through the barred window, and speculating within myself when it would fall upon the hearth. Suddenly I heard

the sound of footsteps in the corridor, my door was opened, and the jailer entered, followed by a man carrying my breakfast.

"Come, sir," said the former, "I hope you have got an appetite for our prison fare. Lose no time, for there is a carriage in waiting to bring you to the Castle, and the Major himself is without."

"I am ready this moment," said I, starting up, and taking my hat; and notwithstanding every entreaty to eat, made with kindness and good-nature, I refused everything, and followed him out into the courtyard, where Barton was pacing up and down, impatiently awaiting our coming.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CASTLE.

SCARCELY had the carriage driven from the gloomy portals of the jail, and entered one of the long, straggling streets that led toward the river, when I noticed a singular-looking figure who ran alongside, and kept up with us as we went. A true type of the raggedness of old Dublin, his clothes fluttered behind him like ribbons; even from his hat, his long, red hair straggled and streamed, while his nether garments displayed a patchwork no tartan could vie with; his legs were bare, save where a single top-boot defended one of them, the other was naked to the foot, clad in an old morocco slipper, which he kicked up and caught again as he went with surprising dexterity, accompanying the feat with a wild yell which might have shamed a war-whoop; he carried a bundle of printed papers over one arm, and flourished one of them in his right hand, vociferating something all the while with uncommon energy. Scarcely had the carriage drawn up at the door of an old-fashioned brick building when he was beside it.

"How are ye, Major? How is every bit of you, sir? Are ye taking them this mornin'?—'tis yourself knows how! Buy a ha'porth, sir."

"What have you got to-day, Toby?" said the Major, with a greater degree of complacency in his manner than I had ever noticed before.

"An illigant new song about Buck Whaley; or, maybe, you'd like 'Beresford's Jig; or, the Humors of Malbro' Green.'"

"Why, man, they're old these three weeks."

"True for ye, Major. Begorra! there's no chating you at all, at all. Well, maybe you'll have this. Here's the bloody and cruel outrage committed by the yeomen on the body of a dacent and respectable young man, by the name of Darby M'Keown, with the full and true account of how he was inhumanly stabbed and murdered on the 8th day of July—"

"Ay, give me that; I hope they've done for that scoundrel; I have been on his track three years."

The fellow drew near, and, as he handed the paper to the Major, contrived to approach close to where I stood. "Buy one, master," said he; and, as he spoke, he turned completely round, so as only to be observed by myself, and as suddenly the whole expression of his vacant features changed like magic, and I saw before me the well-known face of Darby himself.

"Did you get an answer to that for me, Toby?" said the Major.

"Yes, sir, here it is." And with that he pulled off his tattered hat, and withdrew a letter which lay concealed within the lining. "'Tis sixpence you ought to be afther givin' me this mornin', Major," continued he, in an insinuating tone of voice; "the devil a less than twenty-one mile it is out of this, not to spake of the danger I run, and the boys out on every side o' me."

"And what's the news up the country, Toby?" asked the Major, as he broke the seal of the letter.

"'Tis talking of a risin' they do be still, sir—av the praties was in; glory be to God, they say it'll be a great sayson."

"For which, Toby—the cups or the croppies?"

"Yes, sir," replied Toby, with a most provoking look of idiocy. "And you won't buy Darby, sir?" rejoined he, flourishing the printed placard. "No matter; here's the whole, full, thrue, and particular account—" And so he turned the angle of the building, and I could hear his voice mingling with the street noises as he wended his way down Dame street. The Major looked after him and smiled, and brief as was that smile, I saw in it how thoroughly he was duped.

"Come, sir, follow me, if you please," said he, addressing me.

I mounted a flight of old and neglected stairs, and entered an anteroom, where, having waited for a few seconds, the Major whispered an order to the porter, and passed on to the inner room, leaving me behind.

As Major Barton passed out by one door, the porter turned the key in the other, and, placing it in his pocket, drew his chair to the window and resumed the newspaper he

was reading when we entered. How long I waited I cannot say. My thoughts, though sad ones, chased each other rapidly, and I felt not the time as it passed. Suddenly the door opened, and I heard my name called. I drew a deep breath, like one who felt his fate was in the balance, and entered.

The room, which was plainly furnished, seemed to serve as an office. The green-covered table that stood in the middle was littered with letters and papers, among which a large, heavy-browed, dark-featured man was searching busily as I came in. Behind, and partly beside him, stood Barton, in an attitude of respectful attention, while, with his back to the fire, was a third person, whose age might have been from thirty-five to forty. His dress was in the perfection of the *mode*, his top-boots reaching to the middle of his leg; his coat, of the lightest shade of sky-blue, was lined with white silk; and two watch-chains hung down beneath his buff waistcoat, in the acme of the then fashion. His features were frank and handsome, and, saving a dash of puppyism that gave a character of weakness to the expression, I should deem him a manly, fine-looking fellow.

"So this is your 'Robespierre!' Major, is it?" cried he, bursting into a laugh, as I appeared.

Barton approached nearer to him, and muttered something in a low, mumbling tone, to which the other seemed to pay little, if any, attention.

"You are here, sir," said the dark-featured man at the table, holding in his hand a paper as he spoke—"You are here, under a warrant of the Privy Council, charging you with holding intercourse with that rebellious and ill-fated faction who seek to disturb the peace and welfare of this country—disseminating dangerous and wicked doctrines, and being in alliance with France—with France— What's that word, Barton?—to—"

"In two words, young gentleman, said the young man at the fire, "you are charged with keeping very bad company—learning exceedingly unprofitable notions, and incurring very considerable present risk. Now I am not disposed to think that, at your age, and with your respectable connections, either the cause or its associates can have taken a very strong hold of your mind. I am sure that you must have received your impressions, such as they are, from artful and designing persons, who had only their own ends in view when involving you in their plots. If I am justified in this opinion, and if you will pledge me your honor—"

"I say, Cooke, you can't do this. The warrant sets forth—"

"Well, well, we'll admit him to bail."

"It is not bailable, Right Honorable," said Barton, addressing the large man at the table.

"Phelan," said the younger man, turning away in pique, "we really have matters of more importance than this boy's case to look after."

"Boy as he is, sir," said Barton, obsequiously, "he was in the full confidence of that notorious French captain for whose capture you offered a reward of one thousand pounds."

"You like to run your fox to earth, Barton," replied the Under-Secretary, calmly, for it was he who spoke.

"In alliance with France," continued the dark man, reading from the paper, over which he continued to pore ever since, "for the propagation—ay, that's it—the propagation of democratic—"

"Come, come, Browne, never mind the warrant; if he can find bail—say five hundred pounds—for his future appearance, we shall be satisfied."

Browne, who never took his eyes from the paper, and seemed totally insensible to everything but the current of his own thoughts, now looked up, and, fixing his dark and beetling look upon me, uttered in a deep, low tone:

"You see, sir, the imminent danger of your present position, and at the same time the merciful leniency which has always characterized his Majesty's Government—ahem! If, therefore, you will plead guilty to any transportable felony, the grand jury will find true bills—"

"You mistake, Browne," said Cooke, endeavoring with his handkerchief to repress a burst of laughter, "we are going to take his bail."

"Bail!" said the other, in a voice and with a look of amazement absolutely comic.

Up to this moment I had not broken silence, but I was unable to remain longer without speaking.

"I am quite ready, sir," said I, resolutely, "to stand my trial for anything laid to my charge. I am neither ashamed of the opinions I profess, nor afraid of the dangers they involve."

"You hear him, sir, you hear him," said Barton, triumphantly, turning toward the Secretary, who bit his lip in disappointment, and frowned on me with a mingled expression of anger and warning. "Let him only proceed, and you'll be quite satisfied, on his own showing, that he cannot be admitted to bail."

"Bail!" echoed the right honorable, whose faculties seemed to have stuck fast in the mud of thought, and were totally unable to extricate themselves.

At the same moment, a gentle tap was heard at the door, and the porter entered with a card, which he delivered to the Secretary.

"Let him wait," was the brief reply, as he threw his eyes over it. "Captain Bubbleton," muttered he, between his teeth. "Don't know him."

I started at the name, and felt my cheek flush; he saw it at once.

"You know this gentleman, then," said he mildly.

"Yes; to his humanity I am indebted for my life."

"I think I shall be able to show, sir," said Barton, interposing, "that through this Burke's instrumentality a very deep scheme of disaffection is at this moment in operation among the troops in garrison. It was in the barrack at George's street that I apprehended him."

"You may withdraw, sir," said the Secretary, turning toward me. "Let Captain Bubbleton come in."

As I left the room, the burly captain entered; but so flurried and excited was he, that he never perceived me, as we passed each other.

I had not been many minutes in the outer room when a loud laugh attracted me, in which I could distinctly recognize the merry cadence of my friend Bubbleton; and shortly after the door was opened, and I was desired to enter.

"You distinctly understand, then, Captain Bubbleton," said Mr. Cooke, "that in accepting the bail in this case, I am assuming a responsibility which may involve me in trouble?"

"I have no doubt of it," muttered Barton, between his teeth.

"We shall require two sureties of five hundred pounds each."

"Take the whole myself, by Jove!" broke in Bubbleton, with a flourish of his hand. "In for a penny—eh, Tom?"

"You can't do that, sir," interposed Barton.

The Secretary nodded an assent, and for a moment or two Bubbleton looked nonplussed.

"You'll of course have little difficulty as to a co-surety," continued Barton with a grin. "Burke of 'Ours' is sufficiently popular in the Forty-fifth to make it an easy matter."

"True," cried Bubbleton, "quite true; but in a thing of this kind, every fellow will be so deuced anxious to come forward—a kind of military feeling, you know."

"I understand it perfectly," said Cooke, with a polite bow; "although civilian, I think I can estimate the '*esprit de corps*' you speak of."

"Nothing like it, nothing like it, by Jove! I'll just tell you a story—a little anecdote in point. When we were in the Neelgharries, there was a tiger devilish fond of one of ours. Some way or other, Forbes—that was his name—"

"The tiger's?"

"No! the captain's. Forbes had a devilish insinuating way with him—women always liked him—and this tiger used to come in after mess, and walk round to where he was sitting, and Forbes used to give him his dinner, just as you might a dog—"

The Castle clock struck three just at this moment; the Secretary started up:

"My dear captain," cried he, putting his hand on Bubbleton's arm, "I never was so sorry in my life; but I must hurry away to the Privy Council. I shall be here, however, at four; and if you will meet me at that time with the other security, we can arrange this little matter at once." So saying, he seized his hat, bowed politely round the room, and left us.

"Come along, Tom," cried Bubbleton, taking me by the arm; "devilish good fellow that; knew I'd tickle him with the tiger; nothing to what I could have told him, however, if he had waited."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Barton, interposing between us and the door, "Mr. Burke is in custody until the formality at least of a bail be gone through."

"So he is," said Bubbleton; "I forgot all about it. So good-by, Tom, for half an hour: I'll not be longer, depend on it."

With this he shook me warmly by the hand, bustled out of the room, and hurried down-stairs, humming a tune as he went, apparently in capital spirits, while I knew from his manner that the bail he was in search of had about as much existence as the tiger in the Neelgharries.

"You can wait in this room, sir," said Barton, opening the door of a small apartment which had no other exit save through this office.

I sat down in silence and in sorrow of heart, to speculate, as well as I was able, on the consequences of my misfortune. I knew enough of Bubbleton to be certain that all chance of assistance in that quarter was out of the question—the only source he could draw upon being his invention—the only wealth he possessed the riches of his

imagination—which had, however, this advantage over any other species of property I ever heard of—the more he squandered it, the more affluent did he become. Time wore on; the clock struck four; and yet no appearance of Bubbleton. Another hour rolled by—no one came near me, and at length, from the perfect stillness without, I believed they had forgotten me.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BAIL.

Six o'clock, seven, and even eight struck, and yet no one came. The monotonous tread of the sentry on guard at the Castle gate, and the occasional challenge to some passing stranger, were the only sounds I heard above the distant hum of the city, which grew fainter gradually as evening fell. At last I heard the sound of a key moving in a lock, the bang of a door, and then came the noise of many voices, as the footsteps mounted the stairs, amid which Bubbleton's was pre-eminently loud. The party entered the room next to where I sat, and, from the tones, I could collect that Major Barton and Mr. Cooke were of the number. Another there was, too, whose voice was not absolutely new or strange to my ears, though I could not possibly charge my memory where I had heard it before.

While I was thus musing, the door opened noiselessly, and Bubbleton entering without a word, closed it behind him, and approached me on tiptoe.

"All right, my boy; they're doing the needful outside; ready in ten minutes; never was such a piece of fortune; found out a glorious fellow; heard of him from Hicks, the money-lender; he'll go security to any amount; knows your family well; knew your father, grandfather, I believe; delighted to meet you; says he'd rather see you than fifty pounds!"

"Who is he, for Heaven's sake?" said I, impatiently; for it was a new thing to me to receive anything like kindness on the score of my father's memory.

"Eh! who is he? He's a kind of a bill-broking, mortgaging, bail-giving, devilish good sort of fellow. I've a notion he'd do a bit of something at three months."

"But his name—what's he called."

"His name is—let me see—his name is —— But who cares for his name? He can write it, I suppose, on a stamp, my boy—that's the mark. Bless your heart, I only spoil a stamp when I put my autograph across it—it would be worth prime cost till then. What a glorious thing is youth—unfledged, unblemished youth—to possess a name new to the Jews—a reputation against which no one has 'protested!' Tom Burke, my boy, I envy you. Now, when I write George Frederick Augustus Bubbleton on any bill, warrant, or quittance, straightway there's a grin around the circle—a kind of a d—d impertinent sort of a half-civil smile, as though to say '*nulla bona*,' payable nowhere. But hold! that was a tap at the door—oh, they want us."

So saying, the captain opened the door and introduced me.

"I say, Tom," cried he, "come here, and thank our kind friend, Mr. ——, Mr. ——"

"Mr. Basset," said I, starting back, as my eyes beheld the pale, sarcastic features of the worthy attorney, who stood at the table, conversing in a low tone with the Under-Secretary.

"Eh! what's the matter?" whispered Bubbleton, as he saw my color come and go, and perceived that I leaned on a chair for support. "What the devil's wrong now?"

"You've betrayed me to my greatest enemy," said I, in a low, distinct voice.

"Eh! what!—why you seem to have nothing but foes in the world. Confound it, that's always my luck—my infernal good nature is everlastingly making a wrong plunge."

"In that case, if I understand the matter aright, the bail is unnecessary," said Mr. Cooke, addressing Basset, who never turned his head to the part of the room where we stood.

"No, sir, it is not necessary. While the law assists me to resume my guardianship of this young gentleman, I am answerable for his appearance."

"The indentures are quite correct," said Barton, as he laid the papers on the table, "as I believe Mr. Basset's statement to be also."

"No bail necessary," interrupted Bubbleton, rubbing his hands pleasantly, "so much the better. Wish them good evening, Tom, my hearty; we shall be back in time for supper. You wouldn't take an oyster, Mr. Cooke?"

"I thank you very much, but I am unfortunately engaged."

"Not so fast, Captain, I beg you," said Basset, with a most servile but malignant expression in his features. "The habits I would inculcate to my apprentice

are not exactly consistent with mess-parties and barrack-suppers."

"Apprentice! apprentice!" said Bubbleton, starting as if stung by a wasp. "Eh! you're surely not—not the—the—"

"Yes, sir; there's the indenture, signed and sealed, if you are desirous to satisfy yourself. The young gentleman himself will not deny his father's instructions concerning him."

I hung down my head, abashed and ashamed. The tears started to my eyes; I turned away to wipe them, and feared to face the others again; I saw that Bubbleton, my only friend, believed I had practiced some deceit on him—and how to explain, without disclosing what I dare not! There was a bustle in the room—a sound of voices—the noise of feet descending the stairs; and when I again looked round, they were all gone, save Basset, who was leisurely collecting his papers together, and fastening them with a string. I turned my eyes everywhere to see if Bubbleton had not remained. But no, he had left me like the rest, and I was alone with the man I most dreaded and disliked of all the world."

"Well, sir," said Basset, as he thrust the papers into the pocket of his great-coat, "I'm ready now."

"Where to, sir?" replied I, sternly, as he moved to leave the room; for without thinking of how and why I was to succeed in it, a vague resolution of defiance flitted through my mind.

"To *my* house, sir, or to Newgate, if you prefer it. Don't mistake, young gentleman, for a moment, the position you occupy—you owe your liberation at this moment not to any merits of your own. Your connection with the disaffected and rebellious body is well known: my interest with the government is your only protection. Again, sir, let me add, that I have no peculiar desire for your company in my family; neither the habits nor the opinions you have acquired will suit those you'll meet there."

"Why, then, have you interfered with me?" said I, passionately. "Why not have left me to my fate? Be it what it might, it would have been not less acceptable, I assure you, than to become an inmate of your house."

"That question were very easily answered," said he, interrupting me.

"Then, why not do so?"

"Come, come, sir, these are not the terms which are to subsist between us, nor is this the place to discuss our difference. Follow me."

He led the way down-stairs as he spoke, and, taking my arm within his, turned into the street. Without a word on either side we proceeded down Parliament street, and crossing Essex bridge, followed the quays for some time, then turning into Stafford street, we arrived at a house, when having taken a latch-key from his pocket, Basset opened the door and ushered me in, muttering half aloud as he turned the key in the lock, and fastened the bolt, "Safe at last." We turned from the narrow hall into a small parlor, which, from its dingy furniture of writing-desk and stools, I guessed to serve as an office. Here my companion lit a candle from the embers of the fire, and having carefully closed the door he motioned me to a seat.

"I have already told you, sir, that I am not in the least covetous of your company in my house; circumstances, which I may or may not explain hereafter, have led me to rescue you from the disgrace you must eventually have brought upon your family."

"Hold, sir, I have none, save a brother—"

"Well, sir, and your brother's feelings are, I trust, not to be slightingly treated—a young gentleman whose position and prospects are of the very highest order."

"You are his agent, I perceive, Mr. Basset," said I, with a significant smile.

"I am, sir," replied he, with a deep flush that mounted even to his forehead.

"Then let me save you all further trouble on my account," said I, calmly. "My brother's indifference to me or my fate has long since absolved me from any regret I might feel for the consequences which my actions might induce on *his* fortunes. His own conduct must stamp him, as mine must me. I choose to judge for myself, and not even Mr. Basset shall decide for me, although I am well aware his powers of discrimination have had the double advantage of experience on both sides of the question."

As I said this his face became almost livid, and his white lips quivered with passion. He knew not before that I was acquainted with his history, nor that I knew of his having sold to the government information which brought his schoolfellow and benefactor to the scaffold.

"Come, come," continued I, gaining courage, as I saw the effect my words produced, "it is not your interest to injure me, however it may be your wish. Is there no arrangement we can come to, mutually advantageous? We shall be but sorry companions. I ought to have some property under my grandfather's will."

"There is, I believe, five hundred pounds," said Basset, with a slow distinct-

ness, as if not rejecting the turn the conversation had taken.

"Well, then, what will you take and cancel that indenture? You don't set a very high value on my services, I suppose?"

"You forget, I perceive," said he, "that I am answerable for your future appearance if called on."

"There was no bail-bond drawn out, no sum mentioned, if I mistake not, Mr. Basset."

"Very true, sir, very true; but I pledged myself to the law adviser—my character is responsible."

"Well, well, let me have two hundred pounds—burn that cursed indenture—"

"Two hundred pounds! Do you fancy, then, that you are in the possession of this legacy? Why, it never may, in all likelihood it never will, be yours—it's only payable on your attaining your majority."

"Give me one hundred pounds, then—give me fifty—let me only be free, at liberty, and not absolutely a beggar on the streets."

Basset leaned his head on the chimney, and seemed sunk in reflection, while I, wound up to the highest pitch of excitement, trod up and down the room, pouring forth from time to time short and broken sentences, declaratory of my desire to surrender all that I might chance to inherit by every casualty in life, to my last guinea, only let there be no constraint on my actions—no attempt to control my personal liberty.

"I see," cried I, passionately—"I see what hampers you—you fear I may compromise my *family!* It is my brother's fair fame you are thinking of; but away with all dread on that score—I'll leave Ireland—I have long since determined on that."

"Indeed!" said Basset, slowly, as he turned round his head, and looked me full in the face. "Would you go to America, then?"

"To America! no—to France! that shall be the land of my adoption, as it is this moment of all my heart's longings."

His eyes sparkled, and a gleam of pleasure shot across his cold features, as if he caught a glow of the enthusiasm that lit up mine.

"Come," cried he, "I'll think of this—give me till to-morrow, and if you'll pledge yourself to leave Ireland within a week—"

"I'll pledge myself to nothing of the kind," replied I, fiercely. "It is to be free—free in thought as in act, that I would barter all my prospects with you. There must be but one compact between us—it must begin and end here. Take a night if you will to think it over, and to-morrow morning—"

"Well, then, to-morrow morning be it," said he, with more of animation in his tone; "and now to supper."

"To bed, rather," said I, "if I may speak my mind, for rest is what I now stand most in deed of."

CHAPTER XVII.

MR. BASSET'S DWELLING.

EXCEPTING the two dingy-looking, dust-covered parlors, which served as office and dining-room, the only portion of Mr. Basset's dwelling untenanted by lodgers were the attics. The large brass plate that adorned the hall-door, setting forth in conspicuous letters, "Anthony Basset, Attorney," gave indeed a most inadequate notion of the mixed population within, whose respectability, in the inverse ratio of their height from the ground, went on growing beautifully less, till it found its culminating point in the host himself, on whose venerable head the light streamed from a cobweb-covered pane in the roof. The stairs were dark and narrow, the walls covered with a dull-colored old wainscot, that flapped and banged with every foot that came and went, while the windows were defended by strong iron railings, as if anything inside them could possibly demand such means of protection.

I followed Mr. Basset as he led the way up these apparently interminable stairs, till at length the decreasing head-room betokened that we were near the slates. Mumbling a half apology for the *locale*, he introduced me into a long, low attic, where a settle bed of the humblest pretensions, and a single rush-bottomed chair supporting a basin, were the only articles of furniture. Something like the drop-curtain of a strolling theatre closed up the distance; but this I could only perceive imperfectly by the dim twilight of a dip candle; and in my state of fatigue and weariness, I had little inclination to explore further. Wishing me a good-night, and promising that I should be called betimes next morning, Mr. Basset took his leave, while I, overcome by a long day of care and anxiety, threw myself on the bed, and slept far more soundly than I could have believed it were possible for me to do under the roof of Anthony Basset.

The sun was streaming in a rich flood of yellow light through a small skylight, and playing its merry gambols on the floor when I awoke. The birds, too, were singing; and the hum of the street noises, mellowed by distance, broke not unpleasantly on the ear. It did not take me long to remember where I was, and why. The conversation of the evening before recurred at once to my mind, and hope, stronger than ever before I felt it, filled my heart. It was clear Basset could place little value on such services as mine; and if I could only contrive to make it his interest to part with me, he would not hesitate about it. I resolved that, whatever price he put upon my freedom, if in my power I should pay it. My next plan was to find out, through some of the persons in correspondence with France, the means of reaching that country, in whose military service I longed to enroll myself. Had I but the papers of my poor friend Charles de Meudon, there had been little difficulty in this; but, unfortunately, they were seized by Major Barton, on the day of his death, and I had never seen them since.

While I revolved these thoughts within myself I heard the merry notes of a girl's voice, singing, apparently, in the very room with me. I started up and looked about me, and now perceived that what seemed so like a drop-curtain the night before was nothing more or less than a very large patchwork quilt, suspended on a line across the entire attic, from the other side of which came the sounds in question. It was clear, both from the melody and the voice, that she could not be a servant; and somewhat curious to know more of my fair neighbor, I rose gently, and slipping on my clothes, approached the boundary of my territory with noiseless step.

A kind of whistling noise interrupted every now and then the lady's song, and an occasional outbreak of impatience would burst forth in the middle of the "Arrah, will you marry me, dear Alley Croker," by some malediction on a "black knot" or a broken string. I peeped over the "drop," and beheld the figure of a young, plump, and pretty girl, busily engaged in lacing her stays—an occupation which accounted equally for the noise of the rushing stay-lace and the bit of peevishness I had heard. I quite forgot how inadvisable was the indulgence of my curiosity in my admiration of my fair neighbor, whose buxom figure, not the less attractive for the shortness of her drapery, showed itself to peculiar advantage as she bent to one side and the other in her efforts to fasten the impracticable bodice. A mass of rich brown hair, on which the sun was playing, fell over her neck and on her shoulders, and half concealed her round, well-turned arms as they plied their busy task.

"Well, ain't my heart broke with you entirely?" exclaimed she, as a stubborn knot stopped all further progress. At this moment the cord, on which through inadvertence I had leaned somewhat too heavily, gave way, and down came the curtain with a squash to the floor. She sprang back with a bound, and, while a slight but momentary blush flushed her cheek, stared at me half angrily, and then cried out, "Well, I hope you like me?"

"Yes, that I do," said I, readily; "and who wouldn't that saw you?"

Whether it was the *naïveté* of my confession, or my youth, or both, I can't well say, but she laughed heartily at my speech, and threw herself into a chair to indulge her mirth.

"So we were neighbors, it seems," said I.

"And if we were," said she, roguishly, "I think it's a very unceremonious way you've opened the acquaintance."

"You forget, apparently, I haven't left my own territory."

"Well, I'm sure I wish you would, if you're any good at a black knot; my heart and my nails are both broke with one here."

I didn't wait for any more formal invitation, but stepped at once over the frontier, while she, rising from the chair, turned her back toward me, as with her finger she directed me to the most chaotic assemblage of knots, twists, loops, and entanglements, I ever beheld.

"And you're Burke, I suppose," cried she, as I commenced my labors.

"Yes, I'm Burke."

"Well, I hope you're done with wildness by this time. Uncle Tony tells fine tales of your doings."

"Uncle Tony! So you're Mr. Basset's niece—is that so?"

"You didn't take me for his wife, I hope," said she, again bursting out into laughter.

"In truth, I never thought so well of him as to suppose it."

"Well, well, I'm sure it's little I expected you to look so mild and so quiet; but you needn't pinch me, for all that. Isn't your name Tom?"

"Yes, I hope you'll always call me so."

"Maybe I will. Isn't that done yet?—and there's the milk bell. Uncle will be in a nice passion if I'm not down soon—cut it—cut it at once."

"Now do be patient for a minute or two

—it's all right if you stay quiet. I'll try my teeth on it."

"Yes, but you needn't try your lips too," said she, tartly.

"Why, it's the only plan to get your fingers out of the way. I'm sure I never was so puzzled in all my life."

"Nothing like practice, my boy, nothing," cried a merry voice from the door behind me, half choked with laughing, while a muttered anathema, in a deeper tone, followed. I looked back, and there stood Bubbleton, his face florid with laughter, endeavoring to hold back Mr. Basset, whose angry look and flashing eye there was no mistaking.

"Mr. Burke—Burke, I say—Nelly, what does this mean? How came this young gentleman—"

"As to that," said I, interrupting him, and my blood somewhat chafed by his manner, "this piece of trumpery tumbled down when I leaned my arm on it. I had no idea—"

"No, no; to be sure not," broke in Bubbleton, in an ecstasy. "The thing was delicious; such a bit of stage effect. She was there, as it might be, combing her hair, and all that sort of thing. Tom was here, raving about absence, and eternal separation. You are an angry father, or uncle—all the same; and I'm Count Neitztachenitz, the old friend and brother-officer of Tom's father. Now, let Miss Nelly—But where is she?—why, she's gone! Eh, and Basset? Basset!—why, he's gone! Come, Tom, don't you go too. I say, my boy, devilish well got up that. You ought to have had a white satin doublet and hose, slashed with pale cherry color ribbons to match, small hat looped, aigrette and white plume. She was perfect—her leg and foot were three certain rounds of applause from the pit and gallery."

"What nonsense," said I, angrily; "we weren't playing a comedy."

"Weren't you though? well, I'm deuced sorry for it, that's all; but it did look confoundedly like an undress rehearsal."

"Come, come, no foolery, I beg. I'm here in a very sad plight, and this piece of nonsense may not make matters any better. Listen to me, if you can, patiently for five minutes, and give me your advice."

I took him by the arm as I spoke, and leading him from the room, where I saw that everything was only suggesting some piece of scenic effect, and in as few words as I could command, explained how I was circumstanced; omitting, of course, any detail of my political bias, and only stated so much of my desires as implied my wish to be free of my contract with Basset, and at liberty to dispose of myself as I liked in future.

"I see," cried Bubbleton, as I finished; "the old fox has this five hundred pounds of yours."

"No, I didn't say that; I only mean—"

"Well, well, it's all the same. If he hasn't, you know he ought."

"No; that's not essential either."

"No matter, he would if he could; it just comes to the same thing, and you only wish to get clear out of his hands at any cost. Isn't that it?"

"Exactly; you have it all perfectly."

"Bless your heart, boy, there's nothing easier. If I were in your place, I should arrange the affair in less than a week. I'd have fits—strong fits—and burn all the papers in the office during the paroxysm. I'd make a pile of deeds, leases, bonds, and settlements in the back yard.

"I don't fancy your plan would be so successful as you flatter yourself," said a dry, husky voice from behind: "there's rather a stringent law for refractory apprentices, as Mr. Burke may learn." We turned round, and there stood Mr. Basset, with a grin of most diabolical malignity in his by no means pleasant features. "At the same time," continued he, "your suggestions are of infinite value, and shall be duly appreciated in the King's Bench."

"Eh—King's Bench! Lord bless you, don't speak of it. Mere trifles—I just threw them out as good hints. I had fifty far better to come. There's the young lady, now—to be sure, he has started that notion himself, so I must not pretend it was mine; but Miss Nelly, I think, Tom—"

"Mr. Basset is well aware," interrupted I, "that I am only desirous to be free and untrammeled—that whatever little means I may derive from my family, I'm willing to surrender all, short of actual beggary, to attain this object—that I intend quitting Ireland at once. If, then, he consent to enter into an arrangement with me, let it be at once, and on the spot. I have no desire, I have no power, to force him by a threat, in case of refusal; but I hope he will make so much of amend to one of whose present desolation and poverty he is not altogether innocent."

"There, there, that's devilish well said; the whole thing is all clear before me. So come along, Basset, you and I will settle all this. Have you got a private room where we can have five minutes' chat together? Tom, wait for me here."

Before either of us could consent or oppose his arrangement, he had taken Bas-

set's arm, and led him down-stairs, while I, in a flurry of opposing and conflicting resolves, sat down to think over my fortunes.

Tired at length with waiting, and half suspecting that my volatile friend had forgotten me and all my concerns, I descended to the parlor in hopes to hear something of the pending negotiation. At the head of a long, narrow table sat my fair acquaintance, Miss Nelly, her hair braided very modestly at each side of her pretty face, which had now assumed an almost Quakerish propriety of expression. She was busily engaged in distributing tea to three pale, red-eyed, emaciated men, whose spongy-looking, threadbare garments bespoke them to be attorney's clerks: a small imp, a kind of embryo practitioner, knelt before the fire in the act of toasting bread, but followed with his sharp piercing eyes every stir in the apartment, and seemed to watch with malicious pleasure the wry faces around, whenever any undue dilution of the bohea, or any curtailment of the blue milk pressed heavily on the guests. These were not exactly the circumstances to renew my acquaintance with my fair neighbor, had I been so minded; so, having declined her offer of breakfast, I leaned moodily on the chimney-piece, my anxiety to know my fate becoming each instant more painful. Meanwhile, not a word was spoken—a sad, moody silence, unbroken save by the sounds of eating, pervaded all, when suddenly the door of the front parlor was flung open, and Bubbleton's pleasant voice was heard as he talked away unceasingly; in an instant he entered, followed by Basset, over whose hard countenance a shade of better nature seemed to pass.

"In that case," cried the captain, "I'm your man, not that I'm anything of a performer at breakfast or dinner; supper's rather my forte—an odor of a broiled bone at three in the morning, a herring smeared with chetna and grilled with brandy, two hundred of small oysters, a few hot ones to close with, a glass of Seltzer dashed with Hollands for health, and then any number you like of glasses of hot brandy-and-water afterward for pleasure."

While Bubbleton ran on in this fashion, he had broken about half a dozen eggs into the slop basin, and seasoning the mess with pepper and vinegar, was busily engaged in illustrating the moderation of his morning appetite.

"Try a thing like this, Tom," cried he, not defining how it was to be effected under the circumstances, while he added in a whisper, "your affair's all right."

These few words brought courage to my heart; and I ventured to begin the breakfast that had lain untasted before me.

"I think, Mr. Burke," said Basset, as soon as he recovered from the surprise Bubbleton's mode of breakfasting had excited—"I think and trust that all has been arranged to your satisfaction." Then turning to the clerks, who ate away without even lifting their heads, "Mr. Muggridge, you will be late at the Master's Office; Jones, take that parcel to Hennet; Kit, carry my bag up to the Courts."

Miss Nelly did not wait for the part destined for her, but with a demure face rose from the table and left the room, giving me, however, one sly glance as she passed my chair, that I remembered for many a day after.

"You'll excuse me, gentlemen, if I am pressed for time this morning—a very particular case comes on in the Common Pleas."

"Never speak of it, my dear fellow," said Bubbleton, who had just addressed himself to a round of spiced beef, "business has its calls just as pleasure has, ay, and appetite too. That would make an excellent bit of supper, with some mulled port, after a few rubbers of shorts."

Basset paid little attention to this speech, but, turning to me, continued:

"You mentioned your intention of leaving Ireland, I think; might I ask where you have decided on—from where? Is it possible that your brother—"

"My brother's anxieties on my account, Mr. Basset, can scarcely be very poignant, and deserve no particular respect or attention at my hands. I suppose that this morning has concluded all necessary intercourse between us; and if you have satisfied my friend Captain Bubbleton—"

"Perfectly, perfectly—another cup of tea, if you please—yes, nothing could be more gratifying than Mr. Basset's conduct—you are merely to sign the receipt for the legacy, and he hands you over one hundred pounds; isn't that it?"

"Yes; quite correct; my bill for one hundred at three months."

"That's what I mean; but surely you're not done breakfast—why, Tom, you've eaten nothing. I have been picking away this half hour, just to encourage you a bit. Well, well, I lunch in Stephen's green, at three, so here goes."

Mr. Basset now took from his pocket-book some papers, which, having glanced his eye over, he handed to me.

"This is a kind of acknowledgment, Mr. Burke, for the receipt of a legacy to which you could be only entitled on attaining your

majority; here are your indentures to me, and this is my acceptance for one hundred pounds."

"I am content," said I, eagerly, as I seized the pen. The thought of my liberty alone filled my mind, and I cared little for the conditions, provided I secured *that*.

Basset proffered his hand; I was in no humor to reject anything that even simulated cordiality; I shook it heartily. Bubbleton followed my example, and, having pledged himself to see more of his pleasant acquaintance, thrust his arm through mine, and bustled out, adding, in a tone loud enough to be overheard, "Made a capital fight of it—told him you were a Defender, a United Irishman, a Peep-o'-day Boy, and all that sort of thing—devilish glad to get rid of you, even on Miss Nelly's account." And so he rattled away without ceasing, until we found ourselves at the George's-street Barracks, my preoccupation of mind preventing my even having remarked what way we came.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS.

I WAS not sorry to find that Miss Bubbleton did not respond to the noisy summons of the captain, as he flourished about from one room to the other, making the quarters echo to the sweet name of "Anna Maria." "Saladin," "Grimes," "Peter," were also shouted out unsuccessfully; and with a fierce menace against various grooms of the chambers, waiting-men, and lackeys, who happily were still unborn, Bubbleton flung himself into a seat, and began to conjecture what had become of the inhabitants.

"She's paying a morning call—gone to see the Duchess—that's it, or perhaps she's looking over that suit of pearls I bought yesterday at Gallon's—pretty baubles, but dear at eight hundred pounds. Never mind, what's money for, eh, Tom?"

As he looked at me for a reply, I drew my chair closer toward him, and, assuming as much of importance as my manner could command, I besought his attention for a moment. Hitherto, partly from my own indecision, partly from his flighty and volatile bearing, I never had an opportunity either to explain my real position or my political sentiments, much less my intentions for the future. The moment had at length arrived, and I resolved to profit by it; and, in as few words as I was able, gave a brief narrative of my life, from the hour of my father's death to the day in which I fell into his own hands in Dublin, only omitting such portions as might, by the mention of names, compromise others concerned.

Nothing could possibly be more attentive than he was during the entire detail. He leaned his head on his hand, and listened with eager curiosity to all my scrapes and difficulties, occasionally nodding in assent, and now evincing by his excited air his desire to learn further; and when I at last wound up by avowing my long-cherished desire to enter the French service, he sat perfectly silent, and seemed to reflect gravely on the whole.

"I say, Tom," said he, at length, as he stared me full in the face, and laid his hand impressively on my knee, "there's good stuff in that—excellent stuff! depend upon it!"

"Good stuff! what do you mean?" said I, in amazement.

"I mean," replied he, "there's bone in it, sinew in it, substance in it—there are some admirable situations too. How Fulham would come out in Tony Basset—brown shorts, white stockings, high shoes and buckles—his own very costume; and there's that little thing, Miss Booth, for Nelly, give her a couple of songs—ballad airs take best; Williams should be Barton; a devilish fine villain in coarse parts, Williams. I think I see him stealing along by the flats with his soldiers to the attack. Then the second act should open—interior of hut—peasants round a table—eating always successful on the stage—nothing like seeing a fat fellow bolting hard eggs, and blustering out unpronounceable jokes over a flagon of colored water. You, by right, should have your own part—splendid thing—devilish fine, your sensations when the cabin was on fire, and the fellows were prodding about with their bayonets to discover you."

"And who's to perform Captain Bubbleton?" asked I, venturing for once to humor his absurdity.

"Eh?—oh! there's nothing for me, no marked feature, nothing strong, nothing characteristic. That has been through life my greatest, my very highest ambition—that no man should ever detect by anything in my manner, my dress, or my style of conversation, that I was not John Nokes, or Peter Styles. You'll meet me at a dinner-party, Tom, you'll converse with me, drink with me, we'll sit the evening together, grow intimate—perhaps you'll borrow fifty pounds of me—and yet I'd wager

another, you'd never guess that I rode a hippopotamus across the Ganges after tiffin one day, to pay my respects to the Governor-General. That, let me tell you, Tom, is the very proudest boast a man can make. Do you see that scar? It looks nothing now—that was a bite from a ferocious boa; the villain got into my room before breakfast, he had eaten my chokadar—a fellow I was very fond of—"

"Ah, I remember you mentioned that to me. And now to come back to my dull story, to which, I assure you, however dramatic you may deem it, I'd prefer adding an act or so before it comes before the world. I intend to leave this to-morrow."

"No, no, you mustn't think of it yet awhile. Why, my dear fellow, you've a hundred pounds—only think of that! twenty will bring you to Paris, less if you choose. I once traveled from Glugdamuck to the Ghauts of Bunderamud for half a rupee—put my elephants on three biscuits a day—explained to them in Hindostanee—a most expressive language—that our provisions had fallen short—that on our arrival all arrears of grub should be made up. They tossed up their trunks thus in token of assent, and on we marched. Well, when we came to Helgie, there was no water—"

"Very true," interrupted I, half in despair at the torrent of story-telling I had got involved in; "but you forget I have neither elephants, nor camels, nor coolies, nor chokadars—I'm a mere adventurer with, except yourself, not a friend in the world."

"Then why not join us?" cried the ever-ready Captain. "We are to have our orders for foreign service in a few weeks—you've only to volunteer; you've money enough to buy your kit. When you're fairly in, it's only writing to your brother. Besides, something always turns up; that's my philosophy. I rarely want anything I don't find means to obtain, somehow or other."

"No," said I, resolutely, "I will never join the service of a country which has inflicted such foul wrong on my native land."

"All stuff and nonsense!" cried Bubbleton. "Who cares the deuce of clubs about politics? When you're my age, you'll find that if you're not making something of politics, they'll make very little of you. I'd as soon sell figs for my grocer, or snuff for my tobacconist, as I'd bother my head governing the kingdom for Billy Pitt; he's paid for it—that's his business, not mine. No, no, my boy, join us—you shall be '*Burke of Ours*'—we'll have a glorious campaign among the Yankees. I'll teach you the Seneca language, and we'll have a ramble through the Indian settlements. Meanwhile, you dine to-day at the mess: to-morrow, we pic-nic at the Dargle; next day, we—what the deuce is next day to be?—oh, yes! next day we all dine with you. Nothing stiff or formal—a snug, quiet thing for sixteen—I'll manage it all."

Here was an argument there was no resisting, so I complied at once, comforting myself with a silent vow, come what might, I'd leave Ireland the day after my dinner-party.

Under whatever guise, with what history of my rank, wealth, and family influence, Bubbleton thought proper to present me to his brother officers, I cannot say; but nothing could possibly be more kind, or even more cordial, than their reception of me; and although I had some difficulty in replying to questions put under mistaken notions of my position and intentions, I readily followed, as far as I was able, the line suggested by my imaginative friend, whose representations, I suspected, would be received with a suitable limitation by his old associates.

There is, perhaps, no species of society so striking and so captivating to the young man entering on life as that of a military mess. The easy, well-bred intimacy, that never degenerates into undue familiarity—the good-humored, playful raillery, that never verges on coarseness or severity—the happy blending of old men's wisdom and young men's buoyancy—are all very attractive features of social intercourse, even independently of the stronger interest that invests the companionship of men whose career is arms. I felt this, and enjoyed it, too, not the less pleasantly that I discovered no evidence of that violent partisan feeling I had been led to believe was the distinguishing mark of the Royalist soldier. If, by chance, any allusion was made to the troubles of the period, it was invariably done rather in a tone of respect for mistaken and ill-directed political views, than in reprehension of disloyalty and rebellion; and when I heard the dispassionate opinions, and listened to the mild counsels of these men, whom I had always believed to be the veriest tyrants and oppressors, I could scarcely credit my own senses, so utterly opposed were my impressions and my experience. One only of the party evinced an opposite feeling. He was a pale, thin, rather handsome man, of about five-and-twenty, who had lately joined them from a dragoon regiment, and who, by sundryl ittle innuendoes, was

ever bringing uppermost the preference he evinced for his former service, and his ardent desire to be back again in the cavalry.

Captain Montague Crofts was, indeed, the only exception I witnessed to the almost brotherly feeling that prevailed in the Forty-fifth. Instead of identifying himself with the habits and opinions of his brother officers, he held himself studiously apart. Regarding his stay in the regiment like a period of probation, he seemed resolved to form neither intimacy nor friendships, but to wait patiently for the time of his leaving the corps to emancipate himself from a society below his caste.

The cold, repulsive, steady stare, the scarcely-bowed head, the impassive silence with which he heard the words of Bubbleton's introduction of me, formed a strong contrast with the warm cordiality of the others; and though at the time little disposed to criticise the manner of any one, and still less to be dissatisfied with anything, I conceived from the moment a dislike to Captain Crofts, which I felt to increase with every minute I spent in his company. The first occasion which suggested this dislike on my part was, from observing that while Bubbleton—whose historical accuracy, or blind adherence to reality, no one in the corps thought of requiring—narrated some of his incredible adventures, Crofts, far from joining in the harmless mirth which such tales created, invariably took delight in questioning and cross-questioning the worthy captain, quoting him against himself, and playing off a hundred tricks, which, however smart and witty in a law court, are downright rudeness when practiced in society. Bubbleton, it is true, saw nothing in all this save the natural interest of a good listener—but the others did; and it was quite clear to me, that while one was the greatest favorite in the regiment, the other had not a single friend amongst them. To me, Crofts manifested the most perfect indifference—not ever mixing himself in any conversation in which I bore a part. He rarely turned his head toward that part of the table at which I sat; and by an air of haughty superciliousness gave me plainly to understand that our acquaintance, though confessedly begun, was to proceed no further. I cannot say how happy I felt to learn that one I had so much cause to dislike was a violent aristocrat, an ultra-Tory—a most uncompromising denouncer of the Irish Liberal party, and an out-and-out advocate of severe and harsh measures toward the people. He never missed an opportunity for the enunciation of such doctrines, which, whatever might be the opinions of the listeners, there was, at the time I speak of, no small risk in gainsaying; and this immunity did Crofts enjoy to his heart's content.

Slight as these few reminiscences of the mess are, they are the called-up memories of days not to be forgotten by me. For now, what with my habitual indecision on the one hand, and Bubbleton's solicitations on the other, I continued to linger on in Dublin, leading the careless, easy life of those about me, joining in all the plots for amusement which the capital afforded, and mixing in every society to which my military friends had access. Slender as were my resources, they sufficed, in the eyes of all who knew not their limit, to appear abundant. Crofts was the only rich man in the regiment; and my willingness to enter into every scheme of pleasure, regardless of cost, impressed them all with the notion that Bubbleton for once was right, and that "Burke was a kind of west-country Crœsus," invaluable to the regiment.

Week after week rolled on, and still did I find myself a denizen of George's street. The silly routine of the barrack life filled all my thoughts, save when the waning condition of my purse would momentarily turn them toward the future; but these moments of reflection came but seldom, and at last came not at all. It was autumn—the town almost divested of its inhabitants, at least of all who could leave it; and along the parched, sunburnt streets a stray jingle or a noddy was rarely seen to pass. The squares, so lately crowded with equipages and cavalcades of horsemen, were silent and deserted; the closed shutters of every house, and the grass-grown steps, vouched for the absence of the owners. The same dreamy lethargy that seemed to rest over the deserted city appeared to pervade everything; and save a certain subdued activity among the officials of the Castle—a kind of ground-swell movement that boded something important—there was nothing stirring. The great measure of the "Union," which had been carried on the night of the riots, had, however, annihilated the hopes of the Irish Liberal party; and many who once had taken a leading part in politics had now deserted public life forever.

They with whom I associated cared but little for these things. There were but two or three Irish in the regiment, and they had long since lost all their nationality in the wear and tear of the service; so that I heard nothing of what occupied

the public mind, and lived on in the very midst of the threatening hurricane, in a calm as deep as death itself.

I had seen neither Barton nor Basset since the day of my leave-taking; and, stranger still, never could meet with Darby, who seemed to have deserted Dublin. The wreck of the party he belonged to seemed now effectually accomplished, and the prospect of Irish independence was lost, as it seemed, forever.

I was sitting one evening in the window of Bubbleton's quarters, thinking over these things, not without self-reproach for the life I was leading, so utterly adverse to the principles I had laid down for my guidance. I thought of poor De Meudon, and all his ambitious dreams for my success, and I felt my cheek flush with shame for my base desertion of the cause to which, with his dying breath, he devoted me. I brought up in memory those happy evenings, as we wandered through the fields, talking over the glorious campaigns of Italy, or speculating on the mighty changes we believed yet before us; and then I thought of the reckless orgies in which my present life was passed. I remembered how his full voice would falter when one great name fell from his lips; and with what reverence he touched his chapeau as the word "Bonaparte" escaped from him! And how my heart thrilled to think of an enthusiasm that could light up the dying embers of a broken heart, and make it flash out in vivid brilliancy once more! and longed to feel as he did.

For the first time for some weeks I found myself alone. Bubbleton was on guard; and though I had promised to join him at supper, I lingered at home, to think and ponder over the past. I scarcely dared to face the future. It was growing dusky. The rich golden arch of an autumn moon could be seen through the hazy mist of that half frost which is at this season the sure harbinger of a hot day on the morrow. The street noises had gradually died away, and, save the distant sound of a ballad singer, whose mournful cadence fell sadly on the ear, I heard nothing.

Without perceiving it, I found myself listening to the doggerel of the minstrel, who, like most of her fellows of the period, was celebrating the means that had been used by Government to carry their favorite measure—the union with England. There was, indeed, very little to charm the ear or win the sense, in either the accent or the sentiment of the melody; yet somehow she had contrived to collect a pretty tolerable audience, who moved slowly along with her down the street, and evinced by many an outburst of enthusiasm how thoroughly they relished the pointed allusions of the verse, and how completely they enjoyed the dull satire of the song.

As they approached the barracks, the procession came to a halt, probably deeming that so valuable a lesson should not be lost to his Majesty's service; and, forming into a circle round the singer, a silence was commanded, when, with that quavering articulation so characteristic of the tribe, and that strange quality of voice that seems to alternate between a high treble and a deep bass, the lady began:

"Don't be crowdin' an me that away. There it is now—ye're tearin' the cloak off the back o' me! Divil receave the note I'll sing, if ye don't behave! And look at his honor up there, with a tenpenny bit in the heel of his fist for me. The Lord reward your purty face—'tis yourself has the darlin' blue eyes! Bad scran to yez, ye blaggards—look at my elegant bonnet the way you've made it!"

"Arrah! rise the tune, and don't be blarneying the young gentleman," said a voice from the crowd; and then added, in a lower but very audible tone, "them chaps hasn't a farthin' beyond their pay—three and ninepence a day, and find themselves in pipeclay!"

A rude laugh followed this insolent speech; and the ballad-singer, whose delay had only been a *ruse* to attract a sufficient auditory, then began to a very well-known air—

"Come hither, M.P.'s, and I'll tell
My advice, and I'm sure you'll not mock it:
Whoe'er has a country to sell,
Need never want gold in his pocket.
Your brother a bishop shall be—
Yourself—if you only will make a
Voice in our ma-jo-rity—
We'll make you chief judge in Jamaica.
Tol, lol de rol, tol de rol lay."

The mob-chorus here broke in, and continued with such hearty enthusiasm, that I lost the entire of the next verse in the tumult.

"Your father, they say, is an ass,
And your mother, not noted for knowledge;
But he'll do very well at Madras,
And she shall be provost of college.
Your aunt, lady's-maid to the queen;
And Bill, if he'll give up his rakin',
And not drunk in day-time be seen,
I'll make him a rosy archdeacon.
Tol, lol de rol, tol de rol lay.

"A jollier set ne'er was seen,
Than you'll be, when freed from your callin';
With an empty house in College green—
What an elegant place to play ball in.

Ould Foster stand by with his mace,
He'll do mighty well for a marker;
John Toler—"

"Here's the polis!" said a gruff voice from the crowd; and the word was repeated from mouth to mouth in every accent of fear and dread, while in an instant all took to flight, some dashing down obscure lanes and narrow alleys, others running straight onward toward Dame street, but all showing the evident apprehension they felt at the approach of these dreaded officials. The ballad-singer alone did not move. Whether too old or too infirm to trust to speed, or too much terrified to run, I know not; but there she stood, the last cadence of her song still dying on her lips, while the clattering sounds of men advancing rapidly were heard in the distant street.

I know not why, some strange momentary impulse, half pity, half caprice, moved me to her rescue, and I called out to the sentry, "Let that woman pass in!" She heard the words, and with an activity greater than I could have expected, sprang into the barrack-yard, while the police passed eagerly on in vain pursuit of their victims.

I remained motionless in the window-seat, watching the now silent street, when a gentle tap came to my door. I opened it, and there stood the figure of the ballad-singer, her ragged cloak gathered closely across her face with one hand, while with the other she held the bundle of printed songs, her only stock in trade.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE QUARREL.

WHILE I stood gazing at the uncouth and ragged figure before me, she pushed rudely past, and shutting the door behind her, asked, in a low whisper, "Are ye alone?" and then, without waiting for a reply, threw back the tattered bonnet that covered her head, and, removing a wig of long black hair, stared steadfastly at me.

"Do you know me now?" said the hag, in a voice of almost menacing eagerness.

"What!" cried I, in amazement, "it surely cannot be—Darby, is this really you?"

"Ye may well say it," replied he, bitterly. "Ye had time enough to forget me since we met last; and 'tis thinking twice your grand friends the officers would be, before they'd put their necks where mine is now to see you. Read that"—as he spoke, he threw a ragged and torn piece of printed paper on the table—"read that; and you'll see there's five hundred pounds of blood-money to the man that takes me. Ay, and here I stand this minit in the king's barrack, and walked fifty-four miles this blessed day just to see you and speak to you once more. Well, well"—he turned away his head while he said this, and wiping a starting tear from his red eyeball, he added, "Master Tom, 'tis myself would never b'lieve ye done it."

"Did what?" said I, eagerly; "what have I ever done that you should charge me thus?"

But Darby heard me not; his eyes were fixed on vacancy, and his lips moved rapidly as though he were speaking to himself. "Ay," said he, half aloud, "true enough, 'tis the gentlemen that betrayed us always—never came good of the cause where they took a part. But you"—here he turned full round, and grasping my arm, spoke directly to me—"you that I loved better than my own kith and kin, that I thought would one day be a pride and glory to us all—you that I brought over myself to the cause—"

"And when have I deserted—when have I betrayed it?"

"When did you desert it?" repeated he, in a tone of mocking irony. "Tell me the day and hour ye came here—tell me the first time ye sat down among the red butchers of King George, and I'll answer ye that. Is it here you ought to be? Is this the home for him that has a heart for Ireland? I never said you betrayed us; others said it—but I stood to it, ye never did that. But what does it signify? 'Tis no wonder ye left us; we were poor and humble people, we had nothing at heart but the good cause—"

"Stop!" cried I, maddened by this taunt, "what could I have done? Where was my place?"

"Don't ask me. If your own heart doesn't teach ye, how can I? But it's over now—the day is gone, and I must take to the road again. My heart is lighter since I seen you, and it will be lighter again when I give you this warnin'—God knows if you'll mind it. You think yourself safe now since you joined the sodgers—you think they trust you, and that Barton's eye isn't on ye still—there isn't a a word you say isn't noted down—not a man you spake to isn't watched! You don't know it, but I know it. There's more go to the gallows in Ireland over their wine, than with the pike in their hands. Take care of your friends, I say."

"You wrong them, Darby, and you wrong me. Never have I heard from one here a single word that could offend the proudest heart among us."

"Why would they?—what need of it? Ar'n't we down, down—ar'n't we hunted like wild beasts? is the roof left to shelter us? dare we walk the roads? dare we say, 'God save ye!' when we meet, and not be tried for pass-words? It's no wonder they pity us—the hardest heart must melt sometimes."

"As to myself," said I—for there was no use in attempting to reason with him further—"my every wish is with the cause as warmly as on the day we parted; but I look to France—"

"Ay, and why not? I remember the time your eye flashed and your cheek grew another color when you spoke of that."

"Yes, Darby," said I, after a pause; "and I had not been here now, but that the only means I possessed of forwarding myself in the French service are unfortunately lost to me."

"And what was that?" interrupted he, eagerly.

"Some letters which the poor Captain de Meudon gave me," said I, endeavoring to seem as much at ease as I could. Darby stooped down as I spoke, and, ripping open the lining of his cloak, produced a small parcel fastened with a cord, saying,

"Are these what you mean?"

I opened it with a trembling hand, and, to my inexpressible delight, discovered Charles's letter to the head of the *Ecole Polytechnique*, together with a letter of credit and two checks on his banker. The note to his sister was not, however, among them.

"How came you by these papers, Darby?" inquired I, eagerly.

"I found them on the road Barton traveled, the same evening you made your escape from the yeomanry—you remember that? They were soon missed, and an orderly was sent back to search for them. Since that, I've kept them by me; and it was only yesterday that I thought of bringing them to you, thinking you might know something about them."

"There's a mark on this one," said I, still gazing on the paper in my hand—"it looks like blood."

"If it is, it's mine then," said Darby, doggedly; and, after a pause, he continued, "The soldier galloped up the very minute I was stooping for the papers. He called out to me to give them up; but I pretended not to hear, and took a long look round to see what way I could escape where his horse couldn't follow me; but he saw what I was at, and the same instant his sabre was in my shoulder, and the blood running hot down my arm. I fell on my knees; but, if I did, I took this from my breast"—here he drew forth a long-barreled rusty pistol—"and shot him through the neck."

"Was he killed?" said I, in horror at the coolness of the recital.

"Sorrow one o' me knows. He fell on his horse's mane, and I saw the beast gallop with him up the road with his arms hanging at each side of the neck; and then I heard a crash, and I saw that he was down, and the horse was dragging him by the stirrup; but the dust soon hid him from my sight, and, indeed, I was growing weak too, so I crept into the bushes until it was dark, and then got down to Glencree."

The easy indifference with which he spoke, the tone of coolness in which he narrated this circumstance, thrilled through me far more painfully than the most passionate description; and I stood gazing on him with a feeling of dread that, unhappily, my features but too plainly indicated. He seemed to know what was passing in my mind; and, as if stung by what he deemed my ingratitude for the service he had rendered me, his face grew darkly red, the swollen veins stood out thick and knotted in his forehead, his livid lips quivered, and he said, in a thick, guttural voice,

"Maybe ye think I murdered him?" And then, as I made no answer, he resumed, in a different tone, "And faix, ye warn't long larnin' their lessons. But, hear me, now: there never was a traitor to the cause had a happy life, or an easy death; there never was one betrayed us but we were revenged on him or his. I don't think ye're come to *that* yet; for, if I did, by the mortial—" As he pronounced the last word in a tone of the fiercest menace, the sounds of many voices talking without, and the noise of a key turning in the lock, broke in upon our colloquy, and Darby had scarcely time to resume his disguise, when Bubbleton entered, followed by three of his brother officers, all speaking together, and in accents that evidently betokened their having drunk somewhat freely.

"I tell you, again and again, the diamond wins it. But here we are," cried Bubbleton; "and now for a pack of cards, and let's decide the thing at once."

"You said you'd bet fifty, I think?" drawled out Crofts, who was unquestionably the most sober of the party. "But

what have we here?" At this instant his eye fell upon Darby, who had quietly ensconced himself behind the door, and hoped to escape unseen. "Eh, what's this, I say?"

"What!" cried Bubbleton, "what do I see?—a nymph with bright and flowing hair—a hag like Hecuba, by Jove! Tom Burke, my man, how comes the damsel here?"

"'Tis Kitty — ould Kitty Cole, your honor. The young gentleman was buying a ballad from me, the Heavens prosper him!" said Darby.

"Nothing treasonous, I hope—no disloyal effusion, Tom; no scandal about Queen Elizabeth, my boy, eh?"

"Come, old lady," said Cradock, "let's have the latest novelty of the Liberty."

"Yes," said Bubbleton, "strike the harp in praise of— Confound the word!"

"Hang the old crone!" broke in Hilliard. "Here are the cards. The game stands thus: a spade is led—you've got none; hearts are trumps."

"No, you mistake; the diamond's the trump," said Cradock.

"I cry halt," said Crofts, holding up both his hands; "the first thing is, what's the bet?"

"Anything you like," cried Bubbleton; "fifty—a hundred—five hundred."

"Be it then five hundred; I take you," said Crofts, coolly, taking a memorandum-book from his pocket.

"No, no," interposed Hilliard; "Bubbleton, you shan't do any such thing; five—ten—twenty, if you wish, but I'll not stand by at such a wager."

"Well, then, if twenty be as much as you have got permission to bet," replied Crofts, insolently, "there's *my* stake." So saying, he threw a note on the table, and looked over at Bubbleton, as if awaiting his doing the same.

I saw my poor friend's embarrassment, and, without stirring from my place, slipped a note into his hand in silence; a squeeze of his fingers replied to me, and the same instant he threw the crumpled piece of paper down, and cried out, "Now for it—decide the point."

Crofts at once drew his chair to the table, and began with the utmost coolness to arrange the cards; while the others, deeply interested in the point at issue, looked on without speaking. I thought this a good opportunity for Darby to effect his escape, and, raising my hand noiselessly, I pointed to the door. Darby, who had been only waiting for the fortunate moment, stole quietly toward it; but, while his hand was on the lock, Crofts lifted his eyes toward me, and then throwing them half round, intimated at once that he observed the manœuvre. The blood suffused my face and temples, and though I saw the door close behind the piper, I could not recover from my embarrassment, or the fear that pressed on me lest Crofts should have penetrated the secret of Darby's disguise, and augured from the fact something to my discredit.

"The game is now arranged," said he. "The spade being led here, the second player follows suit, the third, having none, trumps the card, and is overtrumped by the last in play; the trick is lost, therefore, and, with it, the game."

"No, no," interrupted Bubbleton, "you mistake altogether; the diamond—no, the heart—I mean the—the—what the deuce is it? I say, Cradock, I had it all correct a minute ago—how is it, old fellow?"

"Why, you've lost, that's all," said the other, as he looked intently on the table, and seemed to consider the point.

"Yes, Bubbleton, there's no doubt about it—you've lost—we forgot all about the last player," said Hilliard.

A violent knocking at the outer door drowned the voices of all within, while a gruff voice shouted out,

"Captain Bubbleton, the grand round is coming up Parliament street."

Bubbleton snatched up his sword, and dashing through the room, was followed by the others in a roar of laughter. Crofts alone remaining behind, proceeded leisurely to open the folded piece of bank paper that lay before him, while I stood opposite unable to take my eyes from him. Slowly unfolding the note, he flattened it with his hand, and then proceeded to read aloud, "*Payez au porteur la somne de deux mille livres—*"

"I beg pardon," interrupted I; "there's a mistake there—that belongs to me."

"I thought as much," replied Crofts, with a very peculiar smile—"I scarcely supposed my friend Bubbleton had gone so far."

"There's the sum, sir," said I, endeavoring to control my temper, and only eager to regain possession of what would at once have compromised me, if discovered. "This is what Captain Bubbleton lost—twenty pounds, if I mistake not."

"I must entreat your pardon, sir," said Crofts, folding up the French *billet de banque*. "My wager was not with you, nor can I permit you to pay it. This is at present *my* property, and remains so until Captain Bubbleton demands it of me."

I was struck dumb by the manner in which these words were spoken. It was clear to me, that not only he suspected the disguise of the ballad-singer, but that by the discovery of the French note he connected his presence with its being in my possession. Rousing myself for the effort, I said, "You force me, sir, to speak of what nothing short of the circumstance could have induced me to allude to. It was I gave Captain Bubbleton that note. I gave it in mistake for this one."

"I guessed as much, sir," was the cool answer of Crofts, as he placed the note in his pocket-book and clasped it; "but I cannot permit your candid explanation to alter the determination I have already come to—even had I not the stronger motive, which as an officer in his Majesty's pay I possess, to inform the Government, on such infallible evidence, how deeply interested our French neighbors are in our welfare, when they supply us with a commodity which report says is scarce enough among themselves."

"Do not suppose, sir, that your threat —for as such I understand it—has any terror for me; there is, it's true, another whose safety might be compromised by any step you might take in this affair; but when I tell you, that it is one who never did, never could have injured you, and, moreover, that nothing treasonous or disloyal lies beneath your discovery—"

"You are really taking a vast deal of trouble, Mr. Burke," said he, stopping me with a cold smile; "which I am forced to say is unnecessary. Your explanation of how this *billet de banque* came into your possession may be required elsewhere, and will, I am certain, meet with every respect and attention. As for me, an humble captain, with only one principle to sustain me, one clue to guide me, in what I am disposed to consider a question of some importance, I shall certainly ask advice of others better able to direct me."

"You refuse, then, sir, to restore me what I have assured you is mine?"

"And what I have no doubt whatever you are correct in calling so," added he, contemptuously.

"And you persist in the refusal?" said I, in a voice which unhappily betrayed more temper than I had yet shown.

"Even so, sir," said he, moving toward the door.

"In that case," said I, springing before him, and setting my back against it, "you don't leave this room until, in the presence of a third party, I care not who he be, I have told you somewhat more of my opinion of you than it is necessary I should say now." The insulting expression of Crofts' features changed suddenly as I spoke, the color left his cheek, and he became as pale as death; his eye wandered round the room with an uncertain look, and then was fixed steadfastly on the door, against which I stood firmly planted. At length his face recovered its wonted character, and he said, in a cool, distinct manner,

"Your difficulties have made you bold, sir."

"Not more bold than you'll find me whenever you think fit to call on me; but perhaps I am wrong for suggesting a test, which report, at least, says Captain Crofts has little predilection for."

"Insolent cub," said he, half drawing his sword from the scabbard, and as hastily replacing it when he perceived that I never moved a muscle in my defense, but stood as if inviting his attack. "Let me pass, sir," cried he, impetuously; "stand by this instant."

I made no reply, but, crossing my arms on my breast, stared at him firmly as before. He had now advanced within a foot of me, his face purple with passion, and his hands trembling with rage.

"Let me pass, I say," shouted he, in an accent that boded his passion had completely got the ascendant; at the same instant he seized me by the collar, and, fixing his grip firmly in my clothes, prepared to hurl me from the spot. The moment had now come that for some minutes past I had been expecting, and with my open hand I struck him on the cheek, but so powerfully, that he reeled back with the stroke. A yell of rage burst from him, and in an instant his sword leaped from the scabbard, and he darted fiercely at me. I sprang to one side, and the weapon pierced the door and broke off short; still more than half the blade remained; and with this he flew toward me. One quick glance I gave to look for something which might serve to arm me, and the same moment the sharp steel pierced my side, and I fell backward with a shock, carrying my antagonist along with me. The struggle was now a dreadful one; for while he endeavored to withdraw the weapon from the wound, my hands were on his throat, and in his strained eyeballs and livid color might be seen that a few seconds more must decide the contest; a sharp pang shot through me, just then a hot gush of warm blood ran down my side, and I saw above me the shining steel, which he was gradually shortening in his hand, before he ventured to strike; a wild cry broke from me, while at

the instant, with a crash, the door of the room fell forward, torn from its hinges; a heavy foot approached, and the blow of a strong arm felled Crofts to the earth, where he lay stunned and senseless. In a second I was on my feet; my senses were reeling and uncertain, but I could see that it was Darby who came to my rescue, and who was now binding a sash round my wound to staunch the blood.

"Now for it—life or death's on it now," said he in a low but distinct whisper; "wipe the blood from your face, and be calm as you can when you're passing the sentry."

"Is he——" I dared not speak the word as I looked on the still motionless body that lay before me. Darby raised one arm, and as he let it go it fell heavily on the ground; he stooped down, and, placing his lips near the mouth, endeavored to ascertain if he breathed, and then, jumping to his feet, he seized my arm, and, in a tone I shall never forget, he said, "It's over now."

I tottered back as he spoke; the horrible thought of murder—the frightful sense of crime—the heaviest, the blackest that can stain the heart of man—stunned me; my senses reeled, and as I looked on that corpse stretched at my feet, I would have suffered my every bone to be broken on the rack, to see one quiver of life animate its rigid members. Meanwhile, Darby was kneeling down, and seemed to search for something beside the body.

"All right—come now," said he; "we must be far from this before daybreak; and it's lucky if we've the means to do it." I moved onward like one walking in a dream, when horrible images surround him, and dreadful thoughts are ever crowding fast; but where, amid all, some glimmering sense of hope sustains him, and he half feels that the terrors will pass away, and his soul be calm and tranquil once more. What is it? What has happened? was the ever rising question, as I heard Darby groping his way along the dark gallery, and the darker stairs.

"Be steady, now," said he, in a whisper, "we're at the gate."

"Who comes there?" cried the sentry.

"A friend," said Darby, in a feigned voice, answering for me, while he dropped behind me. The heavy bolts were withdrawn, and I felt the cold air of the streets on my cheek.

"Where to, now?" said I, with a dreamy consciousness that some place of safety must be sought, without well knowing why or wherefore.

"Lean on me, and don't speak," said Darby. "If you can walk as far as the end of the quay we're all safe." I walked on without further questioning, and almost without thought; and though, from time to time, Darby spoke to several persons as we passed, I heard not what they said, nor took any notice of them.

CHAPTER XX.

THE FLIGHT.

"ARE ye getting weak?" said Darby, as I staggered heavily against him and gasped twice or thrice for breath. "Are ye bleeding still?" was his next question, while he passed his hand gently within the sash, and felt my wound. I endeavored to mutter something in reply, to which he paid no attention, but, stooping down, he threw me across his shoulder, and darting off at a more rapid pace than before, he left the more frequented thoroughfare, and entered a narrow and gloomy alley, unlighted by a single lamp. As he hurried onward he stopped more than once, as if in quest of some particular spot, but which in the darkness he was unable to detect. "Oh! Holy Mother!" he muttered, "the blood is soaking through me! Master Tom, dear—Master Tom, my darlin', speak to me—speak to me, acushla!" But, though I heard each word distinctly, I could not utter one—a dreamy stupor was over me, and I only wished to be left quiet. "This must be it—ay, here it is," said Darby, as he laid me gently down on the stone sill of the door, and knocked loudly with his knuckles. The summons, though repeated three or four times, was unheeded; and, although he knocked loudly enough to have alarmed the neighborhood, and called out at the top of his voice, no one came; and the only sounds we could hear were the distant cadences of a drinking song, mingled with wild shouts of laughter, and still wilder cries of agony and woe.

"Here they are, at last," said Darby, as he almost staved in the door with a heavy stone.

"Who's there?" cried a harsh and feeble voice from within.

"'Tis me, Molly—'tis Darby M'Keown. Open quick, for the love of Heaven—here's a young gentleman bleedin' to death on the steps."

"Ugh! there's as good as ever he was, and going as fast, too, here within," said the crone. "Ye must take him away—he

wouldn't mind him now for a king's ransom."

"I'll break open the door this minit," said Darby, with a horrible oath, "av ye don't open it."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the hag. "If ye wor Darby M'Keown, ye'd know well how easy that is; try it—try it, acushla! oak timber and nails is able to bear all you'll do."

"See, now," said Darby, dropping his voice to a whisper—"see, Molly, here's five goold guineas for ye, av ye'll let us in—'tis a man's life on it, and one I'd give my own for twice over."

"Av ye offered me forty," replied she, "I dar'n't do it. Ye don't know the sorrow that's here this night. 'Tis Dan Fortescue is going. I'm coming, I'm coming," muttered she to some call from within. And then, without waiting to hear more, she shuffled back along the passage, and left us once more alone.

"There's nothing for it but this now," said Darby, as, retiring a few paces, he dashed his shoulder against the door with all his force; but, though a powerful man, and though every window rattled and trembled with the tremendous shock, the strong panels withstood the stroke, and never yielded in the least. "'Tis no use firing through the lock," said he, in a tone of despair. "Blessed Joseph! what's to be done?"

As he spoke, the light tread of a barefooted child was heard coming up the lane, and the same moment a little girl approached the door; she carried a cup in her hand, and held it carefully, as if fearful of spilling its contents. As she neared the door, she seemed uncertain how to proceed, and at last, as if gaining courage, tapped twice at it with her knuckles.

"Don't ye know me, Nora?" said Darby; "don't ye know Darby the Blast?"

"Ah! Mister M'Keown, is this you? Ah! I'm afeard it's little use there is in coming here to-night. Mr. Fortescue's dying within, and Dr. Kenagh can't leave him. I'm bringing him this to take, but—"

"Nora, dear," said Darby, "I've a secret for Mr. Fortescue, and must see him before he dies. Here's a crown, my darlin', and don't tell any one I gave it to ye." Here he stooped down, and whispered rapidly some words in her ear.

"Who's there?" broke in the hag's voice from within.

"'Tis me, Nora," said the child, boldly.

"Are ye alone there—do ye see any one about the door?"

"Sorra one; can't you let me in out of the cowld?"

"Come in quick, then," said the crone, as she opened the door carefully, and only wide enough to let the child pass; but the same instant Darby dashed forward his foot, and, flinging the door full wide, seized me by the collar, and dragged me in after him, closing the door at once behind him. The screams of the hag, though loud and vehement, were as unheeded as were Darby's own efforts to attract notice half an hour before.

"Be quiet, I say—hush yer crying, or, be the sowl o' the man that's dyin', I'll dhrive a ball through ye." The sight of a pistol-barrel seemed at last to have its effect, and she contented herself with a low, wailing kind of a noise, as she tottered after us along the passage.

The cold air of the street, and the rest combined, had given me strength, and I was able to follow Darby, as he led the way through many a passage, and up more than one stair.

"Here it is," said the child, in a whisper, as she stopped at the door of a room which lay half ajar.

We halted in silence, and listened to the breathings of a man, whose short, sobbing respiration, broken by hiccup, denoted the near approach of death.

"Go on," cried a deep, low voice, in a tone of eagerness; "ye'll not have the cough now for some time."

The sick man made no reply, but his hurried breathing seemed to show that he was making some unwonted effort; at last he spoke, but in a voice so faint and husky, we could not hear the words. The other, however, appeared to listen, and, by a stray monosyllable dropped at intervals, to follow the tenor of his speech. At last the sound ceased, and all was still.

"Go in now," said Darby, in a whisper, to the child, "I'll follow you."

The little girl gently pushed the door and entered, followed by M'Keown, who, however, only advanced one foot within the room, as if doubting what reception he should meet with.

By the uncertain light of a wood-fire, which threw in fitful flashes its glare around, I perceived that a sick man lay on a mean-looking, miserable bed in one corner of a dark room; beside him, seated on a low stool, sat another, his head bent down to catch the low breathings which the dying man gave forth from time to time. The heavy snoring sound of others asleep directed my eyes to a distant part of the chamber, where I saw three fellows

lying on the floor, partly covered by a blanket. I had barely time to see this much, when the figure beside the bed sprang forward, and, in a low but menacing tone, addressed M'Keown. The last words only could I catch, as he said,

"And if he wakes up he may know you still."

"And if he does," said Darby, doggedly, "who cares? Isn't there as good blood as his shed for the cause? Look here!"

He dragged me forward as he spoke, and, tearing open my coat, pointed to the sash that was now saturated with the blood that flowed at every stir from my wound. The other looked fixedly at me for a second or two, took my hand within his, and, letting it fall heavily, he whispered a word to M'Keown, and turned away.

"No, no," cried Darby, violently; by the holy mass! ye'll not trate me that way. Sit down, Master Tom," said he, as he forced me into an old arm-chair beside the fire. "Here, take a drink of water. Come here, doctor; come here, now, stop the bleeding; stand by me this wonst, and by this—" Here he crossed his fingers before him, and looked fervently upward; but at this instant the sick man sprang up in his bed, and looked wildly about him.

"Isn't that Darby—isn't that M'Keown there?" cried he, as he pointed with his finger. "Darby," he continued, in a low, clear whisper—"Darby, see here, my boy; you often said I'd do nothing for the cause. Is this nothing?" He threw back the bedclothes as he spoke, and disclosed a ghastly wound that divided his chest, exposing the cartilage of the ribs, which stood out amid the welling blood that oozed forth with every respiration he made. "Is it nothing that I gave up rank, and place, and fortune, the broad acres that were in my family for three centuries—all my hopes, all my prospects—"

"And if you did," interrupted M'Keown, hastily, "you knew what for."

"I knew what for!" repeated the sick man, as a deadly smile played upon his livid face and curled his white lip; "I know it now, at least: to leave my inheritance to a bastard—to brand my name with disgrace and dishonor—to go down to the grave a traitor, and, worse still—" He shuddered violently here, and though his mouth moved, no sound came forth; he sank back, worn out and exhausted.

"Was he *there*," said Darby to the doctor, with a significant emphasis on the word, "was he *there* to-night?"

"He was," replied the other. "He thinks, too, he fired the shot that did it; but, poor fellow! he was down before that. The boys brought him off. That child is going fast," continued he, as his eye fell upon me.

"Look to him, then, and don't be losin' time," said Darby, fiercely; "look to him," he added, more mildly, "and the heavens will bless ye. Here's twenty goolden guineas—it's all I've saved these eight years—here they're for you, and save his life."

The old man knelt down beside me, and slipping a scissors within the scarf that lay fastened to my side with clotted blood, he proceeded to open and expose the situation of my wound. A cold, sick feeling, a kind of half-fainting sensation, followed this, and I could hear nothing of the dialogue that passed so near me. An occasional sting of pain shot through me as the dressing proceeded; but, save this, I had little consciousness of anything. At length, like one awakening from a heavy slumber, with faculties half clouded by the dreamy past, I looked around me. All was still and motionless in the room. The doctor sat beside the sick man's bed, and Darby, his eyes riveted on me, knelt close to my chair, and held his hand upon the bandage over my wound. A gentle tap here came to the door, and the child I had seen before entered noiselessly, and approaching the doctor, said,

"The car is come, sir."

The old man nodded in silence, and then, turning toward Darby, he whispered something in his ear. M'Keown sprang to his legs at once, his cheek flushed deeply, and his eyes sparkled with animation.

"I have it! I have it!" cried he; "there never was such luck for us before."

With that he drew the old man to one side, and speaking to him in a low but rapid tone, evinced by the violence of his gestures and the tremulous eagerness of his voice how deeply he was interested.

"True enough, true enough," said the old man, after a pause; "poor Dan has but one more journey before him."

"Is he able to bear it, doctor?" said Darby, pointing toward me with his finger; "that's all I ask. Has he the strength in him?"

"He'll do now," replied the other, gruffly; "there's little harm done him this time. Let him taste that, whenever you find him growing weak; and keep his head low, and there's no fear of him." As he spoke, he took from a cupboard in the wall a small phial, which he handed to M'Keown, who received the precious elixir

with as much reverence as though it contained the very well-spring of human existence.

"And now," said Darby, "the less time lost the better. It will soon be daylight on us. Master Tom, can you rise, acushla? Are you able to stand up?"

I made the effort as well as I could, but my limbs seemed chained down, and even my arm felt like lead beside me.

"Take him on your back," said the old man, hurriedly. "You'll stay here till sunrise. Take him down-stairs on your back; and, when you have him in the open air, turn him toward the wind, and keep his head low—mind that."

I made another attempt to stand up; but, before I could effect it, Darby's strong arms were round my waist, and I felt myself lifted on his shoulder, and borne from the room. A muttered good-by passed between the others, and Darby began to descend the stairs cautiously, while the little child went before with a candle. As the street-door was opened I could perceive that a car and horse stood in waiting, accompanied by two men, who, the moment they saw me, sprang forward to Darby's assistance, and helped to place me on the car. M'Keown was soon beside me, and, supporting my head upon his shoulder, he contrived to hold me in a leaning position, giving me, at the same time, the full benefit of the cool breeze, which already refreshed and restored me. The vehicle now moved on in darkness and in silence. At first our pace was slow, but it gradually quickened as we passed along the quay—for as such I recognized it by the dull sound of the river near us. The bright lamps of the greater thoroughfares soon made their appearance; and, as we traversed these, I could mark that our pace slackened to a walk, and that we kept the very middle of the wide street, as if to avoid observation. Gradually we emerged from this, and, as I heard by the roll of the wheels, reached the outskirts of the town. We had not been many minutes there when the horse was put to his speed, and the car whirled along at a tremendous rate. Excepting a sense of weight and stiffness in the side, I had no painful feeling from my wound; while the rapidity with which we passed through the air imparted a sensation of drowsiness far from unpleasant. In this state I scarcely was conscious of what passed about me. Now and then some occasional halt, some chance interruption, would momentarily arouse me, and I could faintly hear the sound of voices; but of what they spoke I knew nothing. Darby frequently questioned me, but my utmost effort at reply was to press his hand. By times it would seem to me as though all I felt were but the fancies of some sick dream, which the morning should dispel and scatter. Then I thought that we were flying from an enemy, who pressed hotly on us, and gained at every stride; a vague, shadowy sense of some horrible event mingling with all, and weighing heavily on my heart.

As the time wore on my senses became clearer, and I saw that we were traveling along the seaside. The faint gray light of breaking day shed a cold gleam across the green water, which plashed with a mournful cadence on the low, flat shore. I watched the waves as they beat with a heavy sough amid the scattered weeds, where the wild cry of the curlew mingled with the sound as he skimmed along the gloomy water, and my heart grew heavier. There is something—I know not what—terribly in unison with our saddest thoughts in the dull plash of the sea at night: the loudest thunders of the storm, when white-crested waves rise high, and break in ten thousand eddies on the dark rocks, are not so suggestive of melancholy as the sighing moan of the midnight tide. Long-buried griefs, long-forgotten sorrows, rise up as we listen; and we feel as though that wailing cry were the funeral chant over cherished hopes and treasured aspirations. From my dark musings I was roused suddenly by Darby's voice asking of the men who sat at the opposite side, how the wind was?

"Westing by south," replied one, "as fair as need be, if there was enough of it—but who knows, we may have a capful yet, when the sun gets up."

"We'll not have long to wait for that," cried the other—"see there."

I lifted my eyes as he spoke, and beheld the pink stain of coming day rising above the top of a large mountain.

"That's Howth," said Darby, seizing with eagerness the proof of my returning senses.

"Come, press on, as fast as you can," said one of the men; "we must catch the ebb, or we'll never do it."

"Where does she lie?" said Darby, in a low whisper.

"Under the cliffs, in Bolskaton Bay," said the last speaker, whom I now perceived, by his dress and language, to be a sailor.

My curiosity was now excited to the utmost to know whither we were bound, and with an effort I articulated the one word, "Where?" Darby's eyes brightened as I

LANCE MORE I CAUGHT OF HIS FIGURE AS WE STOOD OUT TO SEA; HE WAS KNEELING ON THE BEACH, BAREHEADED, AS IF IN PRAYER. (P. 313.)

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spoke, he pressed my hand firmly within his, but made me no reply. Attributing his silence to caution, I pressed him no further; and, indeed, already my former indifference came back on me, and I felt listless as before.

"Turn off there to the right," cried the sailor to the driver; and suddenly we left the high road, and entered a narrow byway, which seemed to lead along the side of the mountain close to the water's edge. Before we had proceeded far in this direction, a long, low whistle was heard from a distance.

"Stop there, stop," said the sailor, as he knelt upon the car, and replied to the signal. "Ay, all right, there they are," said he, as, pointing to a little creek between the rocks below us, we saw a small row-boat with six men lying on their oars.

"Can't he walk?" said the sailor, in a half whisper, as he stood beside the car. "Well, let's lose no more time, we'll take him down between us."

"No, no," said Darby; "put him on my back, I'll do it myself."

"The ground's slippier than you take it," said the other; "my way's the safest."

With that, he lifted me from the car, and placing me between Darby and himself, they grasped each other's hands beneath me, and soon began a descent which I saw would have been perfectly impracticable for one man to have accomplished with another on his back.

During the time my desire to know where they were bringing me again grew stronger than ever; and, as I turned to ask Darby, I perceived that the tears were coursing each other fast down his weather-beaten cheeks, while his lips shook and trembled like one in an ague.

"Mind your footing there, my man, I say," cried the sailor, "or you'll have us over the cliff."

"Round the rock to the left there," cried a voice from below; "that's it, that's it—now you're all right; steady there; give me your hand."

As he spoke, two men advanced from the boat, and assisted us down the sloping beach, where the wet seaweed made every step a matter of difficulty.

"Lay him in the stern there—gently, lads, gently," said the voice of one who appeared the chief amongst them; "that's it; throw those jackets under his head. I say, piper, ar'n't you coming with us?"

But Darby could not speak one word. A livid pallor was over his features, and the tears fell, drop by drop, upon his cheek.

"Master Tom," said he, at length, as his lips almost touched me—"my child, my heart's blood, you won't forget poor Darby. Ye'll be a great man yet—ye'll be all I wish ye. But will you remember a poor man like me?"

"Jump ashore there, my good fellow," cried the coxswain; "we'll have enough to do to round the point before the tide ebbs."

"One minit more, and God love ye for it," said Darby, in a voice of imploring accent; "who knows will we ever meet again. 'Tis the last time, maybe, I'll ever look on him."

I could but press his hand to my heart; for my agitation increased the debility I felt, and every effort to speak was in vain.

"One half minit more—if it's only that he'll be able to say, 'God bless you, Darby!' and I'll be happy."

"Push off, my lads," shouted the sailor, sternly; and as he spoke the oars plashed heavily in the sea, and the boat rocked over with the impulse. Twice the strong stroke of the oars sent the craft through the clear water, when the piper clasped his arm wildly around me, and kissing me on the cheek, he sprang over the side. The waves were nearly to his shoulders; but in a few seconds he had buffeted through them, and stood upon the shore. With a last effort I waved my hand in adieu; and as I sank back exhausted, I heard a wild cry burst from him, half in triumph, half in despair. One glance more I caught of his figure as we stood out to sea; he was kneeling on the beach, bareheaded, and as if in prayer. The tears gushed from my eyes as I beheld him, and the long pent-up sorrow at last broke forth, and I sobbed like a child.

"Come, come, my lad, don't feel downhearted," said the sailor, laying his hand on my shoulder, "The world can scarce have been over rough to one so young as you are. Lift up your head and see what a glorious morning we've got; and there comes the breeze over the water. We hadn't such weather the last time we made this trip, I assure you."

I looked up suddenly, and truly never did such a scene of loveliness meet my eyes. The sun had risen in all his glorious brilliancy, and poured a flood of golden light across the bay, tipping with a violet hue the far-off peaks of the Wicklow mountains, and lighting up the wooded valleys at their feet. Close above us rose the rugged sides of Howth in dark shadow, the frowning rocks and gloomy caverns contrasting with the glittering tints of the opposite coast, where every cottage and cliff sparkled in

the dancing sunlight. As we rounded the point, a cheer broke from the men, and was answered at once. I turned my head, and saw beneath the tall cliffs the taper spars of a small vessel, from which the sails hung listlessly, half brailed to the mast.

"There she lies," said the skipper, "that's the *Saucy Sal*, my master; and if you're any judge of a craft, I think you'll like her. Give way, lads—give way; when that rock yonder's covered, the tide is at the flood."

The boat sprang to the strong jerk of their brawny arms, and in a few minutes glided into the little creek where the *Saucy Sal* lay at anchor.

Lifting me up, they placed me on board the little vessel, while, without losing a moment, they proceeded to ship the anchor and shake out the canvas. In less than five minutes the white sails bent to the breeze, the water rustled at the prow, and we stood out to sea.

"Where to?" said I, in a faint whisper, to the sailor who held the tiller beside me.

"Down channel, sir."

"And then?" asked I once more—"and then?"

"That must depend on the revenue cruisers, I believe," said he, more gruffly, and evidently indisposed to further questioning.

Alas! I had too little interest in life to care for where, and, laying my head upon my arm, fell into a heavy stupor for several hours.

The hot sun, the breeze, the unaccustomed motion, and, worse than all, the copious libations of brandy and water I was forced from time to time to take, gradually brought on fever, and, before evening, a burning thirst and throbbing headache seized me, and my senses, that hitherto had been but lethargic, became painfully acute, and my reason began to wander. In this state I remained for days, totally unconscious of the flight of time; frightful images of the past pursuing each other through my heated brain, and torturing me with horrors unspeakable. It was in one of my violent paroxysms I tore the bandage from my side, and, reopening my half-healed wound, became in a moment deluged with blood. I have no memory of aught that followed; the debility of almost death itself succeeded, and I lay without sense or motion. To this circumstance I owed my life, for, when I next rallied, the fever had left me, my senses were unclouded, my cheek no longer burned, nor did my temples throb, and, as the sea-breeze played across my face, I drank it in with ecstasy, and felt once more the glorious sensations of returning health. It was evening, the faint wind that follows sunset scarce filled the sails as we glided along through the waveless sea. I had been listening to the low, monotonous song of one of the sailors as he sat mending a sail beside me, when suddenly I heard a voice hail us from the water; the skipper jumped on the half-deck, and immediately replied—the words I could not hear, but, by the stir and movement about me, I saw something unusual had occurred, and, by an effort, I raised my head above the bulwark and looked about me. A long, low craft lay close alongside us, filled with men, whose blue caps and striped shirts struck me as strange and uncommon, not less than their black belts and cutlasses with which every man was armed. After an interchange of friendly greetings with our crew, for such they seemed, although I could not catch the words, she moved rapidly past us.

"There's their flotilla, sir," said the helmsman, as he watched my eye while it wandered over the water.

I crept up higher, and followed the direction of his finger. Never shall I forget that moment; before me, scarce, as it seemed, a mile distant, lay a thousand boats at anchor, beneath the shadow of tall sandhills, decorated with gay and gaudy pennons, crowded with figures whose bright colors and glittering arms shone gorgeously in the setting sunlight. The bright waves reflected the myriad tints, while they seemed to plash in unison with the rich swell of martial music that stole along the water with every freshening breeze. The shore was covered with tents, some of them surmounted with large banners that floated out gayly to the breeze; and, far as the eye could reach, were hosts of armed men dotted over the wide plain beside the sea. Vast columns of infantry were there—cavalry and artillery, too—their bright arms glittering, and their gay plumes waving, but all still and motionless, as if spell-bound. As I looked, I could see horsemen gallop from the dense squares, and riding hurriedly to and fro. Suddenly a blue rocket shot into the calm sky, and broke in a million glittering fragments over the camp; the deep roar of a cannon boomed out, and then the music of a thousand bands swelled high and full, and in an instant the whole plain was in motion, and the turf trembled beneath the tramp of marching men. Regiment followed regiment, squadron poured after squadron, as they descended

the paths toward the beach, while a long, dark line wound through the glittering mass, and marked the train of the artillery, as with caissons and ammunition-wagons they moved silently over the grassy surface.

All that I had ever conceived of warlike preparations was as nothing to the gorgeous spectacle before me. The stillness of the evening air, made tremulous with the clang of trumpets and the hoarse roar of drums—the mirror-like sea, colored with the reflection of bright banners and waving pennants—and then, the simultaneous step of the mighty army, so filled up every sense, that I feared lest all might prove the mere pageant of a dream, and vanish as it came.

"What a glorious sight!" cried I, at length, half wild with enthusiasm. "Where are we?"

"Where are we!" repeated the skipper, smiling. "Look out, and you'll soon guess that. Are those very like the uniforms of King George? When did you see steel breastplates and helmets before? This is France, my lad."

"France! France!" said I, stupefied with the mere thought.

"Yes, to be sure. That's the Army of England, as they call it, you see yonder; they are practicing the embarkation. See the red rockets; there they go—three, four, five, six—that's the signal; in less than half an hour thirty thousand men will be ready to embark. Mark how they press on faster and faster; and watch the cavalry, as they dismount and lead their horses down the step. See how the boats pull in shore—but, holloa there! we shall get foul of the gun-boats—already we've run in too close. Down helm, my lad; keep the headland yonder on your lee."

As he spoke, the light craft bent over to the breeze, and skipped freely over the blue water. Each moment wafted us farther away from the bright scene, and soon a projecting point shut out the whole, save the swell of the brass bands as it floated on the breeze, and I might have believed it a mere delusion.

"They practice that maneuver often enough to know it well," said the skipper; "sometimes at daybreak—now, at noonday—and again, as we see, at sunset; and no one knows at what moment the attack that seems a feint may not turn out to be real. But here we are now alongside; our voyage is ended."

The anchor plashed from our bow, while a signal was made from the shore, and answered by us; and in an instant we were surrounded with boats.

"Ha, Antoine!" cried a sous-officier in a naval uniform, who sat on the gunwale of a long eight-oar gig, and touched his hat in recognition of our skipper. "What news '*outre mer?*'—what are we doing in Ireland?"

"My young friend here must tell you that," replied the skipper, laughingly, as he laid his hand on my shoulder. "Let me present him to you—Mr. Burke, Lieutenant Brevix."

The lieutenant saluted me politely, and then, springing up, he jumped gayly on board of us, and shook our hands with great appearance of cordiality.

"They'll want to see you ashore, Antoine, as soon as may be; there are dispatches going off to-night for Paris, and they'll be glad to send the last accounts of the state of the channel."

"Light winds and no cruisers are all I have to tell them, then," said the skipper.

The Lieutenant now took him aside, and they conversed for some time in a low tone, during which I occupied myself by watching the sentinels who paraded incessantly to and fro along a low wooden pier that stretched out into the sea, and formed, with a promontory at some distance, a small harbor. Their watch seemed of the most vigilant, if I might judge from the low but continued cry which passed from mouth to mouth of "*Sentinelle, prenez garde à vous;*" while from each boat, across the harbor, a sing-song note chanted in response the monotonous sounds, "*bon quart!*" as each quarter of an hour stole past. These precautions against the approach of any strange craft extended, as I afterward learned, along the entire coast from Dieppe to Ostend; yet were they not sufficient to prevent frequent visits from the English spies, who penetrated into every quarter of the camp, and even had the hardihood to visit the theater of the town, and express loudly their disapprobation of the performance.

"You'd better come ashore with me, sir," said the Lieutenant. "Colonel Dorsenne will be glad to ask you some questions. What papers have you got?"

"None, save a few private letters," said I, somewhat confused at the question.

"No matter," said he, gayly. "I hear from Antoine you wish to join the service here. That wish is your best recommendation to the Colonel; he'll not trouble you for your reasons, I warrant you. Conduct Monsieur to the quartier-général," said the Lieutenant to a corporal, who, with his party of four men, stood awaiting at the landing-place the arrival of any one

from the boats; and in an instant, the men falling to each side of me, took their way along the pier. I could mark as we went that more than once their looks were bent on me with an expression of compassion and pity, which at the time I was at a loss to explain. I knew not then that the road we were taking was that which so often led to death, and that it was only on the very day before two Englishmen were shot for having ventured on shore without authority.

The *consigne* of the corporal passed us through one post after another, until we reached the open plain, over which now the night was falling fast. A lantern at some distance off marked the quarters of the officer on duty; and thither we directed our steps, and at last reached a small wooden hut, from within which the sounds of mirth and revelry proceeded. The voice of the sentinel who challenged us brought an officer to the door, who, the moment his eyes fell on me, stepped back, and, passing his hand hurriedly across his forehead, muttered, half inaudibly, "Another already!"

While he retired into an inner apartment, I had time to look at the singular decorations which adorned the walls of the antechamber; around on every side, and arranged like trophies, were grouped the weapons of different arms of the service, surmounted with some device emblematic of their peculiar character, or sometimes the mere record of some famous battle in which they had pre-eminently distinguished themselves. Here were the long, straight swords of the cuirassier crossed above the steel breastplate, and surmounted by the heavy helmet half hid in leopard skin, and bearing the almost effaced word "Arcole" in front; there was the short carbine of the voltigeur, over which hung the red cap and its gay gold tassel, with the embroidered motto, "*En avant,*" in gold letters; the long and graceful weapon of the lancer, the curved sabre of the *chasseur à cheval*, even the axe of the pioneer was not wanting, displaying at a glance some trait of every branch of the mighty force that bore the proud designation of "*La Grande Armée.*"

I was busily engaged inspecting these when the door opened, and an officer in full uniform appeared; his figure was above the middle size, strongly and squarely built, and his bronze features and high, bold forehead gave him a soldier-like air.

"Your name, sir," said he, quickly, as he drew himself up before me, and looked sternly in my face.

"Burke—Thomas Burke."

"Write it down, Auguste," said he, turning to a younger officer, who stood, pen in hand, behind him.

"Your rank or profession?"

"*Gentilhomme,*" said I, not knowing that the word expressed nobility.

"*Ah, pardieu,*" cried he, as he showed his white teeth in a grin. "Produce your papers, if you have any."

"I have nothing save those letters," said I, handing him those of De Meudon.

Scarce had his eye glanced over them, when I saw his color heighten and his cheek tremble.

"What!" cried he, "are you the same young Irishman who is mentioned here; the constant companion and friend of poor Charles? He was my schoolfellow; we were at Brienne together. What a mistake I was about to fall into. How did you come, and when?"

Before I could reply to any of his many questions, the naval officer I had met at the harbor entered, and delivered his report.

"Yes, yes; I know it all," said Dorsenne, hurriedly throwing his eye over it. "It's all right, perfectly right, Brevix. Let Capitaine Antoine be examined at the quartier-général. I'll take care of Monsieur here; and to begin—come and join us at supper."

Passing his arm familiarly over my shoulder, he led me into the adjoining room, where two other officers were seated at a table covered with silver dishes and numerous flasks of wine. A few words sufficed for my introduction, and a few glasses of champagne placed me as thoroughly at my ease as though I had passed my life amongst them, and never heard any other conversation than the last movement of the French army, and their projects for future campaigns.

"And so," said the Colonel, after hearing from me a short account of the events which had induced me to turn my eyes to France—"and so you'd be a soldier—*Eh bien*, I see nothing better going myself. There's Davernac will tell you the same, though he has lost his arm in the service."

"*Oui, pardieu,*" said the officer on my right, "I'm not the man to dissuade him from a career I've ever loved."

"*A vous, mon ami,*" said the young officer who first addressed me on my arrival, as he held out his glass and clinked it against mine. "I hope we shall have you one of these days as our guide through the dark streets of London. The time may not be so distant as you think. Never shake your head at it."

"It is not that I would mean," said I eagerly.

"What then?" said the Colonel. "You don't suppose such an expedition as ours could fail of success?"

"Nor that either," replied I. "I am not so presumptuous as to form an opinion on the subject."

"*Diantre*, then, what is it?"

"Simply this: that whatever fortune awaits me, I shall never be found fighting against the country under whose rule I was born. England may not—alas! she has not been—just to us. But whatever resistance I might have offered in the ranks of my countrymen, I shall never descend to in an invading army. No, no; if France have no other war than with England—if she have not the cause of continental liberty at heart—she'll have no blood of mine shed in her service."

"*Sacristi!*" said the Colonel, sipping his wine coolly, "you had better keep these same opinions of yours to yourself. There's a certain little general we have at Paris, who rarely permits people to reason about the cause of the campaign. However, it is growing late now, and we'll not discuss the matter at present. Auguste, will you take Burke to your quarters? and to-morrow I'll call on the General about his brevet for the Polytechnique."

I felt now that I had spoken more warmly than was pleasing to the party; but the sentiments I had announced were only such as in my heart I had resolved to abide by, and I was pleased that an opportunity so soon offered to display them. I was glad to find myself at rest at last; and although events pressed on me fast and thick enough to have occupied my mind, no sooner had I laid my head on my pillow, than I fell into a sound sleep.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE "ECOLE MILITAIRE."

Let me now skip over at a bound some twelve months of my life—not that they were to me without their chances and their changes, but they were such as are incidental to all boyhood—and present myself to my reader as the scholar at the "Polytechnique." What a change had the time, short as it was, worked in all my opinions; how completely had I unlearned all the teaching of my early instructor, poor Darby; how had I been taught to think that glory was the real element of war, and that its cause was of far less moment than its conduct.

The enthusiasm which animated every corps of the French army, and was felt through every fiber of the nation, had full sway in the little world of the military school. There, every battle was known and conned over; we called every spot of our playground by some name great in the history of glory; and among ourselves we assumed the titles of the heroes who shed such luster on their country; and thus in all our boyish sports our talk was of the Bridge of Lodi—Arcole—Rivoli—Castiglione—the Pyramids—Mount Tabor. While the names of Kléber, Kellerman, Masséna, Desaix, Murat, were adopted amongst us, but one name only remained unappropriated, and no one was bold enough to assume the title of him whose victories were the boast of every tongue. If this enthusiasm was general amongst us, I felt it in all its fullest force, for it came untinged with any other thought. To *me* there was neither home nor family—my days passed over in one unbroken calm; no thought of pleasure, no hope of happiness when the *fête* day came round; my every sense was wrapped up in the one great desire—to be a soldier—to have my name known among those great men whose fame was over Europe—to be remembered by him, whose slightest word of praise was honor itself. When should that day come for me? when should I see the career open before me?—these were my earliest waking thoughts, my last at nightfall.

If the intensity of purpose, the strong current of all my hopes, formed for me an ideal and a happy world within me, yet did it lend a trait of seriousness to my manner that seemed like melancholy; and while few knew less what it was to grieve, a certain sadness in me struck my companions, on which they often rallied me, but which I strove in vain to conquer. It was true that at certain times my loneliness and isolation came coldly on my heart; when one by one I saw others claimed by their friends, and hurrying away to some happy home, where some fond sister threw her arm around a brother's neck, or some doting mother clasped her son close to her bosom, and kissed his brow, a tear would find its way down my cheek, and I would hasten to my room, and, locking the door, sit down alone to think, till my sad heart grew weary, or my sterner nature rose within me, and, by an effort over myself, I turned to my studies and forgot all else. Meanwhile I made rapid progress; the unbroken tenor of my thoughts gave me a decided advan-

tage over the others, and long before the regular period arrived, the day for my final examination was appointed.

What a lasting impression do some passages of early life leave behind them! Even yet—and how many years are past!—how well do I remember all the hopes and fears that stirred my heart as the day drew near; how each morning at sunrise I rose to pore over some of the books which formed the subjects of examination; how, when the gray dawn was only breaking, have I bent over the pages of Vauban, and the calculations of Carnot, and with what a sinking spirit have I often found that a night seemed to have erased all the fruit of a long day's labor, and that the gain of my hard-worked intellect had escaped me; and then again, like magic, the lost thought would come back, my brain grow clear, and all the indistinct and shadowy conceptions assume a firm and tangible reality, which I felt like power. At such times as these my spirits rose, my heart beat high, a joyous feeling throbbed in every pulse, and an exhilaration almost maddening elevated me, and there was nothing I would not have dared—no danger I would not have confronted. Such were the attractions of my boyish days, and such the temperament they bequeathed to my manhood.

It was on the 16th of June, the anniversary of Marengo, when the drum beat to arms in the court of the Polytechnique, and soon after the scholars were seen assembling in haste from various quarters, anxious to learn if their prayer had been acceded to, which asked permission for them to visit the "Invalides," the usual indulgence on the anniversary of any great victory.

As we flocked into the court we were struck by seeing an orderly dragoon standing beside the head-master, who was eagerly perusing a letter in his hands; when he had concluded he spoke a few words to the soldier, who at once wheeled round his horse and trotted rapidly from the spot.

Again the drum rolled out, and the order was given to form in line; in an instant the command was obeyed, and we stood in silent expectation of the news which we perceived awaited us.

"*Messieurs les élèves,*" he began, when stillness was restored, "this day being the anniversary of the glorious battle of Marengo, the General Bonaparte has decreed that a review should be held of the entire school. Lieutenant-General d'Auvergne will arrive here at noon to inspect you, and on such reports as I shall give of your general conduct, zeal, and proficiency, will recommendations be forwarded to the First Consul for your promotion."

A loud cheer followed this speech. The announcement far surpassed our most ardent hopes, and there was no limit to our enthusiasm; and loud *vivas* in honor of General Bonaparte, D'Auvergne, and the head-master himself, were heard on all sides.

Scarcely was the breakfast over when our preparations began. What a busy scene it was: here, were some brushing up their uniforms, polishing their sword-hilts, and pipeclaying their cross-bets; there, might be seen others conning over the directions of field maneuvers, and refreshing their memory of the words of command; some, practiced marching in groups along the corridor; others, too much excited by the prospect before them, jumped madly from place to place, shouting and singing snatches of soldier songs; but all were occupied. As for me, it was only two days before I had obtained my grade of corporal; my new uniform had only just come home, and I put it on for the first time with no inconsiderable pride, indeed I could scarce turn my eyes, as I walked, from the stripes upon my arm that denoted my rank. Long before the appointed time we were all assembled, and when the clock struck twelve and the drum beat out, not a boy was absent; we were drawn up in three columns according to our standing, spaces being left between each to permit of our wheeling into line at the word of command. The head-master passed down our ranks, narrowly inspecting our equipments, and scrutinizing every detail of our costume; but a stronger impulse than ordinary was now at work, and not the slightest irregularity was anywhere detectable. Meanwhile the time passed on, and although every eye was directed to the long avenue of lime-trees by which the general must arrive, nothing moved along it; and the bright streaks of sunlight that peeped between the trees were unbroken by any passing shadow. Whispers passed along the ranks, some fearing he might have forgotten the whole appointment, others suspecting that another review elsewhere had engrossed his attention, and at last a half murmur of dissatisfaction crept through the mass, which only the presence of the *chef* restrained within due bonds. One o'clock struck, and yet no rider appeared; the alley remained silent and deserted as before, the minutes now seemed like hours—weariness and lassitude appeared everywhere. The ranks were broken, and many wandered from their posts, and

forgot all discipline. At last a cloud of dust was seen to rise at a distance, and gradually it approached the long avenue; every eye was turned in the direction, and in an instant the stragglers resumed their places, and all was attention and anxiety, while every look pierced eagerly the dense cloud, to see whether it was not the long-wished-for staff which was coming. At length the object burst upon our sight; but what was our disappointment to see that it was only a traveling carriage with four post-horses that approached; no appearance of a soldier was there, not one solitary dragoon —a half-uttered shout announced our dissatisfaction, for we at once guessed it was merely some chance visitor, or perhaps the friends of some of the scholars, who had thus excited our false hopes.

The *chef* himself participated in our feeling, and passing down the lines he announced, that if the General did not arrive within ten minutes, he would himself dismiss us, and set us at liberty. A cheer of gratitude received this speech, and we stood patiently awaiting our liberation, when suddenly, from the guard-house at the gate, the clash of arms was heard, and the roll of drums in salute, and the same instant the carriage we had seen rolled into the court-yard, and took up its station in the middle of the square. The next moment the door was opened and the steps lowered, and an officer in a splendid uniform assisted three ladies to alight. Before we recovered from the surprise of the proceeding, the master had approached the party, and by his air of deference and deep respect, denoted that they were no ordinary visitors; but our attention was quickly drawn from the group that now stood talking and laughing together, for already the clank of a cavalry escort was heard coming up the avenue, and we beheld the waving plumes and brilliant uniform of a general officer's staff advancing at a rapid trot. The drums now rolled out along the lines, we stood to arms—the gallant *cortège* turned into the court and formed in front of us. All eyes were fixed on the General himself, the perfect *beau idéal* of an old soldier. He sat his horse as firmly and gracefully as the youngest aide-de-camp of his suite; his long white hair, dressed in queue behind, was brushed back off his high broad forehead; his clear blue eye, mild yet resolute, glanced over our ranks, and as he bowed to the head-master, his whole gesture and bearing was worthy of the court of which once he was a brilliant member.

"I have kept my young friends waiting for me," said he, in a low but clear voice, "and it now remains for me to make the only *amende* in my power—a short inspection. Dorsenne, will you take the command?"

I started at the name, and looked round, and close beside him stood the same officer who had so kindly received me the day I landed in France; though he looked at me, however, I saw he did not remember me, and my spirits sank again as I thought how utterly friendless and alone I was.

The General was true to his word in making the inspection as brief as possible; he rode leisurely down the ranks, stopping from time to time to express his satisfaction, or drop some chance word of encouragement or advice, which we caught up with eagerness and delight. Forming us into line, he ordered his aide-de-camp to put us through some of the ordinary parade maneuvers, which we knew as thoroughly as the most disciplined troops. During all this time, the group of ladies maintained their position in front, and seemed to watch the review with every semblance of interest. The General, too, made one of the party, and appeared from time to time to explain the intended movement, and direct their attention to the scene.

"Let them march past in salute," said he, at length; "the poor fellows have had enough of it; I must not encroach on the entire holiday."

A unanimous cheer was the reply to this kind speech, and we formed in sections and marched by him at a quick-step. The *chef d'école* had now approached the staff, and was making his report on the boys, when the General again interrupted him by saying,

"Madame has expressed a wish to see the boys at their usual exercise of the play hour. If the request be admissible—"

"Certainly, *mon Général*, of course," said he. And, stepping forward, he beckoned to one of the drummers to come near, he whispered a word, and the tattoo beat out, and, like magic, every one sprang from his ranks, caps were flung into the air, and *vivas* rung out from every quarter of the court.

The sudden transition from discipline to perfect liberty added to our excitement, and we became half wild with delight. The first mad burst of pleasure over, we turned, as if by instinct, to our accustomed occupations: here were seen a party collecting for a drill, officers gathering and arranging their men, and sergeants assisting in the muster; there were others, armed with spades and shovels, at work on an entrench-

ment, while some were driving down stockades and fixing a palisade; another set, more peaceful in their pursuits, had retired to their little gardens, and were busy with watering-pots and trowels. The section I belonged to were the seniors of the school, and we had erected a kind of fort which it was our daily amusement to defend and attack, the leadership on either side being determined by lots. On this day the assault had fallen to my command, and I hurried hither and thither collecting my forces, and burning for the attack.

We were not long in assembling, and the garrison having announced their readiness by the display of a flag from the ramparts, the assault began. I know not why nor wherefore, but on this day my spirits were unusually high; it was one of those chance occasions when my temperament, heated and glowing, had elevated me in my own esteem, and I would have given my life for some opportunity of distinguishing myself.

I led my party on, then, with more than common daring, and though repulsed by the besieged, we fell back only for a moment, and returned to the assault determined to succeed; the others, animated by the same spirit, fought as bravely, and the cheers that rose from one side were replied to by shouts as full of defiance from the other. Heated and excited, I turned round to order an attack of my whole force, when, to my surprise, I beheld that the General and his staff, accompanied by the ladies, had taken their places a short distance off, and were become interested spectators of the siege. This alone was wanting to stimulate my efforts to the utmost, and I now returned to the fight with tenfold impetuosity. But if this feeling animated me, it also nerved my antagonists, for their resistance rose with every moment, and as they drove us back from their walls, cheers of triumph rang out and proclaimed the victory.

Already the battle had lasted nearly an hour, and all that was obtained was a slight breach in one of the outworks, too small to be practicable for assault. In this state were matters when the sound of a cavalry escort turned every eye toward the entrance to the court-yard, where we now beheld a squadron of the *Lanciers rouges* following a numerous and brilliant staff of general officers. Scarcely had they entered the gates when a loud cry rent the air, and every voice shouted, "*C'est lui! C'est lui!*" and the next moment, "*Vive Bonaparte! vive le Premier Consul!*" All that I had ever heard from poor De Meudon came rushing on my mind, and my heart swelled out till it seemed bursting my very bosom. The next instant my eye turned to the little fort; the moment was propitious, for there every cap was waving, every look bent toward *him*. I seized the opportunity, and pointing silently to the breach, stole forward; in a second I was beneath the grassy rampart, in another I reached the breach, the next brought me to the top, where, with a shout of victory, I called on my men to follow me. On they came rushing—but too late; already the garrison were upon me, and, overcome by numbers, I fought alone and unsupported; step by step they drove me to the edge of the rampart, already my foot was on the breach, when with a spring I dashed at the flag-staff and carried it with me as I fell headlong into the ditch. In a moment I was on my legs, but so stunned and crushed that I fell almost immediately again; cold perspiration broke over my face and forehead, and I should have fainted but that they dashed some water over me. As I lay sick and faint I lifted my eyes, and what was my amazement to see, not the little companions of the school about me, but the gorgeous uniform of staff officers, and two elegantly-dressed ladies, one of whom held a cup of water in her hand and sprinkled it over my brow. I looked down upon my torn dress, and the sleeve of my coat where the marks of my rank were already half effaced, and I felt the tears start into my eyes as the remembrance of my late failure crossed my mind; at the instant the crowd opened, and a pale but handsome face, where command was tempered by a look of almost womanly softness, smiled upon me.

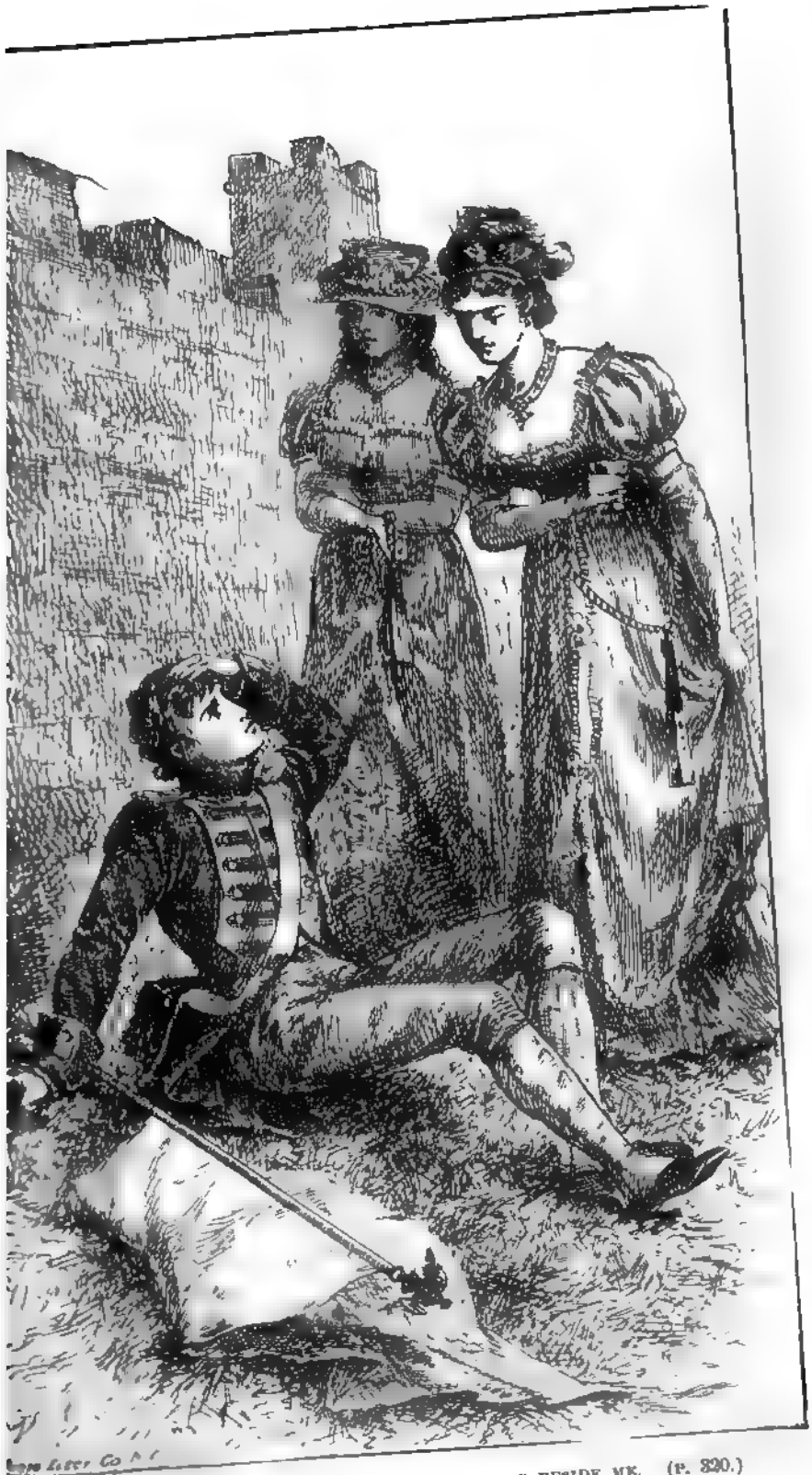
"*C'était bien fait, mon enfant,*" said he, "*très bien fait,* and if you have lost a coat by the struggle, why I must even see if I can't give you another to replace it. Monsieur Legrange, what is the character of this boy in the school? Is he diligent, zealous, and well conducted?"

"All of the three, General," said the *chef*, bowing obsequiously.

"Let him have his brevet; to date from to-day. Who are his friends?"

A whispered answer replied to this inquiry.

"Indeed!" said the first speaker; "reason the more we should take care of him. Monsieur," continued he, turning toward me, "to-morrow you shall have your epaulettes; never forget how you gained them, and remember ever that every grade in the service is within the reach of a brave man who does his duty." So saying he passed



I LOOKED UP AND THERE WERE TWO LADIES STANDING BESIDE ME. (P. 320.)

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on, while overcome by emotion I could not speak or move.

"There, he is much better now," said a soft voice near me; "you see his color is coming back." I looked up, and there were two ladies standing beside me. The elder was tall and elegantly formed; her figure, which in itself was most graceful, looked to its full advantage by the splendor of her dress: there was an air of stateliness in her manner, which had seemed *hauteur*, were it not for a look of most benevolent softness that played about her mouth whenever she spoke. The younger, who might in years have seemed her daughter, was in every respect unlike her: she was slight and delicately formed, her complexion and her black eyes, shaded by a long dark fringe, bespoke the Provençal, her features were beautifully regular, and when at rest, completely Greek in their character; but each moment some chance word, some passing thought, implanted a new expression, and the ever-varying look of her flashing eyes, and full round lips, played between a smile and that arch spirit that essentially belongs to the fair daughters of the South. It was not until my fixed gaze had brought a deep blush to her cheek, that I felt how ardently I had been looking at her.

"Yes, yes," said she, hurriedly, "he's quite well now," and at the same moment she made a gesture of impatience to pass on. But the elder held her arm close within her own, as she whispered with something of half malice—"But stay, Marie, I should like to hear his name. Ah!" cried she, starting in affected surprise, "how flushed you are; there must be something in the air here, so we had better proceed." And with a soft smile and a courteous motion of her hand she passed on.

I looked after them as they went; a strange, odd feeling stirred within my heart—a kind of wild joy with a mingled sense of hope too vague to catch at. I watched the drooping feather of her bonnet, and the folds of her dress as they fluttered in the wind, and when she disappeared from my sight, I could scarce believe that she was not still beside me, and that her dark eyes did not look into my very soul. But already my companions crowded about me, and amid a hundred warm congratulations and kind wishes I took my way back to the college.

Scarcely was breakfast over the following morning, when the order arrived for my removal from the scholar quarter of the Polytechnique to that occupied by the *cadets*. A small tri-colored cockade affixed to my hat was the only emblem of my new rank; but simple as it was, no decoration ever attracted more envy and admiration from the beholders, nor gave more pride to the wearer, than that knot of ribbon.

"At number thirteen you'll find your quarters, *Monsieur le Cadet*," said a sergeant, as he presented me with the official order. I remember at this very hour what a thrill his military salute sent through me. It was the first acknowledgment of my grade—the first recognition that I was no longer a mere schoolboy. I had not much time granted me to indulge such sensations, for already my schoolfellows had thronged round me, and overwhelmed me with questions and felicitations.

"Ah! what a fortunate fellow—no examination to go through—has his grade given him without toiling for it—is it the cavalry, Burke—are you *à cheval*—when do you join?—where is your regiment?—shall we see you again?—won't you write to us all about the corps when you join them?—who is your comrade?—yes, tell us that; who is he?"

"*Ma foi*," said I, "I know not more than yourselves. You are all aware to what an accident I owe my promotion. Where I am destined for, or in what corps, I can't tell; and as to my comrade—"

"Ah! take care he's no tyrant," said one.

"Yes, yes," cried another—"show him you-know what a small sword is at once."

"Burke won't be trifled with," cried a third.

And then followed a very chorus of voices, each detailing some atrocity committed by the *cadets* on their newly-joined associates. One had a friend wounded in the side the very day he joined; another knew some one who was thrown out of a window; here was an account of a delicate boy who passed an entire night in the snow, and died of a chest disease three weeks after; there, a victim to intemperance met his fate in the orgie that celebrated his promotion. This picture, I confess, did somewhat damp the ardor of my first impressions; and I took leave of my old friends with not less feeling of affection, that I doubted how much kindness and good feeling I had to expect from my new ones. In this mood of mind I shook their hands for the last time, and followed the soldier who carried my baggage to the distant quarter of the *école*. As I entered the large court by the richly ornamented gate, whose bronzed tracery and handsome carving dated from the time of Louis XIV., my heart swelled with conscious pride. The *façade* of the square, unlike the simple

front of the scholars' quarters, was beautifully architectural; massive consoles supported the windows, and large armorial insignia, cut on stone, surmounted the different entrances: but what most captivated my spirits and engaged my attention was a large flag in the center, from which waved the broad ensign of France, beside which a sentinel paced to and fro. He presented arms as I passed; and the click of his musket, as he stood erect, sent a thrill through me, and made my very fingers tingle with delight.

"This is number thirteen, sir," said the soldier, as we arrived in front of one of the doorways; and before I could reply, the door opened, and a young officer, in the uniform of an infantry regiment, appeared. He was about to pass out, when his eye resting on the luggage the soldier had just placed beside him, he stopped suddenly, and, touching his cap, asked, in a polite tone,

"Not Mr. Burke, is it?"

"Yes," said I, bowing in return.

"*Eh, mon camarade,*" said he, holding out his hand, "delighted to see you. Have you breakfasted? Well, you'll find all ready for you in the quarters. I shall be back soon. I'm only going to a morning drill, which won't last half an hour; so make yourself at home, and we'll meet soon again."

So saying, he once more saluted me, and passed on. "Not very like what I feared," thought I, as I entered the quarters, whose look of neatness and comfort so pleasantly contrasted with my late abode. I had barely time to look over the prints and maps of military subjects which ornamented the walls, when my new friend made his appearance.

"No parade to-day, thank Heaven," said he, throwing down his cap and sabre, and lolling at full length on the little camp sofa. "Now, *mon cher camarade,* let us make acquaintance at once, for our time is likely to be of the shortest. My name is Tascher, an humble sous-lieutenant of the 21st Regiment of Foot. As much a stranger in this land as yourself, I fancy," continued he, after a slight pause, "but very well contented to be adopted by it."

After this opening, he proceeded to inform me that he was the nephew of Madame Bonaparte—her sister's only son—who, at his mother's death, left Guadaloupe, and came over to France, and became an *élève* of the Polytechnique. There he had remained five years, and, after a severe examination, obtained his brevet in an infantry corps; his uncle Bonaparte having shown him no other favor nor affection than a severe reprimand on one occasion for some boyish freak, when all the other delinquents escaped scot free.

"I am now under orders for service," said he; "but where for, and when, I can't tell. But this I know, that whatever good fortune may be going a-begging, I, Lieutenant Tascher, am very likely to get only the hem of the garment."

There was a tone of easy and frank good-nature in all he said, which at once disposed me to like the young creole; and we spent the whole afternoon recounting our various adventures and fortunes, and before night came on were sworn friends for life.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE "TUILERIES" IN 1808.

THE life of the cadet differed little from that of the schoolboy. The same routine of study, the same daily round of occupation and duty were his. Until drafted to the particular corps to which he might be appointed, he only could absent himself from the college by special leave; and the most rigid of all military discipline prevailed during the brief interval which was to fit him for the arduous life of a soldier. The evenings, however, were at our disposal; and what a pleasure it was—the fatigue of the day over—to wander forth into the city—that brilliant Paris—near which I had lived so long, and yet had seen so little of.

At first the splendor of the shops, the unceasing flow of population, the might and grandeur of the public buildings, attracted all my attention; and when these wore off in novelty, I could still wander with delight through the gay gardens of the Tuileries, and watch the sparkling fountains as they splashed in the pale moonlight, and look upon the happy children who played about them, their merry laughter ringing through the water's plash. What a fairy scene it was to watch the groups as they passed and repassed—came and went, and disappeared—amid those dark alleys, where the silent footstep did not mar the sounds of happy voices; and then, how have I turned from these, to throw a wistful glance toward the palace windows, where some half-closed curtain, from time to time, would show the golden sparkle of a brilliant luster, or the rich frame of a mirror; mayhap an open sash would for a moment display some fair form.

the outline only seen as she leaned on the balcony, and drank in the balmy air of the mild evening, while the soft swell of music would float from the gorgeous saloon, and falling on my ear, set me a-dreaming of pleasures my life had never known. My utter loneliness pressed deeper on me every day; for, while each of my companions had friends and relatives, among whom their evenings were passed, I was friendless and alone. The narrowness of my means —I had nothing save my pay—prevented my frequenting the theater, or even accepting such invitations as the other cadets pressed upon me; and thus for hours long have I sat and watched the windows of the palace, weaving to myself stories of that ideal world from which my humble fortune debarred me.

It had been years since the Tuileries exhibited anything resembling the state that formerly prevailed in that splendid palace; but, at the period I speak of, Bonaparte had just been chosen Consul for life, and already the organization of his household had undergone a most considerable alteration. In the early years of the Consulate, a confused assemblage of aides-de-camp, whose heavy gait and loud speech betokened less the court than the camp, were the only attendants on his person. He lived in the center pavilion, as if in a tent in the midst of his army; but now he inhabited the splendid suite of rooms to the left of the pavilion, *de l'horloge*, as it is called, which stretch away toward the river. The whole service of the palace was remodeled; and, without wounding those prejudices that attached to the times of the deposed monarchy by adopting the titles of chamberlain, or gentlemen of the chamber, he gradually instituted the ceremonial of a Court by preferring to the posts about his person those whose air and manners savored most of the higher habitudes of society, and whose families were distinguished among the *noblesse* of the kingdom.

Duroc, the chief aide-de-camp of the General, was appointed governor of the palace; and it was said that the Consul himself studied all the ancient ceremonial of the old Court, and ordained that every etiquette of royalty should be resumed with the most unerring accuracy. The chamberlains were represented by prefects of the palace, and Josephine had her ladies of honor, like any princess of the blood royal.

The Consul, still imitating the observances of the Bourbons, had his *petits levers* and his grand receptions; and if the new-created functionaries possessed little of the courteous ease and high-bred habitudes of the old Court, there was in their hard-won honors—most of them promoted on the very field of battle—that which better suited the prejudices of the period, and scarcely less became the gilded saloons of the Tuileries.

Like all newly organized societies, the machinery worked ill at first. Few, if any of them, had ever seen a court; and the proud but yet respectful obedience which characterized the French gentleman in the presence of his sovereign was converted into an obsequious and vulgar deference toward Bonaparte, equally opposite to the true type, as it was foreign to the habits of the blunt soldier who proffered it. But what, after all, signified these blemishes? There was beauty—never in the brighter annals of France had more lovely women filled those gorgeous saloons; there was genius—heroism—the highest chivalry of the great nation could scarce vie with the proud deeds of those grouped around him—the mighty one, on whom each eye was fixed; and if, as M. Talleyrand remarked, there were those who knew not how to walk on the waxed floor of a palace, few could tread more finely the field of battle, and step with firmer foot the path that led to glory. Yet with all the First Consul's pride in those whose elevation to rank and dignity was his own work, his predilections leaned daily more and more toward the high and polished circles of the Faubourg St. Germain. The courteous and easy politeness of Talleyrand, the chivalrous and courtly bearing of the Count de Narbonne, and the graceful elegance of Segur's manners, formed too striking a contrast with the soldier-like rudeness of the newly-promoted generals, not to make a profound impression on one who could, in the deepest and weightiest concerns of life, take into calculation the most minute and trivial circumstances.

This disparity, remarkable as it was among the men, was still more so in the ladies of the Court, few of those newly elevated having tact enough either to imitate successfully the polished usages of the old nobility, or resolution sufficient to maintain their original habits without blushing at their own want of breeding.

If I have been led somewhat from the current of my own story by this digression, it is merely that I may passingly note down some of the features of the period—one of the most remarkable in the history of modern Europe, and one which already, to the far-seeing eye of some, betokened the speedy return to these very institutions of monarchy, to uproot which cost the last

blood of France, and a revolution the most terrific the world has ever witnessed.

And now, looking back on the great career of that great man, no portion of his history can, perhaps, present anything to compare with the splendor of the Consulate. A long succession of victories—the spoils of half Europe—glory to very satiety had intoxicated the nation—a country flourishing in every element of prosperity—social order restored—a high position amid surrounding nations—and everything that could gratify national ambition obtained—France stood at the very pinnacle of her greatness. Even the splendor of those names who represented the various states of Europe at her Court seemed to attest her supremacy. The stately and polished Whitworth, conspicuous by the elegance of his appearance and the perfection of his aristocratic bearing; the Russian Ambassador, Marcoff; the Chevalier Azara, the Minister of Spain, the Courtier of Europe; Baron de Cetto, the Envoy of Saxony, one of the most distinguished, both by manners and ability, in the whole diplomatic circle, were among those who frequented the First Consul's levees, which already, in the splendor of costume and the gorgeous display of uniform, rivaled the most sumptuous days of the monarchy.

All the long forgotten ceremonial of a Court was restored. Dinners, most splendid in all the array of pomp and grandeur, were given every week; *fêtes*, that vied with the luxurious era of Louis XIV. himself, took place frequently; and Paris became the rendezvous for all Europe, curious to behold the rich trophies of successful wars, and mix in the delight of a capital where pleasure reigned triumphant.

The theater presented an array of genius and talent hitherto unequaled. Talma and Mademoiselle Mars were in the very zenith of their fame, and obtained a large share of Bonaparte's favor, whose tastes were eminently dramatic. In a word, a new era had commenced, and every class and walk, every condition of man, seemed resolved to recompense itself, by the pursuit of pleasure, for the long and dark night of trouble through which it had passed.

While, therefore, the Court of the First Consul partook of such features as those, the circle of Josephine possessed attractions totally different. There, amid her intimate friends, all the charm and fascination of French society held sway; each evening saw assembled round her the wittiest and most polished persons of the day; the gay and spirited talkers who so pre-eminently gave the tone to Parisian society; the handsomest women, and the most distinguished of the *littérateurs* of the period, found ready access to one whose own powers of pleasing have left an undying impression on some who even still can recall these delightful moments. Such were, in brief, the leading features of the Court then held in the Tuileries, and such the germ of that new order of things which was so soon to burst forth upon astonished Europe, under the proud title of The Empire.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A SURPRISE.

I WAS sitting one evening alone in my quarters, an open volume before me, in which I persuaded myself I was reading, while my thoughts were far otherwise engaged, when my comrade Tascher suddenly entered the room, and throwing himself into a chair, exclaimed, in a tone of passionate impatience,

"*Pardieu!* it is a fine thing to be nephew to the first man in France!"

"What has happened?" said I, when I perceived that he stopped short without explaining further.

"What has happened!—enough to drive one mad. Just hear this. You know how fond I am of Paris, and how naturally I must wish to be near the Tuileries, where I have the *entrée* to my aunt's soirées. Well, there was a vacancy occurred yesterday in the *huitième* hussars—a corps always stationed here or at Versailles—and as I am longing to have a cavalry grade, I waited on Madame Bonaparte to solicit her interest in my favor. She promised of course. The General was to breakfast with her, and it was all settled. She was to ask him for the promotion; and I had not a doubt of success. In fact, if I must confess, I told two or three of my friends, and actually received their congratulations. It so fell out, however, that he did not come to breakfast, nor dinner either—there's no knowing that man; but what think you, he walked in, this evening, just as we were preparing to act a proverb. Such a scene as it was, to be sure. No one expected him. Most of us were dressed up in costumes of one kind or other; and I, *ma foi*, ridiculous enough, I suppose—I was costumed like a galley-slave. He stood for a second or two at the door with his arms folded, and his stern eyes wandering over the whole room. There was not one

amongst us would not have wished himself many a mile away: even my aunt herself seemed quite confused, and blushed, and grew pale, and blushed again.

"'Ha!' cried he at last, in his dry, short voice. 'Pardon, ladies and gentlemen, I have made a mistake—I believed I was in the palace of the Tuileries, and I find this is the Porte St. Martin.'

"'*Fi donc*, Bonaparte!' cried my aunt, blushing, while with one of her sweetest smiles she endeavored to bring him back to good humor. 'See how you have frightened Madame de Narbonne—she'll never be able to play the miller's wife; and Marie here, her tears will wash away all her rouge.'

"'And this amiable gentleman—what is to become of him?' said he, interrupting her, while he laid his hand on my shoulder, and I stood trembling like a culprit beside him.

"'Ah, there!—that's Tascher,' said she laughingly; and as if happy to escape from her greater embarrassment by any means, she continued: 'Your question comes, indeed, quite *à propos*. I have a request to make in his favor; there's a vacancy in the *huitième*, I think it is—eh, Edward?' I nodded slightly, for if my life depended on it, I could not have uttered a word. 'Now, I am sure he's been sous-lieutenant long enough, and in the infantry too.'

"'Can you ride well, sir?' said he, turning to me with a half frown on his pale face.

"'Yes, General,' replied I, with my heart almost choking me as I spoke.

"'Well, sir, you shall be employed, and in a service worthy your present tastes, if I may judge from your costume. A detachment of prisoners is to march to-morrow from this for the Bagne de Brest—hold yourself in readiness to accompany the military escort. Go, sir, and report yourself to your colonel.' He waved his hand when he had finished, and how I left the room, reached the street, and found myself here, hang me if I can tell you."

"And is there no help for this? must you really go?" said I, compassionating the dejected and sorrow-struck expression of the youth.

"Must I go! *Ma foi*, you know little of this dear uncle of mine, if you ask such a question. When once his mind's made up, anything like an attempt to argue only confirms his resolve. The best thing now is, to obey and say nothing; for if my aunt remonstrates, I may spend my life in garrison there over the galley-slaves."

A knocking at the outer door interrupted our conversation at this moment, and a corporal of the staff entered with a dispatch-bag at his waist.

"Sous-Lieutenant Tascher," said he, touching his cap, and presenting a large official-looking letter to my companion, who threw it from him on the table, and turned away to hide his confusion. "Monsieur Burke," said the corporal, withdrawing another ominous document from his leathern pouch.

"*Diantre!*" cried Tascher, turning quickly about, "have I got you into a scrape as well as myself? I remember now the General asked me who was my 'comrade.'"

I took the paper with a trembling hand, and tore it open. The first line was all I could read; it was a war-office official, appointing me to the vacant commission in the *huitième* hussars.

Tascher's hand shook as he leaned on my shoulder, and I could feel a convulsive twitching of his fingers as his agitation increased; but in a second or two he recovered his self-command, and taking my hand within both of his, he said, while the large tears were starting from his eyes,

"I'm glad it's you, Burke," and then turned away, unable to say more.

It was some time before I could bring myself to credit my good fortune. Had I been free to choose, I could have desired nothing better nor more to my liking; and when I succeeded at length, then came my embarrassment at my poor friend's disappointment, which must have been still more poignant as contrasted with my success. Tascher, however, had all the creole warmth of temperament. The first burst over, he really enjoyed the thought of my promotion; and we sat up the entire night talking over plans for the future, and making a hundred resolves for contingencies, some of which never arose, and many, when they came, suggested remedies of their own.

At day-break my comrade's horses came to the door, and a mounted orderly attended to accompany him to the prison where the convoy were assembled. We shook hands again and again. He was leaving what had been his home for years, Paris—the gay and brilliant city, in whose pleasures he had mixed, and whose fascinations he had tasted. I was parting from one with whom I had lived in a friendship as close as can subsist between two natures essentially different—we both were sad.

"Adieu, Burke!" said he, as he waved his hand for the last time. "I hope you'll command the *huitième* when next we meet."

I hurried into the quarters, which already seemed lonely and deserted, so soon does desolation throw its darkening shadow before it. The sword that had hung above the chimney crosswise on my own was gone; the shako, too, and the pistols were missing; the vacant chair stood opposite to mine; and the isolation I felt became so painful, that I wandered out into the open air, glad to escape the sight of objects, every one of which only suggested how utterly alone I stood in the world, when the departure of one friend had left me companionless.

No one save he who has experienced it can form any just idea of the intense hold a career of any kind will take of the mind of him who, without the ties of country, of kindred, and of friends, devotes all his energies in one direction. The affections that might, under other influences, have grown up—the hopes that might have flourished in the happy sphere of a home, become the springs of a more daring ambition. In proportion as he deserts other roads in life, the path he has struck out for himself seems wider and grander, and his far-seeing eye enables him to look into the long distance with a prophetic vision, where are rewards for his hard-won victories, the recompense of long years of toil. The pursuit, become a passion, gradually draws all into its vortex; and that success which at first he believed only attainable by some one mighty effort, seems at last to demand every energy of his life and every moment of his existence; and as the miser would deem his ruin near, should the most trifling opportunity of gain escape him, so does the ambitious man feel that every incident in life must be made tributary to the success which is his Mammon. It was thus I thought of the profession of arms; my whole soul was in it; no other wish, no other hope, divided my heart; that passion reigned there alone. How often do we find it in life that the means become the end, that the effort we employ to reach an object takes hold upon our fancy, gains hourly upon our affections, and at length usurps the place of what before had been our idol. As a boy, liberty, the bold assertion of my country's rights, stirred my heart, and made me wish to be a soldier. As years rolled on, the warlike passion sank deeper and deeper in my nature; the thirst for glory grew upon me, and, forgetting all save that, I longed for the time when, on the battle-field, I should win my way to fame and honor. In this wise were my musings, as I loitered homeward and entered my quarters. A sealed packet, addressed Sous-Lieutenant Burke—how that humble title made my heart beat—lay on my table. Supposing it referred to my new appointment, I sat down to con it over at my leisure; but no sooner had I torn open the envelope than a card fell to the ground. I took it up hastily, and read, "*D'après l'ordre de Madame Bonaparte, j'ai l'honneur de vous inviter à une soirée—*" "What!" cried I, aloud, "*me!*—invite me to the Palace! There must be some mistake here." And I turned again to the envelope, where my name was legibly written, with my grade, and the number of my new corps. There could be no doubt of it, and yet was it still inexplicable; I that was so perfectly alone, a stranger, without a friend, save among the humble ranks of the school, how came such a distinction as this to be conferred on me! I thought of Tascher; but then we had lived months together, and such a thing had never been even alluded to. The more I reflected on it, the greater became my difficulty; and in a maze of confusion and embarrassment I passed the day in preparation for the evening, for, as was customary at the period, the invitations for small parties were issued on the very mornings themselves. My first care was to look after the uniform of my new corps, in which I knew I must appear. My last remaining bank note, the sole survivor of my little stock of wealth, was before me, and I sat calculating with myself the costly outlay of a hussar dress, the full uniform of which had not till now entered into my computation. Never was my ingenuity more sorely tried than in the endeavor to bring the outlay within the narrow limits of my little purse; and when, at length, I would think that all had been remembered, some small but costly item would rise up against me, and disconcert all my calculations.

At noon I set out to wait on my new colonel, whose quarters were in the Place Vendôme. The visit was a short and not over pleasant one; a crowd of officers filled the rooms, among whom I edged my way with difficulty toward the place where Colonel Marbois was standing. He was a short, thick-set, vulgar-looking man, of about fifty; his moustache and whiskers meeting above the lip, and his bushy, black beard below, gave him the air of a pioneer, which his harsh Breton accent did not derogate from.

"*Ah, c'est vous!*" said he, as my name was announced; "you'll have to learn in future, sir, that officers of your rank are not received at the levees of their colonel. You hear me; report yourself to the *chef*

d'escadron, however, who will give you your orders; and mark me, sir, let this be the last day you are seen in that uniform."

A short and not very gracious nod concluded the audience, and I took my leave not the less abashed, that I could mark a kind of half smile on most of the faces about me as I withdrew from the crowd. Scarcely in the street, however, when my heart felt light and my step elastic. I was a sous-lieutenant of hussars, and if I did my duty what cared I for the smiles and frowns of my colonel; and had not the General Bonaparte himself told me "that no grade was too high for the brave man who did so."

I can scarcely avoid a smile even yet as I call to mind the awe I felt on entering the splendid shop of Monsieur Crillac, the fashionable tailor of those days, whose plate-glass windows and showy costumes formed the standing-point for many a lounger around the corner of the Rue de Richelieu and the Boulevard. His saloon, as he somewhat ostentatiously called it, was the rendezvous for the idlers of a fashionable world, who spent their mornings canvassing the last gossip of the city, and devising new extravagances in dress. The morning papers, caricatures, prints of fashions, patterns of waistcoats, and new devices for buttons, were scattered over a table, round which, in every attitude of indolence and ease, were stretched some dozen of the exquisites of the period, engaged in that species of half *ennui*, half conversation, that forms a considerable part of the existence of your young men of fashion of every age and every country. Their frock-coats of light cloth, high-collared, and covered with buttons; their *bottes à revers* reaching only mid-leg, and met there by a tight *pantalon collant;* their hair studiously brushed back off their foreheads, and worn long, though not in *queue* behind, bespoke them as the most accurate types of the mode.

The appearance of a youth in the simple uniform of the Polytechnique in such a place seemed to excite universal astonishment. Such a phenomenon apparently had never been witnessed before; and as they turned fully round to stare at me, it was clear they never deemed that any mark of rudeness could be felt by one so humble as I was. Monsieur Crillac himself, who was sipping his glass of *eau sucrée*, with one arm leaning on the chimney-piece, never deigned to pay me other attention than a half smile, as, with a voice of most patronizing softness, he lisped out:

"What can we do for you here, Monsieur?"

Apparently the answer to this question was a matter of interest to the party, who suddenly ceased talking to listen.

"I wish to order a uniform," said I, summoning up all my resolution not to seem abashed. "This is a tailor's, if I don't mistake?"

"Monsieur is quite correct," replied the imperturbable proprietor, whose self-satisfied smile became still more insulting, "but perhaps not exactly what you seek for. Gentlemen who wear your cloth seldom visit us."

"No, Crillac," interrupted one of the bystanders; "I never heard that you advertised yourself as fashioner to the Polytechnique, or tailor in ordinary to the corps of Pompiers."

"You are insolent, sir," said I, turning fiercely round upon the speaker. The words were scarce spoken, when the party sprang to their legs; some endeavoring to restrain the temper of the young man addressed, others, pressing around, called on me to apologize on the spot for what I had said.

"No, no: let us have his name—his name," said three or four in a breath. "De Beauvais will take the punishment into his own hands."

"Be advised, young gentleman; unsay your words, and go your way," said an elder one of the party, while he added, in a whisper, "De Beauvais has no equal in Paris with the small sword."

"There is my address," said I, seizing a pen, and writing on a piece of paper before me.

"Ha!" said De Beauvais, as he threw his eye on the writing, "he has got his grade, it seems—all the better that; I half shrunk from the ridicule of an affair with a cadet. So you are serious about this?"

"Sir!" said I, all my efforts being barely enough to repress my rising passion.

"Well, well—enough about it. To-morrow morning—the Bois de Boulogne—the rapier. You understand me, I suppose?"

I nodded, and was about to leave the place, when I remembered that, in my confusion, I had neither asked my antagonist's name nor rank. "And you, sir," said I, "may I have the honor to learn who you are?"

"*Pardieu!* my young friend," cried one of the others, "the information will not strengthen your nerves; but if you will have it, he is the Marquis De Beauvais, and tolerably well known in that little locality where he expects to meet you to-morrow."

"Till then, sir," replied I, touching my cap, as I turned into the street—not, how-

ever, before a burst of laughter rang through the party at a witticism of which I was the object, and the latter part of which only could I catch. It was De Beauvais who spoke. "In which case, Crillac, another artist must take his measure." The allusion could not be mistaken, and, I confess, I did not relish it like the others.

I should, I fear, have fallen very low in the estimate of my companions and associates could the real state of my heart at that moment have been laid open to them. It was, I freely own, one of great depression. But an hour ago, and life was opening before me with many a bright and cheerful hope; and now, in an instant, was my fortune clouded. Let me not be misunderstood; among the rules of the Polytechnique dueling was strictly forbidden; and although numerous transgressions occurred, so determined was the head of the Government to put down the practice, that the individuals thus erring were either reduced in rank, or their promotion stopped for a considerable period; while the personal displeasure of General Bonaparte rarely failed to show itself with reference to them. Now, it was clear to me that some unknown friend, some secret well-wisher, had interested himself in my humble fate—that I owed my newly-acquired rank to his kindness and good offices. What, then, might I not be forfeiting by this unhappy rencontre? Was it not more than likely that such an instance of misconduct, the very day of my promotion, might determine the whole tenor of my future career? What misrepresentation might not gain currency about my conduct? These were sad reflections, indeed, and every moment but increased them.

When I reached the college, I called on one of my friends; but not finding him in his quarters, I wrote a few lines, begging he would come over to me the moment he returned. This done, I sat down alone, to think over my adventure, and devise, if I could, some means to prevent its publicity, or, if not that, its being garbled and misstated. Hour after hour rolled past—my wandering thoughts took no note of time—and the deep-toned bell of the Polytechnique struck eight before I was aware the day was nearly over. Nine was the hour mentioned on my card of invitation; it flashed suddenly on me. What was to be done? I had no uniform save that of the "*école.*" Such a costume in such a place would, I feared, be considered too ridiculous; yet to absent myself altogether was impossible. Never was I in such a dilemma. All my endeavors to rescue myself were fruitless; and at last, worn out with the conflict of my doubts and fears, I stepped into the fiacre and set out for the Palace.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE "PAVILLON DE FLORE."

As my humble carriage slackened its pace to a walk on approaching the Place Carousel, I for the first time perceived that the open space around was thronged with equipages, moving slowly along in line toward the gate of the Palace. A picket of dragoons was drawn up at the great archway, and mounted *gendarmes* rode up and down to preserve order in the crowd. Before me stretched the long *façade* of the Tuileries, now lighted up in its entire extent. The rich hangings and costly furniture could be seen even where I was.

What a sinking sense of shame overwhelmed me as I thought of my humble position amid that mighty concourse of all that was great and illustrious in France; and how I shrunk within myself as I thought of the poor scholar of the Polytechnique—for such my dress proclaimed me—mixing with the most distinguished diplomatists and generals of Europe. The rebuke I had met with from my colonel in the morning was still fresh in my recollection, and I dreaded something like a repetition of it.

"Oh! why had I not known that this was a grand reception?" was the ever-rising thought of my mind. My card of invitation said a *soirée:* even that I might have dared—but here was a regular levee! Already I was near enough to hear the names announced at the foot of the grand staircase, where ambassadors, senators, ministers of state, and officers of the highest rank, succeeded each other in quick succession. My carriage stood now next but two. I was near enough to see the last arrival hand his card to the *huissier* in waiting, and hear his title called out, "Le Ministre de la Guerre," when the person in the carriage before me cried to his coachman, "to the left—the Pavillon de Flore;" and at the same moment the carriage turned from the line, and drove rapidly toward a distant wing of the Palace.

"Move up! move up!" shouted a dragoon; "or are you for the *soirée de Madame?*"

"Yes, yes!" said I, hastily, as I heard his question.

"Follow that carriage, then," said he, pointing with his sabre; and in a moment we left the dense file, and followed the sounds of the retiring wheels toward a dark corner of the Palace, where a single lamp overa gate was the only light to guide us. Never shall I forget the sense of relief I felt as I lay back in the carriage, and listened to the hum and din of the vast crowd growing each moment fainter. "Thank Heaven," said I, "it's no levee." Scarce half a dozen equipages stood around the door as we drove up, and a single dragoon was the guard of honor.

"Whom shall I announce, sir?" said a *huissier* in black, whose manner was as deferential as though my appearance bespoke an embassador. I gave my name and followed him up a wide stair, where the deep velvet carpet left no footfall audible. A large bronze candelabra, supporting a blaze of wax-lights, diffused a light like day on every side. The doors opened before us as if by magic, and I found myself in an antechamber, where the *huissier*, repeating my name to another in waiting, retired. Passing through this, we entered a small drawing-room, in which sat two persons engaged at a chess-table, but who never looked up, or noticed us, as we proceeded. At last the two wings of a wide folding door were thrown open, and my name was announced in a low but audible voice.

The *salon* into which I now entered was a large and splendidly-furnished apartment, whose light, tempered by a species of *abat-jour*, gave a kind of soft mysterious effect to everything about, and made even the figures, as they sat in little groups, appear something almost dramatic in their character. The conversation, too, was maintained in a half-subdued tone—a gentle murmur of voices, that, mingling with the swell of music in another and distant apartment, and the plash of a small fountain in a vase of gold-fish in the room itself, made a strange but most pleasing assemblage of sounds. Even in the momentary glance which, on entering, I threw around me, I perceived that no studied etiquette or courtly stateliness prevailed. The guests were disposed in every attitude of lounging ease and careless *abandon;* and it was plain to see that all, or nearly all, about were intimates of the place.

As the door closed behind me, I stood half uncertain how to proceed. Unhappily, I knew little of the habitudes of the great world; and every step I took was a matter of difficulty.

"I think you will find Madame Bonaparte in that room," said a middle-aged and handsome man, whose mild voice and gentle smile did much to set me at my ease; "but perhaps you don't know her."

I muttered something I meant to be a negative, to which he immediately replied:

"Then let me present you. There is no ceremony here, and I shall be your groom of the chambers—but here she is. Madame la Consulesse, this young gentleman desires to make his respects."

"Ha! our friend of the Polytechnique—Monsieur Burke, is it not?"

"Yes, Madame," said I, bowing low, and blushing deeply as I recognized, in the splendidly-attired and beautiful person before me, the lady who so kindly held the water to my lips the day of my accident at the school.

"Why, they told me you were promoted—a hussar, I think."

"Yes, Madame—but—but—"

"You are too fond of old associations to part from them easily," said she, laughing. "Come here, Stephanie, and see a miracle of manhood, that could resist all the *clinquant* of a hussar for the simple costume of the Ecole Militaire. Monsieur de Custine, this is my young friend of whom I told you the other day."

The gentleman, the same who had so kindly noticed me, bowed politely.

"And now I must leave you together, for I see they are teasing poor Madame Lefebvre." And with a smile she passed on into a small *boudoir*, from which the sounds of merry laughter were proceeding.

"You don't know any one here?" said Monsieur de Custine, as he motioned me to a place beside him on a sofa; "nor is there any very remarkable person here to point out to you this evening. The First Consul's levee absorbs all the celebrities—but by-and-by they will drop in to pay their respects, and you'll see them all. The handsome woman yonder with her fan before her, is Madame Beauharnais Lavalette, and the good-looking young fellow in the staff uniform is Monsieur de Melcy, a stepson of General Rapp."

"And the large handsome man with the embroidered coat who passed through so hurriedly?"

"Yes, he is somebody—that's Decrès, the Ministre de la Marine—he is gone to the levee; and there, next the door, with his eyes cast down, and his hands folded, that is the Abbé Maynal, one of the most 'spirituel' men of the day; but I suppose you'd much rather look at the beauties of the Court than hear long stories about literature and politics; and there is the gem of loveliness among them."

I turned my eyes as he spoke, and close beside me, engaged in an eager conversation with an old lady, stood a young and most beautiful girl. Her long hair, through which, in the then mode, violets were wreathed and interwoven, descended in rich masses of curl over a neck white as marble. The corsage of her dress, which, in imitation of Greek costume, was made low, displayed her well-rounded shoulders to the greatest advantage; and though rather below than above the middle size, there was a dignity and grace in the air of her figure, and a certain elegance about her slightest movements, that was most fascinating.

"And the 'Rose de Provence'—how is she this evening?" said my companion, rising suddenly, and presenting himself with a smile before her.

"Ah, you here, Monsieur de Custine? we thought you had been at Nancy."

The accent, the tone of voice in which she said these few words, sent a thrill through me, and as I looked again, I recognized the young lady who stood at Madame Bonaparte's side on the memorable day of my fall. Perhaps my astonishment made me start; for she turned round toward me, and with a soft and most charming smile saluted me.

"How they are laughing in that room," said she, turning toward her other companions. "Monsieur de Custine has deserted his dear friend this evening, and left her to her unassisted defense."

"*Ma foi*," replied he, "I got ill rewarded for my advocacy. It was only last week, when I helped her out through one of her blunders in grammar, she called me a 'ganache' for my pains."

"How very ungrateful. You that have been interpreter to her—her tutor for the entire winter—without whom she could neither have obtained an ice nor a glass of water."

"So is it; but you are all ungrateful. But I think I had better go and pay my respects to her; pray come along with me."

I followed the party into a small room fitted up like a tent, where, amid some half-dozen persons assembled around like an audience, sat a large, florid, and good-looking person, her costume of scarlet velvet, turban and robe, adding to the flushed and high-colored expression of her features. She was talking in a loud voice, with an accent of such *patois* as I should much more naturally have expected in a remote faubourg than in the gilded *salons* of the Tuileries. She had been relating some anecdotes of military life, which came within her own experience; and evidently amused her auditory as much by her manner as the matter of her narrative.

"*Oui, parbleu*," said she, drawing a long breath, "I was only the wife of a sergeant in the 'Gardes Françaises' in those days; but they were pleasant times, and the men one used to see were men indeed. They were not as much laced in gold, nor had not so much finery on their jackets; but they were bold, bronzed, manly fellows. You'd not see such a poor, miserable little fellow as De Custine there, in a whole demi-brigade." When the laugh this speech caused, and in which her own merry voice joined, subsided, she continued: "Where will you find, now, anything like the Twenty-second of the line? Pioche was in that—poor Pioche!—I tied up his jaw in Egypt when it was smashed by a bullet. I remember, too, when the regiment came back; your husband, the General, reviewed them in the court below, and poor Pioche was quite offended at not being noticed. 'We were good friends,' quoth he, 'at Mount Tabor, but he forgets all that now; that's what comes of a rise in the world. "Le Petit Caporal" was humble enough once, I warrant him; but now he can't remember me.' Well, they were ordered to march past in line, and there was Pioche, with his great dark eyes fixed on the General, and his big black beard flowing down to his waist; but no, he never noticed him no more than the tambour that beat the rappel. He could bear it no longer. His head was twisting with impatience and chagrin; and he sprang out of the lines, and seizing a brass gun—a *pièce de quatre*—he mounted it like a fusee to his shoulder, and marched past, calling out, '*Tu*'—he always *tu-toied* him—'*tu te rappelles maintenant, n'est-ce pas, petit?*'"

No one enjoyed this little story more than Madame Bonaparte herself, who laughed for several minutes after it was over. Story after story did she pour forth in this way; most of them, however, had their merit in some personality or other, which, while recognized by the rest, had no attraction for me. There was in all she said the easy self-complacency of a kind-hearted but vulgar woman—vain of her husband, proud of his services, and perfectly indifferent to the habits and usages of a society whose manners she gave herself no trouble to imitate, nor of whose ridicule was she in the least afraid.

I sauntered from the room alone, to wander through the other apartments,

where objects of art and curiosities of every kind were profusely scattered. The marbles of Greece and Rome, the strange carvings of Egypt, the rich vases of Sèvres were there, amid cabinet pictures of the rarest and most costly kind. Those delicious landscapes of the time of Louis XV., where every charm of nature and art was conveyed upon the canvas; the cool arbors of Versailles, with their terraced promenades and hissing fountains—the subjects which Vanloo loved to paint, and which that voluptuous Court loved to contemplate; the long alleys of shady green, where gay groups were strolling in the mellow softness of an autumn sunset; those proud dames, whose sweeping garments brushed the velvet turf, and at whose sides, uncovered, walked the chivalry of France, how did they live again in the bright pencil of Moucheron, and how did they carry one in fancy to the great days of the monarchy. Strange place for them, too, the boudoir of her whose husband had uprooted the ancient dynasty they commemorated—had erased from the list of kings that proudest of all the royal stocks in Europe. Was it the narrow-minded glory of the usurper that loved to look upon the greatness he had humbled, that brought them there? or was it rather the well-spring of that proud hope just rising in his heart that he was to be successor of those great kings, whose history formed the annals of Europe itself? As I wandered on, captivated in every sense by the charm of what to me was a scene in fairy-land, I came suddenly before a picture of Josephine, surrounded by the ladies of her Court. It was by Isabey, and had all the delicate beauty and transparent finish of that delightful painter. Beside it was another portrait by the same artist, and I started back in amazement at the resemblance. Never had color better caught the rich tint of a southern complexion; the liquid softness of eye, the full and sparkling intelligence of ready wit and bright fancy, all beamed in that lovely face. It needed not the golden letters in the frame which called it "La Rose de Provence." I sat down before it unconsciously, delighted that I might gaze on such beauty unconstrained. The white hand leaned on a balustrade, and seemed almost as if stretching from the very canvas. I could have knelt and kissed it. That was the very look she wore the hour I saw her first—it had never left my thoughts day or night: the half-rising blush, the slightly-averted head, the mingled look of impatience and kindness—all were there; and so entranced had I become, that I feared each instant lest the vision would depart, and leave me dark and desolate. The silence of the room was almost unbroken—a distant murmur of voices, the tones of a harp, were all I heard, and I sat, I know not how long, thus wrapped in ecstasy.

A tall screen of Chinese fabric separated the part of the room I occupied from the rest, and left me free to contemplate alone those charms which each moment grew stronger upon me. An hour might perhaps have thus elapsed, when suddenly I heard the sound of voices approaching, but in a different direction from that of the *salons*. They were raised above the ordinary tone of speaking, and one in particular sounded in a strange accent of mingled passion and sarcasm, which I shall never forget. The door of the room was flung open before I could rise from my chair, and two persons entered, neither of whom could I see from my position behind the screen.

"I ask you, again and again, is the treaty of Amiens a treaty, or is it not?" said a harsh, imperious tone I at once recognized as that of the First Consul, while his voice actually trembled with anger.

"My Lord Whitworth observed, if I mistake not," replied a measured and soft accent, where a certain courtier-like unction prevailed, "that the withdrawal of the British troops from Malta would follow, on our making a similar step as regards our forces in Switzerland and Piedmont."

"What right have they to make such a condition? They never complained of the occupation of Switzerland at the time of the treaty. I will not hear of such a stipulation. I tell you, Monsieur de Talleyrand, I'd rather see the English in the Faubourg St. Antoine than in the Island of Malta. Why should we treat with England as a continental power? Of India, if she will—and as to Egypt, I told my Lord that sooner or later it must belong to France."

"A frankness he has reason to be thankful for," observed M. de Talleyrand, in a voice of sarcastic slyness.

"*Que voulez-vous?*" replied Bonaparte, in a raised tone, "they want a war, and they shall have it: what matter the cause—such treaties of peace as these had better be covered with black crape." Then dropping his voice to a half whisper, he added: "You must see him to-morrow. Explain how the attacks of the English press have irritated me—how deeply wounded I must feel at such a license permitted under the very eyes of a friendly government—plots

against my life encouraged—assassination countenanced. Repeat that Sebastiani's mission to Egypt is merely commercial. That although prepared for war, our wish, the wish of France, is peace. That the armaments in Holland are destined for the colonies. Show yourself disposed to treat, but not to make advances. Reject the word *ultimatum*, if he employ it. The phrase implies a parley between a superior and an inferior. This is no longer the France that remembers an English commissary at Dunkirk. If he do not use the word, then remark on its absence—say, these are not times for longer anxiety—that we must know, at last, to what we are to look. Tell him the Bourbons are not still on the throne here. Let him feel with whom he has to deal."

"And if he demand his passport," gravely observed Talleyrand, "you can be in the country for a day—at Plombières—at St. Cloud."

A low, subdued laugh followed these words, and they walked forward toward the *salons*, still conversing, but in a whispered tone.

A cold perspiration broke over my face and forehead, the drops fell heavily down my cheek, as I sat an unwilling listener of this eventful dialogue. That the fate of Europe was in the balance I knew full well—and, ardently as I longed for war, the dreadful picture that rose before me damped much of my ardor—while a sense of my personal danger, if discovered where I was, made me tremble from head to foot. It was, then, with a sinking spirit, that I retraced my steps toward the *salons*, not knowing if my absence had not been remarked and commented on. How little was I versed in such society, where each came and went as it pleased him; where the most brilliant beauty, the most spiritual conversationalist, left no gap by absence, and where such as I were no more noticed than the statues that held the wax-lights.

The *salons* were now crowded—ministers of state, ambassadors, general officers in their splendid uniforms, filled the apartments, in which the din of conversation and the sounds of laughter mingled. Yet, through the air of gayety which reigned throughout—the tone of light and flippant smartness which prevailed—I thought I could mark here and there, among some of the ministers, an appearance of excitement, and a look of preoccupation, little in unison with the easy intimacy which all seemed to possess. I looked on every side for the First Consul himself, but he was nowhere to be seen. Monsieur Talleyrand, however, remained—I recognized him by his soft and measured accent, as he sat beside Madame Bonaparte, and was relating some story in a low voice, at which she seemed greatly amused. I could not help wondering at the lively and animated character of features, beneath which were concealed the dark secrets of state affairs, the tangled mysteries of political intrigue. To look on him, you would have said, "There sits one whose easy life flows on, unruffled by this world's chances." Not so the tall and swarthy man, whose dark moustache hangs far below his chin, and who leans on the chimney-piece yonder—the large veins of his forehead are swollen and knitted, and his deep voice seems to tremble with strong emotion as he speaks.

"Pray, Monsieur, who is that officer yonder?" said I, to a gentleman beside me, and whose shoulder was half turned away.

"That," said he, raising his glass—"that is Savary, the Minister of Police. And, pardon, you are Mr. Burke—is't not so?"

I started as he pronounced my name, and looking fixedly at him, recognized the antagonist with whom I was to measure swords the next morning in the Bois de Boulogne; I colored at the awkwardness of my situation, but he, with more ease and self-possession, resumed:

"Monsieur, this is, to me at least, a very fortunate meeting. I have called twice, in the hope of seeing you this evening, and am overjoyed now to find you here. I behaved very ill to you this morning—I feel it now—I almost felt it at the time. If you will accept my apology for what has occurred, I make it most freely. My character is in no need of an affair to make me known as a man of courage—yours, there can be no doubt of. May I hope you agree with me? I see you hesitate—perhaps I anticipate the reason—you do not know how far you can, or ought to receive such an amende?" I nodded, and he continued: "Well, I am rather a practiced person in these matters, and I can safely say you may."

"Be it so, then," said I, taking the hand he proffered, and shaking it warmly; "I am too young in the world to be my own guide, and I feel you would not deceive me."

A gratified look, and a renewed pressure of the hand, replied to my speech.

"One favor more—you mustn't refuse me. Let us sup together—my *calèche* is below—people are already taking their leave here—and, if you have no particular reason for remaining—"

"None—I know no one."

"*Allons*, then," said he, gayly taking my arm; and I soon found myself descending the marble stairs, beside the man I had expected to stand opposed to in deadly conflict a few hours later.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SUPPER AT "BEAUVILLIERS'S."

"WHERE to?" asked the coachman, as we entered the *calèche*.

"Beauvilliers's," said the Marquis, throwing himself back in his seat, and remaining for some minutes silent. At last, as if suddenly recollecting that we were strangers to each other, he said, "You know Beauvilliers, of course?"

"No," replied I, with hesitation; "I really have not any acquaintance."

"*Parbleu!*" said he, laughing, "you ought at least to have his friendship. He is the most celebrated restaurateur of this or any other age; no one has carried the great art of the cuisine to a higher perfection, and his cellars are unequaled in Paris—but you shall pronounce for yourself."

"Unhappily my judgment is of little value. Do you forget that the diet-roll of the Polytechnique is a bad school for gastronomy?"

"But a glorious preparation for it," interrupted he. "How delightful must be the enjoyment to the unsophisticated palate of those first impressions which a *carpe à la Chambord*, a pheasant *truffé*, a dish of *ortolans à la Provençale* inspire! But here we are. Our party is a small one—an old préfet of the south, an abbé, a secretary of the Russian embassy, and ourselves." This information he gave me as we mounted a narrow and winding stair, dimly lighted by a single lamp. On reaching the landing, however, a waiter stood in readiness to usher us into a small apartment decorated with all the luxury of gold and plate glass, so profusely employed in the interior of all *cafés*. The guests already mentioned were there, and evidently awaiting our arrival with no small impatience.

"As usual, Henri," said the old man, whom I guessed to be the préfet—"as usual—an hour behind your appointment."

"Forgive him, monsieur," said the Abbé, with a simper. "The fascinations of a Court—"

The grimace the old man made at this last word threw the whole party into a roar of laughter, which only ceased by the Marquis presenting me in all form to each of his friends.

"*A table, à table*, for Heaven's sake!" cried the Préfet, ringing the bell, and bustling about the room with a fidgety impatience.

This was, however, unneeded; for in less than five minutes the supper made its appearance, and we took our places at the board.

The encomiums pronounced as each dish came and went satisfied me that the feast was unexceptionable. As for myself, I ate away, only conscious that I had never been so regaled before, and wondering within me how far ingenuity had been exercised to produce the endless variety that appeared at table. The wine, too, circulated freely; and Champagne, Bordeaux, and Chambertin followed each other in succession, as the different meats indicated the peculiar vintage. In the conversation I could take no part; it was entirely gastronomic; and no man ever existed more ignorant of the seasons that promised well for truffles, or the state of the atmosphere that threatened acidity to the vines.

"Well, Henri," said the Préfet, when the dessert made its appearance, and the time for concluding the gourmand dissertation seemed arrived—"well, and what news from the Tuileries?"

"Nothing—absolutely nothing," said he, carelessly. "The same people; the same topics; the eternal game of tric-trac with old Madame d'Angerton; Denon tormenting some new victim with a mummy or a map of Egypt; Madame Lefebvre relating camp anecdotes—"

"Ah, she is delightful," interrupted the Préfet.

"So thinks your chief, at least, Askoff," said De Beauvais, turning to the Russian.

"He sat on the sofa beside her for a good hour and a half."

"Who sat near him on the other side?" slyly asked the other.

"On the other side? I forget—no, I remember it was Monsieur de Talleyrand and Madame Bonaparte; and, now I think of it, he must have overheard what they said."

"Is it true, then, that Bonaparte insulted the English ambassador at the reception? Askoff heard it as he left the Rue St. Honoré."

"Perfectly true. The scene was a most outrageous one; and Lord Whitworth retired, declaring to Talleyrand—at least, so

they say—that without an apology being made, he would abstain from any future visits at the Tuileries."

"But what is to come of it?—tell me that? What is to be the result?"

"*Pardieu!* I know not. A reconciliation to-morrow; an article in the *Moniteur;* a dinner at the Court; and then another rupture, and another article."

"Or a war," said the Russian, looking cautiously about, to see if his opinion met any advocacy.

"What say you to that, *mon ami?*" said De Beauvais, turning to me. "Glad enough, I suppose, you'll be to win your epaulettes as Colonel."

"That, too, is on the cards," said the Abbé, sipping his glass quietly. "One can credit anything these times."

"Even the Catholic religion, Abbé," said De Beauvais, laughing.

"Or the Restoration," replied the Abbé, with a half-malicious look at the Préfet, which seemed greatly to amuse the Russian.

"Or the Restoration!" repeated the Préfet, solemnly after him—"or the Restoration!" And then filling his glass to the brim, he drained it to the bottom.

"It is a hussar corps you are appointed to?" said De Beauvais, hastily turning toward me, as if anxious to engage my attention.

"Yes; the *huitième,*" said I; "do you know them?"

"No; I have few acquaintances in the army."

"His father, sir," said the Préfet, with a voice of considerable emphasis, "was an old *garde du corps* in those times when the sword was only worn by gentlemen."

"So much the worse for the army," whispered the Abbé in an undertone, that was sufficiently audible to the rest to cause an outbreak of laughter.

"And when," continued the Préfet, undisturbed by the interruption, "birth had its privileges."

"Among the rest, that of being the first beheaded," murmured the inexorable Abbé.

"Were truffles dear before the Revolution, Préfet?" said De Beauvais, with a half-impertinent air of simplicity.

"No, sir; nothing was dear save the king's favor.

"Which could also be had for paying for," quoth the Abbé.

"The *Moniteur* of this evening, gentlemen," said the waiter, entering with the paper, whose publication had been delayed some two hours beyond the usual period.

"Ah, let us see what we have here," said De Beauvais, opening the journal and reading aloud:

"'General Espinasse is appointed to the command of the fourth corps, stationed at Lille, and Major-General Lannes to the fortress of Montreil, vacant by—' No matter—here it is. 'Does the English Government suppose that France is one of her Indian possessions, without the means to declare her wrongs, or the power to avenge them? Can they believe that rights are not reciprocal, and that the observance of one contracting party involves nothing on the part of the other?'"

"There, there, De Beauvais, don't worry us with that tiresome nonsense."

"'Or,' continued the Marquis, still reading aloud, 'do they presume to say, that we shall issue no commercial instructions to our agents abroad, lest English susceptibility should be wounded by any prospect of increased advantages to our trade.'"

"Our trade!" echoed the Préfet, with a most contemptuous intonation on the word.

"Ah! for those good old times, when there was none!" said the Abbé, with such a semblance of honest sincerity as drew an approving smile from the old man.

"Hear this, Préfet," said De Beauvais: "'From the times of Colbert to the present'—what think you? the allusion, right royal, is it not?—'From the times of Colbert our negotiations have been always conducted in this manner.'"

"Sir, I beseech you read no more of that intolerable nonsense."

"And here," continued the Marquis, "follows a special invocation of the benediction of Heaven on the just efforts which France is called on to make, to repress the insolent aggression of England—Abbé, this concerns you."

"Of course," said he, meekly. "I am quite prepared to pray for the party in power: if Heaven but leaves them there, I must conclude they deserve it."

A doubtful look, as if he but half understood him, was the only reply the old Préfet made to this speech; at which the laughter of the others could no longer be repressed, and burst forth most heartily.

"But let us read on. Whose style is this, think you?—'France possessed within her dominion every nation from the North Sea to the Adriatic; and how did she employ her power?—in restoring to Batavia self-government, in giving liberty to Switzerland, and in ceding Venice to Austria, while the troops at the very gates of Vienna are halted and repass the Rhine

once more. Are these the evidences of ambition—are these the signs of that overweening lust of territory with which England dares to reproach us? And if such passions prevailed, what was easier than to have indulged them? Was not Italy our own? Were not Batavia, Switzerland, Portugal, all ours? But no, peace was the desire of the nation—peace at any cost. The colony of St. Domingo, that immense territory, was not conceived a sacrifice too great to secure such a blessing.'"

"*Pardieu!* De Beauvais, I can bear it no longer."

"You must let me give you the reverse of the medal. Hear now what England has done."

"He writes well, at least for the taste of newspaper readers," said the Abbé musingly; "but still he only understands the pen as he does the sword; it must be a weapon of attack."

"Who is the writer, then?" said I, in a half-whisper.

"Who!—can you doubt it?—Bonaparte himself. What other man in France would venture to pronounce so authoritatively on the prospects and the intentions of the nation?"

"Or who," said the Abbé, in his dry manner, "could speak with such accuracy of the 'Illustrious and Magnanimous Chief' that rules her destinies."

"It is growing late," said the Préfet, with the air of one who took no pleasure in the conversation, "and I start for Rouen to-morrow morning."

"Come, come, Préfet, one bumper before we part," said De Beauvais; "something has put you out of temper this evening; yet I think I know a toast can restore you to good humor again."

The old man lifted his hand with a gesture of caution, while he suddenly directed a look toward me.

"No, no; don't be afraid," said De Beauvais, laughing; "I think you'll acquit me of any rashness: fill up, then, and here let us drink one in the old palace of the Tuileries, who, at this moment, can bring us back in memory to the most glorious days of our country."

"*Pardieu!* that must be the First Consul, I suppose," whispered the Abbé to the Préfet, who dashed his glass with such violence on the table as to smash it in a hundred pieces.

"See what comes of impatience," cried De Beauvais, laughing; "and now you have not wherewithal to pledge my fair cousin the 'Rose of Provence.'"

"The Rose of Provence," said each in turn, while, excited by the wine, of which I had drank freely, and carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment, I re-echoed the words in such a tone as drew every eye upon me.

"Ah! you know my cousin, then?" said De Beauvais, looking at me with a strange mixture of curiosity and astonishment.

"No," said I, "I have seen her—I saw her this evening at the Palace."

"Well, I must present you," said he, smiling good-naturedly.

Before I could mutter my acknowledgment, the party had risen, and were taking leave of each other for the night.

"I shall see you soon again, Burke," said De Beauvais, as he pressed my hand warmly; "and now, adieu." With that we parted; and I took my way back toward the Polytechnique, my mind full of the strange incidents of this the most eventful night in my quiet and monotonous existence.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE "TWO VISITS."

AMID all the stirring duties of the next day—amid all the excitement of a new position—my mind recurred continually to the events of the previous twenty-four hours. Now dwelling on the *soirée* at the Palace—the unaccustomed splendor, the rank, the beauty I had witnessed; now on that eventful moment I spent behind the screen; then on my strange rencontre with my antagonist, and that still stranger supper that followed it.

It was not, indeed, without certain misgivings, which I could neither account for nor dismiss from my mind, that I reflected on the character and conversation of my new associates.

The tone of levity in which they dared to speak of him whose name was to me something bordering on idolatry—the liberty with which they ventured to canvass his measures and his opinions, even to ridiculing them, were so many puzzles to my mind; and I half reproached myself for having tamely listened to language which now, as I thought over it, seemed to demand my notice. Totally ignorant of all political intrigue—unconscious that any party did or could exist in France, save that of the First Consul himself, I could find no solution to the enigma, and at last began to think that I had been exaggerating to myself the words I had heard,

and permitting my ignorance to weigh with me, where, with more knowledge, I should have seen nothing reprehensible. And if the spirit in which they discussed the acts of Bonaparte differed from what I had been accustomed to, might it not rather proceed from my own want of acquaintance with the usages of society, than any deficiency in attachment on their sides? The préfet was, of course, as an officer of the government, no mean judge of what became him—the abbé, too, as a man of education and in holy orders, was equally unlikely to express unbecoming opinions; the Russian scarcely spoke at all; and as for De Beauvais, his careless and headlong impetuosity made me feel easy on his score; and so I reasoned myself into the conviction that it was only the ordinary bearing and every-day habit of society to speak thus openly of one who, in the narrower limits of our little world, was deemed something to worship.

Shall I own what then I could scarcely have confessed to myself, that the few words De Beauvais spoke at parting—the avowed cousinship with her they called "La Rose de Provence" did much to induce this conviction on my mind? while his promise to present me was a pledge I could not possibly believe consistent with any but right loyal thoughts and honest doctrines. Still, I would have given anything for one friend to advise with—one faithful counselor to aid me. But again was I alone in the world, and, save the short and not over-flattering reception of my colonel, I had neither seen nor spoken to one of my new corps.

That evening I joined my regiment and took up my quarters in the barracks, where already the rumor of important political events had reached the officers; and they stood in groups discussing the chances of a war, or listening to the *Moniteur*, which was read out by one of the party. What a strange thrill it sent through me to think that I was privy to the deepest secret of that important step on which the peace of Europe was resting—that I had heard the very words as they fell from the lips of him on whom the destiny of millions then depended. With what a different interpretation to me came those passages in the government journal which breathed of peace, and spoke of painful sacrifices to avoid a war, for which already his very soul was thirsting; and how, to my young heart, did that passion for glory exalt him who could throw all into the scale. The proud position he occupied—the mighty chief of a mighty nation—the adulation in which he daily lived—the gorgeous splendor of a Court no country in Europe equaled—all these, and more—his future destiny—did he set upon the cast for the great game his manly spirit gloried in.

In such thoughts as these I lived as in a world of my own; companionship I had none. My brother officers, with few exceptions, had risen from the ranks, and were of that class which felt no pleasure save in the coarse amusements of the barrack-room, or the vulgar jests of the service. The better classes lived studiously apart from these, and made no approaches to intimacy with any newly-joined officer with whose family and connections they were unacquainted; and I, from my change of country, stood thus alone, unacknowledged and unknown. At first this isolation pained and grieved me, but gradually it became less irksome; and when at length they who had at first avoided and shunned my intimacy showed themselves disposed to know me, my pride, which before would have been gratified by such an acknowledgment, was now wounded, and I coolly declined their advances.

Some weeks passed in this manner, during which I never saw or heard of De Beauvais, and at length began to feel somewhat offended at the suddenness with which he seemed to drop an intimacy begun at his own desire; when one evening, as I had returned to my barrack-room after parade, I heard a knock at my door. I rose and opened it, when, to my surprise, I beheld De Beauvais before me. He was much thinner than when I last saw him, and his dress and appearance all betokened far less of care and attention.

"Are these your quarters?" said he, entering and throwing a cautious look about. "Are you alone here?"

"Yes," said I, "perfectly."

"You expect no one?"

"Not any," said I again, still more surprised at the agitation of his manner, and the evident degree of anxiety he labored under.

"Thank Heaven!" said he, drawing a deep sigh as he threw himself on my little camp-bed, and covered his face with his hands.

Seeing that something weighed heavily on him, I half feared to interfere with the current of his thoughts, and merely drew my chair and sat down beside him.

"I say, Burke, *mon cher*, have you any wine? Let me have a glass or two, for, save some galette, and that not the best either, I have tasted nothing these last twenty-four hours."

I soon set before him the contents of my humble larder, and in a few moments he rallied a good deal, and looking up with a smile, said,

"I think you have been cultivating *your* education as gourmand since I saw you. That pasty is worthy our friend in the Palais Royale. Well, and how have you been since we met?"

"Let me rather ask *you*," said I. "You are not looking so well as the last time I saw you. Have you been ill?"

"Ill! no, not ill. Yet I can't say so; for I have suffered a good deal, too. No, my friend; I have had much to harass and distress me. I have been traveling, too, long distances and weary ones—met some disappointments, and altogether the world has not gone so well with me as I think it ought. And now of you—what of yourself?"

"Alas!" said I, "if you have met much to annoy, I have only lived a dull life of daily monotony. If it has had little to distress, there is fully as little to cheer; and I half suspect the fine illusions I used to picture to myself of a soldier's career had very little connection with reality."

As De Beauvais seemed to listen with more attention than such a theme would naturally call for, I gradually was drawn into a picture of my barrack life, in which I dwelt at length on my own solitary position, and the want of that companionship which formed the chief charm of my schoolboy life. To all this he paid a marked attention—now questioning me on some unexplained point—now agreeing with me in what I said by a word or a gesture.

"And do you know, Burke," said he, interrupting me in my description of those whose early coldness of manner had chilled my first advances—"and do you know," said he, impetuously, "who these aristocrats are? The sons of honest *bourgeois* of Paris. Their fathers are worthy men of the Rue Vivienne or the Palais—excellent people, I've no doubt; but very far better judges of point lace and *pâté de Périgord*, than disputed precedence and armorial quarterings. Far better the others, the humble soldiers of fortune, whose highest pride is their own daring, their own undaunted heroism. Well, well," added he, after a pause, "I must get you away from this—I can manage it in a day or two. You shall be sent down to Versailles with a detachment."

I could not help starting with surprise at these words, and through all the pleasure they gave me my astonishment was still predominant.

"I see you are amazed at what I say, but it's not so wonderful as you think. My cousin has only to hint to Madame Bonaparte, who is at present there, and the thing is done."

I blushed deeply as I thought of the agency through which my wishes were to meet accomplishment, and turned away to hide my embarrassment.

"By-the-by, I have not presented you to her yet. I've had no opportunity; but now I shall do so at once."

"Pray, tell me your cousin's name," said I, anxious to say anything to conceal my confusion. "I've only heard her called 'La Rose de Provence.'"

"Yes, that was a silly fancy of Madame la Consulesse, because Marie is *Provençale*. But her name is De Rochfort, at least her mother's name; for, by another caprice, she was forbidden by Bonaparte to bear her father's name. But this is rather a sore topic with me. Let us change it. How did you like my friends the other evening? The Abbé is agreeable, is he not?"

"Yes," said I, hesitating somewhat, "but I am so unaccustomed to hear General Bonaparte discussed so freely—"

"That absurd Polytechnique!" interrupted De Beauvais. "How many a fine fellow has it spoiled with its ridiculous notions and foolish prejudices!"

"Come, come," said I, "you must not call prejudices the attachment which I, and all who wear an epaulette, feel in our glorious chief. There, there; don't laugh, or you'll provoke me; for if I, an alien, feel this, how should you, who are a Frenchman born, sympathize with such a proud career?"

"If you talk of sympathy, Burke, let me ask you, have you ever heard speak of certain old families of these realms, who have been driven forth and expatriated to seek a home among strangers, themselves the descendants of the fairest chivalry of our land—the proud scions of St. Louis—and has your sympathy never strayed across sea to mingle with *their* sorrows?" His voice trembled as he spoke, and a large tear filled his eye and tracked its way along his cheek, as the last word vibrated on his tongue; and then, as if suddenly remembering how far he had been carried away by momentary impulse, he added, in an altered voice: "But what have we to do with these things? Our road is yet to be traveled by either of us. Yours a fair path enough, if it only fulfill its early promise. The fortunate fellow that can win his grade while yet a schoolboy—"

"How came you to know?—"

"Oh! I know more than that, Burke; and believe me, if my foolish conduct the first day we met had led to anything disastrous, I should have passed a life of sorrow for it ever after; but we shall have time enough to talk over all these matters in the green alleys of Versailles, where I hope to see you before a week be over. Great events may happen ere long, too. Burke, you don't know it, but I can tell you, a war with England is at this moment on the eve of declaration."

"Perhaps," said I, somewhat piqued by the tone of superiority in which he had spoken for some minutes, and anxious to assume for myself a position which, I forgot, conferred no credit by the manner of its attainment, "I know more of *that* than you are aware of."

"Oh," replied he, carelessly, "the gossip of a mess is but little to be relied on. The '*sabreurs*' will always tell you that the order to march is given."

"I don't mean that," said I, haughtily. "My information has a higher source—the highest of all—General Bonaparte himself."

"How!—what!—Bonaparte himself?"

"Listen to me," said I; and, hurried on by a foolish vanity and a strange desire I cannot explain, to make a confidant in what I felt to be a secret too weighty for my own bosom, I told him all that I had overheard when seated behind the screen in the *salon* at the Tuileries.

"You heard this—you, yourself," cried he, as his eyes flashed, and he grasped my arm with an eager grip.

"Yes, with my own ears I heard it," said I, half trembling at the disclosure I made, and ready to give all I possessed to recall my words.

"My friend, my dear friend," said he, impetuously, "you must hesitate no longer—be one of us."

I started at the words, and, growing pale with agitation as the very thought of the importance of what I had related flashed across me, I stammered out, "Take care what you propose to me, De Beauvais. I do not, I cannot, fathom your meaning now; but if I thought that anything like treachery to the First Consul—that anything traitorous to the great cause of liberty for which he has fought and conquered, was meditated, I'd go forthwith and tell him, word for word, all I have spoken now, even though the confession might, as it would, humble me forever, and destroy all my future hope of advancement."

"And be well laughed at for your pains, foolish boy," said he, throwing himself back in his chair, and bursting out into a fit of laughter. "No, no, Burke, you must not do anything half so ridiculous, or my pretty cousin could never look at you without a smile ever after; and *à propos* of that—when shall I present you? That splendid jacket, and all that finery of dolman there, will make sad work of her poor heart."

I blushed deeply at the silly impetuosity I had betrayed myself into, and muttered some equally silly apology for it; still, young as I was, I could perceive that my words made no common impression on him, and would have given my best blood to recall them.

"Do you know, De Beauvais," said I, affecting as much of coolness as I could, "do you know I half regret having told you this. The manner in which I heard this conversation—though, as you will see, quite involuntary on my part—should have prevented my ever having repeated it; and now the only reparation I can make is, to wait on my colonel, explain the whole circumstance, and ask his advice."

"In plain words, to make public what at present is only confided to a friend. Well, you think the phrase too strong for one you have seen but twice—the first time not exactly on terms such as warrant the phrase. But come, if you can't trust me, I'll see if I can't trust you."

He drew at these words a roll of paper from his pocket, and was proceeding to open it on the table, when a violent knocking was heard at my door.

"What's that—who can it be?" said he, starting up, and growing pale as death.

The look of terror in his face appalled me, and I stood, not able to reply, or even move toward the door, when the knocking was repeated much louder, and I heard my name called out; pointing to a closet which led from the room, and without speaking a word, I walked forward and unlocked the door; a tall man, wrapped in a blue cloak, and wearing a cocked-hat, covered with oil-skin, stood before me, accompanied by a sergeant of my troop.

"This is the sous-lieutenant, sir," said the sergeant, touching his cap.

"That will do," replied the other; "you may leave us now." Then turning to me, he added, "May I have the favor of a few minutes' conversation with you, Mr. Burke? I am Monsieur Gisquet, *chef de police* of the department."

A trembling ran through me at the words, and I stammered out something scarce audible in reply. Monsieur Gisquet followed me as I led the way into my room,

which already had been deserted by De Beauvais, and, casting a quick glance around, he leisurely took off his hat and cloak and drew a chair toward the table.

"Are we alone, sir?" said he, in a measured tone of voice, while his eye fell with a peculiar meaning on a chair which stood opposite to mine, on the opposite side of the stove.

"I had a friend with me when you knocked," I muttered, in a broken and uncertain accent; "but perhaps—" Before I could finish my sentence the door of the cabinet slowly opened, and De Beauvais appeared, but so metamorphosed, I could scarcely recognize him; for, short as the interval was, he had put on my old uniform of the Polytechnique, which, from our similarity in height, fitted him perfectly.

"All safe, Tom," said he, stealing out, with an easy smile on his countenance. "*Par St. Denis!* I thought it was old Legrange himself come to look for me. Ah, monsieur, how d'ye do? You have given me a rare fright to-night. I came to spend the day with my friend here, and, as ill-luck would have it, have outstayed my time. The *école* closes at nine, so that I'm in for a week's arrest at least."

"A cool confession this, sir, to a minister of police," said Gisquet, sternly, while his dark eyes surveyed the speaker from head to foot.

"Not when that minister is called Monsieur Gisquet," said he, readily, and bowing courteously as he spoke.

"You know me, then?" said the other, still peering at him with a sharp look.

"Only from your likeness to a little boy in my company," said he: "Henri Gisquet; a fine little fellow he is, and one of the cleverest in the school."

"You are right, sir, he is my son," said the minister, as a pleased smile passed over his swarthy features. "Come, I think I must get you safe through your dilemma. Take this; the officer of the night will be satisfied with the explanation, and Monsieur Legrange will not hear of it."

So saying, he seized a pen, and writing a few lines rapidly on a piece of paper, he folded it note fashion, and handed it to De Beauvais.

"A handsome ring, sir," said he, suddenly, and holding the fingers within his own; "a very costly one, too."

"Yes, sir," said De Beauvais, blushing scarlet. "A cousin of mine—"

"Ha, ha! an *amourette*, too. Well, well, young gentleman, no need of further confessions. Lose no more time here—*bon soir.*"

"Adieu, Burke," said De Beauvais, shaking my hand with a peculiar pressure.

"Adieu, Monsieur Gisquet. This order will pass me through the barrack, won't it?"

"Yes; to be sure. You need fear no interference with my people either, go where you will this evening."

"Thanks, sir, once more," said he, and departed.

"Now for our business, Mr. Burke," said the minister, opening his packet of papers before him, and commencing to con over its contents. "I shall ask you a few questions, to which you will please to reply with all the accuracy you can command, remembering that you are liable to be called on to verify any statement hereafter on oath. With whom did you speak on the evening of the second of May, at the *soirée* of Madame Bonaparte?"

"I scarcely remember if I spoke to any one save Madame herself; a strange gentleman, whose name I forget, presented me; one or two others, also unknown to me, may have spoken a passing word or so; and when coming away I met Monsieur de Beauvais."

"Monsieur de Beauvais! who is he?"

"*Ma foi*, I can't tell you. I saw him the day before for the first time; we renewed our acquaintance, and we supped together."

"At Beauvilliers's?" said he, interrupting.

"*Pardieu!* Monsieur," said I, somewhat stung at the 'espionage' on my movements, "you seem to know everything so well already, it is quite needless to interrogate me any further."

"Perhaps not," replied he, coolly. "I wish to have the names of the party you supped with."

"Well, there was one who was called the préfet, a large, full, elderly man."

"Yes, yes, I know him," interrupted Gisquet again; "and the others?"

"There was an abbé, and a secretary of the Russian mission."

"No other?" said he, in a tone of disappointment.

"No one, save De Beauvais and myself—we were but five in all."

"Did no one come in during the evening?"

"No, not any."

"Nor did any leave the party?"

"No; we separated at the same moment."

"Who accompanied you to the barracks?"

"No one. I returned alone."

"And this Monsieur De Beauvais; you

can't tell anything of him? What age is he? what height?"

"About my own," said I, blushing deeply at the thought of the events of a few moments back. "He may be somewhat older; but he looks not much more than twenty-one or two."

"Have you mentioned any of these circumstances to any of your brother officers or to your colonel?"

"No, sir, never."

"Very right, sir. These are times in which discretion is of no common importance. I have only to recommend similar circumspection in future. It is probable that some of these gentlemen may visit you and write to you—they may invite you to sup or to dine; if so, sir, accept the invitation; be cautious, however, not to speak of this interview to any one. Remember, sir, I am the messenger of one who never forgave a breach of trust, but who also never fails to reward loyalty and attachment. If you be but prudent, Mr. Burke, your fortune is certain."

With these words, Monsieur Gisquet threw his cloak over his shoulder, and raising his hat, bowed formally to me, and withdrew, leaving me to meditations which, I need not say, were none of the happiest.

If my fears were excited by the thought of the acquaintances I had so rashly formed, so also was my pride insulted by the system of watching to which my movements had been subjected; and deeper still, by the insulting nature of the proposal the minister of police had not scrupled to make to me, on reflecting over which, only, did I perceive how base and dishonorable it was.

"What!" asked I of myself, "is it a spy—is it a false underhand betrayer of the men into whose society I have been admitted on terms of friendly intercourse he would make of me? What saw he in me or in my actions, to dare so far? Was not the very cloth I wear enough to guard me against such an insult?" Then came the maddening reflection, "Why had I not thought of this sooner? Why had I not rejected his proposal with scorn, and told him that I was not of the stuff he looked for?"

But what was it that he wished to learn? and who were these men, and what were their designs? These were questions that flashed across me, and I trembled to think how deeply implicated I might become, at any moment, in plans of which I knew nothing—merely from the imprudence with which I had made their acquaintance. The escape of De Beauvais, if discovered, would also inevitably involve me, and thus did I seem hurried along by a train of incidents, without will or concurrence, each step but increasing the darkness around me.

That Gisquet knew most of the party was clear; De Beauvais alone seemed personally unknown to him. What, then, did he want of me? Alas! it was a tangled web I could make nothing of—and all I could resolve on was, to avoid in future all renewal of intimacy with De Beauvais, to observe the greatest circumspection with regard to all new acquaintance, and, since the police thought it worth their while to set spies upon my track, to limit my excursions, for some time at least, to the routine of my duty, and the bounds of the barrack-yard. These were wise resolutions, and if somewhat late in coming, yet not without their comfort; above all, because, in my heart, I felt no misgivings of affection, no lack of loyalty to him who was still my idol.

"Well, well," thought I, "something may come of this—perhaps a war; if so, happy shall I be to leave Paris and all its intrigues behind me, and seek distinction in a more congenial sphere, and under other banners than a police minister would afford me."

With thoughts like these I fell asleep to dream over all the events of the preceding day, and wake the next morning with an aching head and confused brain—my only clear impression being, that some danger hung over me, but from what quarter, and how, or in what way it was to be met or averted, I could not guess.

The whole day I felt a feverish dread lest De Beauvais should appear. Something whispered me that my difficulties were to come of my acquaintance with him, and I studiously passed my time among my brother officers, knowing that, so long as I remained among them, he was not likely to visit me; and when evening came, I gladly accepted an invitation to a barrack-room supper, which, but the night before, I should have declined without hesitation.

This compliance on my part seemed well taken by my companions, and, in their frank and cordial reception of me, I felt a degree of reproach to myself for my having hitherto lived estranged from them. We had just taken our places at table, when the door was flung wide open, and a young captain of the regiment rushed in, waving a paper over his head, as he called out:

"Good news, *mes braves*, glorious news for you! Listen to this: 'The English ambassador has demanded his passports, and left Paris; expresses are sent off to the

fourth corps, to move toward the coast; twelve regiments have received orders to march; so that before my Lord leaves Calais, he may witness a review of the army."

"Is this true?"

"It is all certain."

"Read it, here's the *Moniteur*, with the official announcement."

In an instant a dozen heads were bent over the paper, each eager to scan the paragraph so long and ardently desired.

"Come, Burke, I hope you have not forgotten your English," said the Major; "we shall want you soon to interpret for us in London, if, *pardieu*, we can ever find our way through the fogs of that ill-starred island."

I hung my head without speaking—the miserable isolation of him who has no country, is a sad and sickening sense of want no momentary enthusiasm, no impulse of high daring, can make up for. Happily for me, all were too deeply interested in the important news to remark me, or pay any attention to my feelings.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MARCH TO VERSAILLES.

THEY who remember the excited state of England on the rupture of the peace of Amiens—the spirit of military ardor that animated every class and condition of life—the national hatred, carried to the highest pitch by the instigations and attack of a violent press, can yet form but an imperfect notion of the mad enthusiasm that prevailed in France on the same occasion.

The very fact that there was no determinate and precise cause of quarrel, added to the exasperation on both sides. It was less like the warfare of two great nations, than the personal animosity of two high-spirited and passionate individuals, who, having interchanged words of insult, resolve on the sword as the only arbiter between them.

All that the long rivalry of centuries, national dislike, jealousy in every form, and ridicule in a thousand shapes, could suggest, were added to the already existing hate, and gave to the coming contest a character of the blackest venom. In England, the tyrannic rule of Bonaparte gave deep offense to all true lovers of liberty, and gave rise to fears of what the condition of their own country would become, should he continue to increase his power by conquest. In France, the rapid rise to honor and wealth, the carcer of arms so singularly favored, made partisans of war in every quarter of the kingdom. The peaceful arts were but mean pursuits compared with that royal road to rank and riches, the field of battle; and their self-interest lent its share in forming the spirit of hostility, which wanted no element of hatred to make it perfect.

Paris, where so lately nothing was heard save the roll of splendid equipages—the din of that gay world whose business is amusement—where amid gilded *salons* the voluptuous habits of the Consulate, mixed with the less courtly but scarce less costly display of military splendor, became now like a vast camp. Regiments poured in daily to resume their march the next morning; the dull rumble of ammunition-wagons and caissons, the warlike clank of mounted cavalry, awoke the citizens at daybreak; the pickets of hussar corps and the dusty and travel-stained infantry soldiers filled the streets at nightfall: yet, through all, the mad gayety of this excited nation prevailed. The *cafés* were crowded with eager and delighted faces; the tables spread in the open air were occupied by groups, whose merry voices and ready laughter attested that war was the pastime of the people, and the very note of preparation a tocsin of joy and festivity. The walls were placarded with inflammatory addresses to the patriotism and spirit of France. The papers teemed with artful and cleverly-written explanations of the rupture with England, in which every complaint against that country was magnified, and every argument put forward to prove the peaceful desires of that nation, whose present enthusiasm for war was an unhappy commentary on the assertion. The good faith of France was extolled—the moderation of the First Consul dwelt upon; and the treachery of that "perfidious Albion, that respected not the faith of treaties," was displayed in such irrefragable clearness, that the humblest citizen thought the cause his own, and felt the coming contest the ordeal of his own honor.

All the souvenirs of the former wars were invoked to give spirit to the approaching struggle, and they were sufficiently numerous to let no week pass over without at least one eventful victory to commemorate.

Now it was Kellerman's cuirassiers, whose laurel-wreathed helmets reminded

the passing stranger that on that day eight years they tore through the dense ranks of the Austrians, and sabred the gunners at the very guns. Now it was the Polish regiments—the steel-clad lancers—who paraded before the Tuileries, in memory of the proud day they marched through Montebello with that awful sentence on their banners, "Venice exists no longer." Here were corps of infantry, intermingled with dragoons, pledging each other as they passed along; while the names of Castiglione, Bassano, and Roveredo rang through the motley crowd—the very children, "*les enfants de troupe*," seemed filled with the warlike enthusiasm of their fathers; and each battalion, as it moved past, stepped to the encouraging shouts of thousands, who gazed with envious admiration on the heroes of their country.

Never did the pent-up feelings of a nation find vent in such a universal torrent of warlike fervor as now filled the land. The clank of the sabre was the music that charmed the popular ear; and the "coquette vivandière," as she tripped along the gravel avenues of the Tuileries gardens, was as much an object of admiration as the most splendidly-attired beauty of the "Faubourg St. Germain." The whole tone of society assumed the feature of the political emergency. The theaters only represented such pieces as bore upon the ancient renown of the nation in arms—its victories and conquests. The artists painted no other subjects; and the literature of the period appealed to few other sympathies than are found in the rude manners of the guard-room, or around the watch-fires of the bivouac. Pegault Lebrun was the popular author of the day; and his works are even now no mean indication of the current tastes and opinions of the period.

The predictions too hastily made by the English journals that the influence of Bonaparte in France could not survive the rupture of that peace which had excited so much enthusiasm, were met by a burst of national unanimity that soon dispelled the delusive hope. Never was there a greater error than to suppose that any prospect of commercial prosperity, any vista of wealth and riches, could compensate to Frenchmen for the intoxication of that glory in which they lived as in an orgie. Too many banners floated from the deep aisles of the "Invalides;" too many cannon, the spoils of the Italian and German wars, bristled on the rampart, not to recall the memory of those *fête* days when a bulletin threw the entire city into a frenzy of joy. The Louvre and the Luxembourg, too, were filled with the treasures of conquered states, and these are not the guarantees of a long peace.

Such, in brief, was the state of Paris when the declaration of war by Great Britain once more called the nation to arms. Every regiment was at once ordered to make up its full complement to the war standard, and the furnaces were employed in forging shot and casting cannon throughout the length and breadth of France. The cavalry corps were stationed about St. Omer and Compiègne, where a rich corn country supplied forage in abundance. Among the rest the order came for the *huitième* to march; one squadron only was to remain behind, chosen to execute *le service des dépêches* from St. Cloud and Versailles to Paris, and to this I belonged.

From the evening of Monsieur Gisquet's visit I had never seen or heard of De Beauvais, and at last the hope grew in me that we were to meet no more, when suddenly the thought flashed across my mind—this is what he spoke of; he promised I should be sent to Versailles! Can it be chance, or is this his doing? These were difficult questions to solve, and gave me far more embarrassment than pleasure. My fear that my acquaintance with him was in the end to involve me in some calamity, was a kind of superstition which I could not combat, and I resolved at once to see my colonel, with whom, happily, I was now on the best of terms, and endeavor to exchange with some other officer, any being willing to accept a post so much more agreeable than a mere country quarter. I found the old man busied in the preparations for departure; he was marking out the days of march to the adjutant as I entered.

"Well, Burke," said he, "you are the fortunate fellow this time; your troop remains behind."

"It is on that account, sir, I am come. You'll think my request a strange one, but if it be not against rule, would you permit me to exchange my destination with another officer?"

"What—eh! the boy's mad! Why it's to Versailles you are going."

"I know, sir; but, somehow, I'd rather remain with the regiment."

"This is very strange—I don't understand it," said he, leisurely; "come here." With that he drew me into the recess of a window where we could talk unheard by others. "Burke," continued he, "I'm not the man to question my young fellows about secrets which they'd rather keep for themselves; but there is something here more than common. Do you know that in the order

it was your squadron was specially marked out, all the officers' names were mentioned, and yours particularly, for Versailles?"

A deadly paleness and a cold chill spread over my face; I tried to say some commonplace, but I could not utter more than the words, "I feared it." Happily for me he did not hear them, but, taking my hand kindly, said:

"I see it all; some youthful folly or other would make you better pleased to leave Paris just now. Never mind, stormy times are coming, you'll have enough on your hands presently; and let me advise you to make the most of your time at Versailles, for if I'm not mistaken you'll see much more of camps than courts for some time to come."

The rest of that day left me but little time for reflection; but in such short intervals as I could snatch from duty, one thought ever rose to my mind. Can this be De Beauvais's doing? Has he had any share in my present destination, and with what object? "Well," said I to myself at last, "these are but foolish fears after all, and may be causeless ones. If I but follow the straight path of my duty, what need I care if the whole world intrigued and plotted around me? And after all, was it not most likely that we should never see each other again?"

The day was just breaking when we left Paris; the bright beams of a May morning's sun were flickering and playing in the rippling river that ran cold and gray beneath; the tall towers of the Tuileries threw their long shadows across the Place Carousel, where a dragoon regiment was encamped. They were already astir, and some of the men were standing around the fountains with their horses, and others were looking after the saddles and accoutrements in preparation for the march; a half-expiring fire here and there marked where some little party had been sitting together, while the jars and flasks about bespoke a merry evening. A trumpeter sat, statue-like, on his white horse, his trumpet resting on his knee, surveying the whole scene, and as if deferring to the last the wakeful summons that should rouse some of his yet sleeping comrades. I could see thus much as we passed. Our road led along the quay toward the Place Louis XV., where an infantry battalion with four guns was picketed. The men were breakfasting and preparing for the route. They were part of the *grande armée* under orders for Boulogne.

We soon traversed the Champs Elysées, and entered the open country. For some miles it was merely a succession of large corn-fields, and here and there a small vineyard, that met the eye on either side; but as we proceeded farther we were girt in by rich orchards in full blossom, the whole air loaded with the perfume. Neat cottages peeped from the woody inclosures, the trellised walls covered with honeysuckles and wild roses; the surface, too, was undulating, and waved in every imaginable direction, offering every variety of hill and valley, precipice and plain, in even the smallest space. As yet no peasant was stirring, no smoke curled from a single chimney, and all, save the song of the lark, was silent. It was a peaceful scene, and a strong contrast to that we left behind us; and whatever ambitious yearnings filled my heart as I looked upon the armed ranks of the mailed cuirassiers, I felt a deeper sense of happiness as I strayed along those green alleys, through which the sun came slanting sparingly, and where the leaves only stirred as their winged tenants moved among them.

We traveled for some hours through the dark paths of the Bois de Boulogne, and again emerged in a country wild and verdant as before. And thus passed our day, till the setting sun rested on the tall roof of the great palace, and lit up every window in golden splendor as we entered the town of Versailles.

I could scarce avoid halting as I rode up the wide terrace of the palace. Never had I felt before the overcoming sense of grandeur which architecture can bestow. The great *façade*, in its chaste and simple beauty, stretched away to a distance, where dark lime-trees closed the background, their tall summits only peeping above the lofty terrace in which the château stands. On that terrace, too, were walking a crowd of persons of the court, the full-dress costumes showing that they had but left the *salons* to enjoy the cool and refreshing air of the evening. I saw some turn and look after our travel-stained and dusty party, and confess I felt a half-sense of shame at our wayworn appearance. I had not long to suffer such mortification, for ere we marched more than a few minutes, we were joined by a Maréchal de Logis, who accompanied us to our quarters—one of the buildings adjoining the palace—where we found everything in readiness for our arrival; and there I, to my surprise, discovered that a most sumptuous supper awaited me—a politeness I was utterly a stranger to, not being over cognizant of the etiquette and privilege which await the officer on guard at a royal palace.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE PARK OF VERSAILLES.

THE instructions delivered to me soon after my arrival in Versailles convinced me that the transmission of dispatches was not the service we were called on to discharge, but merely a pretense to blind others as to our presence; the real duty being the establishment of a cordon around the royal palace, permitting no one to enter or pass within the precincts who was not provided with a regular leave, and empowering us to detain all suspected individuals, and forward them for examination to St. Cloud.

To avoid all suspicion as to the true object, the men were ordered to pass from place to place, as if with dispatches, many being stationed in different parts of the park; my duty requiring me to be continually on the alert to visit these pickets, and make a daily report to the Préfet de Police at Paris.

What the nature of the suspicion, or from what quarter Monsieur Savary anticipated danger, I could not even guess; and, though I well knew that his sources of information were unquestionable, I began at last to think that the whole was merely some plot devised by the police themselves, to display uncommon vigilance and enhance their own importance. This conviction grew stronger as day by day I remarked that no person more than ordinary had even approached near the town of Versailles itself, while the absurd exactitude of inquiry as to every minute thing that occurred went on just as before.

While my life passed on in this monotonous fashion, the little Court of Madame Bonaparte seemed to enjoy all its accustomed pleasure. The actors of the Français came down expressly from Paris, and gave nightly representations in the palace; *fourgons* continued to arrive from the capital with all the luxuries for the table; new guests poured in day after day, and the lighted-up saloons, and the sounds of music that filled the court, told each evening that whatever fear prevailed without, the minds of those within the palace had little to cause depression.

It was not without a feeling of wounded pride I saw myself omitted in all the invitations; for, although my rank was not sufficient of itself to lead me to expect such an attention, my position as the officer on guard would have fully warranted the politeness, had I not even already received marks of civility while in Paris. From time to time, as I passed through the park, I came upon some of the Court party; and it was with a sense of painful humiliation I observed that Madame Bonaparte had completely forgotten me, while from one whose indifference was more galling still, I did not even obtain a look in passing. How had I forfeited the esteem which voluntarily they had bestowed on me—the good opinion which had raised me from an humble cadet of the Polytechnique to a commission in one of the first corps in the service? Under what evil influence was I placed? Such were the questions that forced themselves on me night and day; that haunted my path as I walked, and my dreams at night. As the impression grew on me, I imagined that every one I met regarded me with a look of distance and distrust; that each saw in me one who had forfeited his fair name by some low or unworthy action, till at last I actually avoided the walks where I was likely to encounter the visitors of the palace, and shunned the very approach of a stranger, like a guilty thing. All the brilliant prospects of my soldier's life, that a few days back shone out before me, were now changed into a dreamy despondence. The service I was employed on—so different from what I deemed became a chivalrous career—was repugnant to all my feelings; and when the time for visiting my pickets came, I shrank with shame from a duty that suited rather the spy of the police than the officer of hussars.

Every day my depression increased. My isolation, doubly painful from the gayety and life around me, seemed to mark me out as one unfit to know, lessened me in my own esteem; and as I walked the long, dark alleys of the park, a weighty load upon my heart, I envied the meanest soldier of my troop, and would willingly have changed his fortune with my own. It was a relief to me even when night came—the shutters of my little room closed, my lamp lighted—to think that there at least I was free from the dark glances and sidelong looks of all I met; that I was alone with my own sorrow,—no contemptuous eye to pierce my sad heart, and see in my gloom a self-convicted criminal. Had I one, but one friend to advise with, to pour out all my sufferings before him, and say, "Tell me, how shall I act? Am I to go on enduring? or where shall I—where can I vindicate my fame?"

With such sad thoughts for company, I sat one evening alone; my mind now recurring to the early scenes of my childhood, and to that harsh teaching which even in infancy had marked me for suffering; now straying onward to a vision of the future I

used to paint so brightly to myself, when a gentle tap at the door aroused me.

"Come in," said I, carelessly, supposing it a sergeant of my troop. The door slowly opened, and a figure wrapped in a loose horseman's cloak entered.

"Ah! lieutenant, don't you know me?" said a voice, whose peculiar tone struck me as well known. "The Abbé d'Ervan, at your service."

"Indeed!" said I, starting with surprise, not less at the unexpected visitor himself than at the manner of his appearance. "Why, abbé, you must have passed the sentinel."

"And so I did, my dear boy," replied he, as he folded up his cloak leisurely on one chair, and seated himself on another opposite me. "Nothing wonderful in that, I suppose?"

"But the countersign—they surely asked you for it?"

"To be sure they did, and I gave it: 'Vincennes,' an easy word enough. But come, come, you are not going to play the police with me. I have taken you in on my way back to St. Cloud, where I am stopping just now, to pay you a little visit and talk over the news."

"Pardon me once more, my dear abbé, but a young soldier may seem over punctilious.—Have you the privilege to pass through the royal park after nightfall?"

"I think I have shown you that already, my most rigid inquisitor, otherwise I should not have known the password. Give me your report for to-morrow. Ah, here it is. What's the hour now? A quarter to eleven. This will save you some trouble." So saying, he took a pen and wrote in a large, free hand, "The Abbé d'Ervan from the Château d'Ancre to St. Cloud." "Monsieur Savary will ask you no further questions, trust me. And now, if you have got over all your fears and disquietudes, may I take the liberty to remind you that the château is ten leagues off—that I dined at three, and have eaten nothing since. Abbés, you are aware, are privileged gastronomists; and the family of D'Ervan have a most unhappy addiction to good things. A poulet, however, and a flask of Chablis will do for the present; for I long to talk with you."

While I made my humble preparations to entertain him, he rambled on in his usual free and pleasant manner—that mixture of smartness and carelessness which seemed equally diffused through all he said, imparting a sufficiency to awake, without containing anything to engage too deeply the listener's attention.

"Come, come, lieutenant, make no apology for the fare: the *pâté* is excellent; and as for the Burgundy, it is easy enough to see your Chambertin comes from the Consul's cellar. And so you tell me that you find this place dull, which I own I'm surprised at. These little *soirées* are usually amusing; but perhaps at your age the dazzling gayety of the ball-room is more attractive."

"In truth, abbé, the distinction would be a matter of some difficulty to me, I know so little of either. And indeed, Madame la Consulesse is not over likely to enlighten my ignorance: I have never been asked to the palace."

"You are jesting, surely."

"Perfectly in earnest, I assure you. This is my third week of being quartered here; and not only have I not been invited, but, stranger still, Madame Bonaparte passed, and never noticed me; and another, one of her suite, did the same; so you see there can be no accident in the matter."

"How strange," said the Abbé, leaning his head on his hand; and then, as if speaking to himself, muttered, "But so it is, there is no such tyrant as your *parvenu*. The caprice of sudden elevation knows no guidance. And you can't even guess at the cause of all this?"

"Not with all my ingenuity could I invent anything like a reason."

"Well, well, we may find it out yet. These are strange times altogether, lieutenant. Men's minds are more unsettled than ever they were. The Jacobin begins to feel he has been laboring for nothing: that all he deems the rubbish of a monarchy has been removed, only to build up a greater oppression. The soldier sees his conquests have only made the fortune of one man in the army, and that one not over-mindful of his old companions. Many begin to think, and they may have some cause for the notion, that the old family of France knew the interests of the nation best after all; and certain it is, they were never ungrateful to those who served them. Your countrymen had always their share of favor shown them. You do surprise me when you say you've never been invited."

"So it is though; and worse still, there is evidently some secret reason. Men look at me as if I had done something to stain my character and name."

"No, no, you mistake all that. This new and patchwork Court does but try to imitate the tone of its leader. When did you see De Beauvais?"

"Not for some months past. Is he in Paris?"

"No. The poor fellow has been ill. He's in Normandy just now, but I expect him back soon. There is a youth who might be anything he pleased: his family one of the oldest in the south; his means abundant; his own ability first rate; but his principles are of that inflexible material that won't bend for mere convenience' sake. He does not like—he does not approve of the present government of France."

"What would he have then? Does not Bonaparte satisfy the ambition of a Frenchman? Does he wish a greater name than that at the head of his nation?"

"That's a brilliant lamp before us; but see there," cried the Abbé, as he flung open the shutter, and pointed to the bright moon that shone pale and beautiful in the clear sky—"see there. Is there not something grander far in the glorious radiance of the orb that has thrown its luster on the world for ages? Is it not a glorious thought to revel in the times long past, and think of those, our fathers, who lived beneath the same bright beams, and drank in the same golden waters? Men are too prone to measure themselves with one of yesterday. They find it hard to wonder at the statue of him whom they have themselves placed on the pedestal. Feudalism, too, seems a very part of our nature."

"These are thoughts I've never known, nor would I now wish to learn them," said I; "and as for me, a hero needs no ancestry to make him glorious in my eyes."

"All true," said the Abbé, sipping his glass, and smiling kindly on me; "a young heart should feel as yours does; and time was when such feelings had made the fortune of their owner; but even now the world is changed about us. The gendarmes have the mission that once belonged to the steel-clad cuirassiers, and, in return, the hussar is little better than a '*mouchard.*'"

The blood mounted to my face and temples, and throbbed in every vein and artery of my forehead, as I heard this contemptuous epithet applied to the corps I belonged to—a sarcasm that told not less poignantly on me, that I felt how applicable it was to my present position.

He saw how deeply mortified the word had made me; and, putting his hand in mine, with a voice of winning softness he added, "One who would be a friend must risk a little now and then; as he who passes over a plank before his neighbor will sometimes spring to try its soundness, even at the hazard of a fall. Don't mistake me, lieutenant, you have a higher mission than this. France is on the eve of a mighty change. Let us hope it may be a happy one. And now it's getting late—far later, indeed, than is my wont to be abroad—and so I'll wish you good-night. I'll find a bed in the village. And since I have made you out here, we must meet often."

There was something—I could not define what exactly—that alarmed me in the conversation of the abbé; and lonely and solitary as I was, it was with a sense of relief I saw him take his departure.

The pupil of a school where the Consul's name was never mentioned without enthusiasm and admiration, I found it strange that any one should venture to form any other estimate of him than I was used to hear; and yet in all he said I could but faintly trace out anything to take amiss. That men of his cloth should feel warmly toward the exiled family was natural enough. They could have but few sympathies with the soldier's calling, and, of course, felt themselves in a very different position now from what they once had occupied. The restoration of Catholicism was, I well knew, rather a political and social than a religious movement; and Bonaparte never had any the slightest intention of replacing the Church in its former position of ascendancy, but rather of using it as a state engine, and giving a stability to the new order of things, which could only be done on the foundation of prejudices and convictions old as the nation itself.

In this way the rising generation looked on the priests; and in this way had I been taught to regard the whole class of religionists. It was, then, nothing wonderful if ambitious men among them, of whom D'Ervan might be one, felt somewhat indignant at the post assigned them, and did not espouse with warmth the cause of one who merely condescended to make them the tool of his intentions. "Yes, yes," said I to myself, "I have divined my friend the abbé; and though not a very dangerous character after all, it's just as well I should be on my guard. His being in possession of the password, and his venturing to write his name in the police report, are evidences that he enjoys the favor of the Préfet de Police. Well, well, I'm sure I am heartily tired of such reflections. Would that the campaign were once begun. The roll of a platoon and the deep thunder of an artillery fire would soon drown the small whisperings of such miserable plottings from one's head."

About a week passed over after this visit, in which, at first, I was rather better pleased that the abbé did not come again; but as my solitude began to press more heavily on me, I felt a kind of regret at not seeing him. His lively tone in conversation, though spiced with that "*moqueur*" spirit which Frenchmen nearly all assume, amused me greatly; and little versed as I was in the world or in its ways, I saw that he knew it thoroughly. Such were my thoughts as I returned home one evening along the broad alley of the park, when I heard a foot coming rapidly up behind me.

"I say, lieutenant," cried the voice of the very man I was thinking of, "your people are terribly on the alert to-night; they refused to let me pass, until I told them I was coming to you; and here are two worthy fellows who won't take my word for it without your corroboration."

I then perceived that two dismounted dragoons followed him at the distance of a few paces.

"All right, men," said I, passing my arm beneath the abbé's, and turning again toward my quarters. "Wouldn't they take the password, then?" continued I, as we walked on."

"*Ma foi*, I don't know, for I haven't got it."

"How—not got it?"

"Don't look so terribly frightened, my dear boy! You'll not be put under arrest or any such mishap on my account; but the truth is, I've been away some days from home, and have not had time to write to the minister for the order; and as I wanted to go over to St. Cloud this evening, and as this route saves me at least a league's walking, of course I availed myself of the privilege of our friendship both to rest my legs and have a little chat with you. Well, and how do you get on here now? I hope the château is more hospitable to you—eh?—not so?—that is most strange. But I have brought you a few books which may serve to while away the hours; and as a recompense, I'll ask you for a supper."

By this time we were at the door of my quarters, where, having ordered up the best repast my *cuisine* afforded, we sat down to await its appearance. Unlike the former evening, the abbé now seemed low and depressed—spoke little, and then moodily, over the unsettled state of men's minds, and the rumors that pervaded Paris of some momentous change—men knew not what—and thus by a stray phrase, a chance word, or an unfinished sentence, gave me to think that the hour was approaching for some great political convulsion.

"But, lieutenant, you never told me by what accident you came first amongst us. Let me hear your story. The feeling with which I ask is not the fruit of an impertinent curiosity. I wish sincerely to know more about one in whose fortunes I have taken a deep interest. De Beauvais told me the little anecdote which made you first acquainted; and though the event promised but little of future friendship, the circumstances have turned out differently. You have not one who speaks and thinks of you more highly than he does. I left him this morning not many miles from this. And now that I think of it, he gave me a letter for you—here it is." So saying, he threw it carelessly on the chimney-piece, and continued: "I must tell you a secret of poor De Beauvais, for I know you feel interested in him. You must know, then, that our friend is desperately in love with a very beautiful cousin of his own, one of the suite of Madame Bonaparte. She's a well-known Court beauty; and if you had seen more of the Tuileries, you'd have heard of La Rose de Provence."

"I have seen her, I think," muttered I, as my cheek grew crimson, and my lips trembled.

"Well," resumed the Abbé, and without noticing my embarrassment, "this love affair, which I believe began long ago, and might have ended in marriage—for there is no disparity of rank, no want of wealth, nor any other difficulty to prevent it—has been interrupted by General Bonaparte, because, and for no other reason, mark ye, than that De Beauvais's family were Bourbonists. His father was a captain of the Garde du Corps, and his grandfather a grand falconer, or something or other, with Louis XV. Now, the young marquis was well enough inclined to go with the current of events in France. The order of things once changed, he deemed it best to follow the crowd, and frequented the Tuileries like many others of his own politics—I believe you met him there—till one morning lately he resolved to try his fortune where the game was his all. And he waited on Madame Bonaparte to ask her consent to his marriage with his cousin—for I must tell you that she is an orphan, and in all such cases the parental right is exercised by the head of the government. Madame referred him coldly to the General, who received him more coldly still, and instead of replying to his suit, as he expected, broke out into invectives against De Beauvais's friends—called them *chouans* and assassins—said they never ceased to plot against his life with his most invete-

rate enemies, the English—that the exiled family maintained a corps of spies in Paris, of whom he half suspected him to be one; and, in a word, contrived to heap more insult on him in one quarter of an hour than, as he himself said, his whole family had endured from the days of St. Louis to the present. De Beauvais from that hour absented himself from the Tuileries, and indeed almost entirely from Paris—now living with his friends in Normandy, now spending a few weeks in the south; but at last he has determined on his course, and means to leave France forever. I believe the object of his coming here at this moment is to see his cousin for the last time. Perhaps his note to you has some reference to it."

I took the letter with a trembling hand—a fear of something undefined was over me—and, tearing it open, read as follows:

"DEAR FRIEND,—The Abbé d'Ervan will deliver this into your hands, and, if you wish it, explain the reason of the request it contains, which is simply that you will afford me the shelter of your quarters for one day in the park at Versailles. I know the difficulty of your position; and if any other means under heaven presented itself I should not ask the favor, which, although I pledge my honor not to abuse, I shall value as the dearest a whole life's gratitude can repay. My heart tells me that you will not refuse the last wish of one you will never see after this meeting. I shall wait at the gate below the Trianon at eleven o'clock on Friday night, when you can pass me through the sentries.

"Yours, ever and devoted,

"HENRI DE BEAUVAIS."

"The thing is impossible," said I, laying down the letter on the table, and staring over at D'Ervan.

"No more so, dear friend, than what you have done for me this evening, and which, I need not tell you, involves no risk whatever. Here am I now, without pass or countersign, your guest—the partaker of as good a supper and as excellent a glass of wine as man need care for. In an hour hence—say two at most—I shall be on my way over to St. Cloud. Who is, then, I ask you, to be the wiser? You'll not put me down in the night report—don't start—I repeat it—you can't do it; for I had no countersign to pass through: and as the Consul reads these sheets every morning, you are not going to lose your commission for the sake of an absurd punctilio that nobody on earth will thank you for. Come, come, my worthy lieutenant, these same excellent scruples of yours savor far more of the scholar at the rigid old Polytechnique than the young officer of hussars. Help me to that ortolan there, and pass the bottle. There—a bumper of such a vintage is a good reward for so much talking."

While the abbé continued to exert himself by many a flippant remark, and many a smart anecdote, to dissipate the gloom that now fell over my spirits, I grew only more and more silent. The one false step I had taken already presented itself before me as the precedent for further wrong, and I knew not what course to take, nor how to escape from my dilemma.

"I say, lieutenant," said D'Ervan, after a pause of some minutes, during which he had never ceased to regard me with a fixed, steady stare, "you are about as unlike the usual character of your countrymen as one can well conceive."

"How so?" said I, half smiling at the remark.

"All the Irishmen I have ever seen," replied he—"and I have known some scores of them—were bold, dashing, intrepid fellows, that cared nothing for an enterprise if danger had no share in it—who loved a difficulty as other men love safety—who had an instinct for where their own reckless courage would give them an advantage over all others, and took life easily, under the conviction that every day could present the circumstance where a ready wit and a stout heart could make the way to fortune. Such were the Irish I knew in the Brigade; and though not a man of the number had ever seen what they called the Green Island, they were as unlike English, or French, or Germans, or any other people, as—as the old court of Louis XIV. was unlike the guard-room style of reception that goes on now-a-days yonder."

"What you say may be just," said I coolly; "and if I seem to have few features of that headlong spirit which is the gift of my nation, the circumstances of my boyhood could well explain, perhaps excuse them. From my earliest years I have had to struggle against ills that many men, in a long lifetime, do not meet with. If suspicion and distrust have crept or stolen into my heaat, it is from watching the conduct of those I deemed high-spirited and honorable, and seeing them weak, and vacillating, and faithless. And lastly, if every early hope that stirred my heart does but wane and pale within me, as stars go out when day is near, you cannot wonder that I, who stand alone here, without

ome or friend, should feel a throb of fear t aught which may tarnish a name that as yet no memory of past services to rely pon. And if you knew how sorely such motions war against the spirit that lives ere, believe me you had never made the eproach—my punishment is enough already."

"Forgive me, my dear boy, if I said nything could wound you for a moment," aid the Abbé. "This costume of mine, hey say, gives a woman's privilege, and ruly I believe it does something of the ex's impertinence also. I ought to have known you better, and I do know you better by this time. And now let me press a request I made some half an hour ago—tell me this same story of yours. I long to learn something of the little boy where I feel such affection for the man."

The look of kindness and the tone of soothing interest that accompanied these words I could not resist; so, drawing my chair close toward him, I began the narrative of my life. He listened with the most eager attention to my account of the political condition of Ireland, questioned me closely as to my own connection with the intrigues of the period; and when I mentioned the name of Charles de Meudon, a livid paleness overspread his features as he asked, in a low, hollow tone, if I were with him when he died?

"Yes," replied I, "by his bedside."

"Did he ever speak to you of me? Did he ever tell you much of his early life when in Provence?"

"Yes, yes; he spoke often of those happy days in the old château, where his sister, on whom he doted to distraction, was his companion. Hers was a sad story, too. Strange, is it not, I have never heard of her since I came to France?"

A long pause followed these words, and the abbé leaned his head upon his hand, and seemed to be lost in thought.

"She was in love with her cousin," I continued, "and Charles, unhappily, refused his consent. Unhappily, I say, for he wept over his conduct on his death-bed."

"Did he?" cried the Abbé, with a start, while his eye flashed fire, and his nostrils swelled and dilated like a chafed horse. "Did he do this?"

"Yes, bitterly he repented it; and although he never confessed it, I could see that he had been deceived by others, and turned from his own high-souled purpose respecting his sister. I wonder what became of Claude—he entered the Church."

"Ay, and lies there now," replied the Abbé, sternly.

"Poor fellow! is he dead, too? and so young."

"Yes. He contrived to entangle himself in some Jacobite plot."

"Why, he was a royalist."

"So he was. It might have been another conspiracy, then—some Chouan intrigue. Whatever it was, the government heard of it; he was arrested at the door of his own *presbytère;* the grenadiers were drawn up in his own garden, and he was tried, condemned, and shot in less than an hour. The officer of the company ate the dinner that was preparing for him."

"What a destiny! And Marie de Meudon?"

"Hush? the name is proscribed. The De Meudons professed strong royalist opinions, and Bonaparte would not permit her bearing her family name. She is known by that of her mother's family, except by those poor minions of the Court, who endeavor, with their *fade* affectation, to revive the graceful pleasantries of Marie Antoinette's time, and they call her La Rose de Provence."

"La Rose de Provence," cried I, springing up from my chair, "the sister of Charles!" while a thrill of ecstasy ran through my frame, followed the moment after by a cold, faint feeling; and I sank almost breathless in the chair.

"Ha!" cried the Abbé, leaning over me, and holding the lamp close to my face, "what—" And then, as he resumed his place, he slowly muttered between his teeth, "I did not dream of this."

Not a word was now spoken by either. The abbé sat mute and motionless, his eyes bent upon the floor, and his hands clasped before him. As for me, every emotion of hope and fear, joy and sorrow, succeeded each other in my mind; and it was only as I thought of De Beauvais once more that a gloomy despair spread itself before me, and I remembered that he loved her, and how the abbé hinted his passion was returned.

"The day is breaking," said D'Ervan, as he opened the shutter and looked out; "I must away. Well, I hope I may tell my poor friend De Beauvais that you'll not refuse his request. Charles de Meudon's sister may have a claim on your kindness too."

"If I thought that she—"

"You mean, that she loved him. You must take his word for that. She is not likely to make a confidant of you; besides, he tells you it's a last meeting. You can scarcely say nay. Poor girl, he is the only one remaining to her of all her house. On

his departure, you are not more a stranger here than is she in the land of her fathers."

"I'll do it, I'll do it," cried I, passionately. "Let him meet me where he mentioned. I'll be there."

"That's as it should be," said the Abbé, grasping my hand, and pressing it fervently; "but come, don't forget you must pass me through this same cordon of yours."

With a timid and shrinking heart I walked beside the abbé across the open terrace, toward the large gate, which with its bronzed and gilded tracery was already shining in the rich sunlight.

"A fine-looking fellow, that dragoon yonder; he's decorated, I see."

"Yes; an old hussar of the Garde."

"What's he called?"

"Pierre Dulong; a name well known in his troop."

"*Halte là!*" cried the soldier, as we approached.

"Your officer," said I.

"The word?"

"Arcole."

"Pass, 'Arcole,' and good morrow."

"Adieu, lieutenant—adieu, Pierre," said the Abbé, as he waved his hand and passed out.

I stood for a minute or two uncertain of purpose; why, I know not. The tone of the last few words seemed uttered in something like a sneer. "What folly, though!" said I to myself. "D'Ervan is a strange fellow, and it is his way."

"We shall meet soon, abbé," I cried out, as he was turning the corner of the park wall.

"Yes, yes, rely on it, we shall meet—and soon."

He kept his word.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LA ROSE DE PROVENCE.

THE one thought that dwelt in my mind the entire day was, that Marie de Rochfort was Charles de Meudon's sister. The fact once known, seemed to explain that secret power she exercised over my hopes and longings. The spell her presence threw around ever as she passed me in the park; that strange influence with which the few words I had heard her speak still remained fast-rooted in my memory; all these did I attribute to the hold her name had taken of my heart, as I sat night after night listening to her brother's stories. And then, why had I not guessed it earlier?—why had I not perceived the striking resemblance which it now seemed impossible to overlook? The dark eye, beaming beneath a brow squarely chiseled like an antique cameo; the straight nose and short, upturned lip, where a half-saucy look seemed struggling with a sweet smile; and then the voice—was it not his own rich, southern accent, tempered by her softer nature? Yes; I should have known her. In reflections like these I made my round of duty, my whole heart wrapped up in this discovery. I never thought of De Beauvais, or his letter. It seemed to me as though I had known her long and intimately; she was not the Rose de Provence of the Court—the admired of the Tuileries—the worshiped belle of Versailles—but Marie de Meudon, the sister of one who loved me as a brother.

There was a dark alley near the Trianon, that led along the side of a little lake, where rocks and creeping plants, rudely grouped together, gave a half-wild aspect to the scene. The tall beech and the drooping ash-trees that grew along the bank threw their shadows far across the still water; and here I had remarked that Mademoiselle de Meudon came frequently alone. It was a place, from its look of shade and gloom, little likely to attract the gay visitors of the Court, who better loved the smoothly-shaven grass of the palace walks, or the broad terraces where bright fountains were plashing. Since I discovered that she avoided me when we met, I had never taken this path on my rounds, although leading directly to one of my outposts, but preferred rather a different and longer route. Now, however, I sought it eagerly, and, as I hurried on, I dreaded lest my unwonted haste might excite suspicion. I resolved to see and speak to her. It was her brother's wish that I should know her; and till now I felt as though my great object in coming to France was unobtained, if I knew not her whose name was hallowed in my memory. Poor Charles used to tell me she would be a sister to me. How my heart trembled at the thought! As I drew near I stopped to think how she might receive me; with what feelings hear me speak of one who was the cause of all her unhappiness. But then they said she loved De Beauvais. What! was poor Claude forgotten? Was all the love-dream of her first affection passed? My thoughts ran wild as different impulses struggled through them, and I could resolve on nothing. Before me, scarcely a dozen paces, and alone, she stood, looking on the calm lake, where the light

golden and green patches played, as it struggled through the dense foliage. The flattering of my sabre startled her, and, without looking back, she dropped her vail, and moved slowly on.

"Mademoiselle de Meudon," said I, taking off my shako, and bowing deeply before her.

"What—how! Why this name, sir? Don't you know it's forbidden here?"

"I know it, madame; but it is by that name alone I dare to speak to you; it was by that I learned to know you—from one who loved you, and who did not reject my humble heart—one who, amid all the trials of hard fate, felt the hardest to be—the wrong he did his sister."

"Did you speak of my brother Charles?" said she, in a voice low and tremulous.

"I did, madame. The last message his lips ever uttered was given to me, and for you. Not until last night did I know that I was every hour of the day so near to one whose name was treasured in my heart."

"Oh! tell me of him—tell me of my dear Charles!" cried she, as the tears ran fast down her pale cheeks. "Where was his death? Was it among strangers that he breathed his last? Was there one there who loved him?"

"There was—there was!" cried I, passionately, unable to say more.

"And where was that youth that loved him so tenderly? I heard of him as one who never left his side—tending him in sickness, and watching beside him in sorrow. Was he not there?"

"I was—I was. My hand held his. In my ear his last sigh was breathed."

"Oh! was it you indeed who were my brother's friend?" said she, seizing my hand and pressing it to her lips. The hot tears dropped heavily on my wrist, and in my ecstasy I knew not where I was. "Oh!" cried she, passionately, "I did not think that in my loneliness such a happiness as this remained for me. I never dreamed to see and speak to one who knew and loved my own dear Charles—who could tell me of his solitary hours of exile; what hopes and fears stirred that proud heart of his; who could bring back to me in all their force again the bright hours of our happy youth, when we were all to each other; when our childhood knew no greater bliss than that we loved. Alas! alas! how short-lived was it all! He lies buried beyond the sea in the soil of the stranger, and I live on to mourn over the past, and shudder at the future. But come, let us sit down upon this bank. You must not leave me till I hear all about him. Where did you meet first?"

We sat down upon a grassy bench beside the stream, where I at once began the narrative of my first acquaintance with De Meudon. At first the rush of sensations that came crowding on me made me speak with difficulty and effort. The flutter of her dress as the soft wind waved it to and fro, the melody of her voice, and her full, languid eye, where sorrow and long-buried affection mingled their expression, sent thrilling through my heart thoughts that I dared not dwell upon. Gradually, as I proceeded, my mind recurred to my poor friend, and I warmed as I spoke of his heroic darings and his bold counsels. All his high-souled ardor, all the nobleness of his great nature, his self-devotion and his suffering, were again before me, mingled with those traits of womanly softness which only belong to those whose courage is almost fanaticism. How her dark eyes grew darker as she listened, and her parted lips and her fast-heaving bosom betrayed the agitation that she felt! And how that proud look melted into sorrow when I told of the day when his outpouring heart recurred to home and her, the loved one of his boyhood!

Every walk in that old terraced garden, each grassy alley, and each shady seat, I knew as though I saw them. Although I did not mention Claude, not even distinctly allude to the circumstances which led to their unhappiness, I could see that her cheek became paler and paler, and that, despite an increased effort to seem calm, the features moved with a slight jerking motion, her lip trembled convulsively, and, with a low, sad sigh, she fell back fainting.

I sprang down the bank toward the lake, and in an instant dipped my shako in the water; and as I hastened back, she was sitting up, her eyes staring madly round her, her look wild almost to insanity, while her outstretched finger pointed to the copse of low beech near us.

"There, there! I saw him!" said she. "He was there now. Look! look!" Shocked at the terrified expression of her features, and alarmed lest my story had conjured up before her disordered imagination the image of her lost brother, I spoke to her in words of encouragement. "No, no," replied she to my words; "I saw *him*—I heard *his* voice, too. Let us leave this. Bring me to the Trianon; and—" The terrified and eager look she threw around at each word did not admit of longer parley, and I drew her arm with-

in mine to lead her forward. "This is no fancy, as you deem it," said she, in a low and broken tone, to which an accent of bitterness lent a terrible power; "nor could the grave give up before me one so full of terror to my heart as him I saw there." Her head sank heavily as she uttered this; and, notwithstanding every effort I made, she spoke no more, nor would give me any answer to my questions regarding the cause of her fears. As we walked forward we heard the sound of voices, which she at once recognized as belonging to the Court party, and pressing my hand slightly, she motioned me to leave her. I pressed the pale fingers to my lips, and darted away, my every thought bent on discovering the cause of her late fright. In an instant I was back beside the lake. I searched every copse and every brake. I wandered for hours through the dark woods, but nothing could I see. I stooped to examine the ground, but could not even detect the pressure of a footstep. The dried branches lay unbroken, and the leaves unpressed around; and I at last became convinced that an excited brain, and a mind harassed by a long sorrow, had conjured up the image she spoke of. As I approached the picket, which was one of the most remote in my rounds, I resolved to ask the sentry had he seen any one.

"Yes, lieutenant," said the soldier; "a man passed some short time ago in an undress uniform. He gave the word, and I let him proceed."

"Was he old or young?"

"Middle-aged, and of your height."

"Which way did he take?"

"He turned toward the left as he passed out; I lost sight of him then."

I hurried immediately onward, and entered the wood by the path in the direction mentioned, my mind painfully excited by what I heard, and resolved to do everything to probe this matter to the bottom; but, though I walked miles in every direction, I met none save a few fagot-gatherers, and they had not seen any one like him I sought for. With a weary and a heavy heart I turned toward my quarters, all the happiness of my morning dashed by the strange event I have related. My night was feverish and disturbed: for a long time I could not sleep, and, when I did, wild and terrible fancies came on me, and I started up in terror. A horrible face recurred at every instant to my mind's eye; and even when awake, the least noise, the slightest rustling of the leaves in the park, agitated and excited me. At last, worn out with the painful struggle between sleep and waking, I arose and dressed. The day was breaking, and already the birds were caroling to the rising sun. I strolled out into the park. The fresh and bracing air of morning cooled my burning brow; the mild influences of the hour, when sweet perfumes float softly in the dew-loaded breeze, soothed and calmed me; and I wandered back in thought to her who already had given a charm to my existence I never knew before.

The long-wished-for dream of my boyhood was realized at last. I knew the sister of my friend. I sat beside her, and heard her speak to me in tones so like his own. I was no longer the friendless alien, without one to care for, one to feel interested in his fortunes. The isolation that pressed so painfully on me fled before that thought, and now I felt raised in my own esteem by those dark eyes that thanked me as I spoke of poor Charles. What a thrill that look sent through my heart! Oh, did she know the power of that glance! Could she foresee what seeds of high ambition her every smile was sowing! The round of my duty was to me devoid of all fatique, and I returned to my quarters with a light step and a lighter heart.

The entire day I lingered about the Trianon and near the lake, but Marie never came, nor did she appear in the walks at all. "Was she ill? had the vision, whatever it was, of yesterday, preyed upon her health?" were my first thoughts, and I inquired eagerly if any doctor had been seen about the château; but no, nothing unusual seemed to have occurred, and a ball was to take place that very evening. I would have given worlds, were they mine, even to know in what part of the palace she was lodged; and fifty times did I affect to have some duty, as an excuse to cross the terrace, and steal a cautious glance toward the windows, but in vain.

So engrossed was my mind with thoughts of her that I forgot all else. The pickets, too, I had not visited since daybreak, and my report to the minister remained unfilled. It was late in the evening when I sallied forth to my duty, and night, with scarce a star, was falling fast. My preoccupation prevented my feeling the way as I walked along; and I had already visited all the outposts except one, when a low, faint whistle, that seemed to issue from the copse near me, startled me. It was repeated after a moment, and I called out,

"Who's there? Advance."

"Ah, I thought it was you, Burke," said a voice I at once knew to be Beauvais's.

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I HAD NOW TIME TO LOOK AT HIM BY THE LIGHT, AND ALMOST STARTED BACK AT THE SPECTACLE THAT PRESENTED ITSELF. (P. 333.)

[ou broke faith with me at the town-
e yonder, and so I had to come down
e."
'How? You surely were not there
en I passed ?"
'Yes, but I was, though. Did you not
the woodcutter, with his blouse on his
, lighting his pipe at the door of the
rdhouse ?"
"Yes; but you can't mean that it was
."
"Do you remember his saying, 'Buy a
ap *charretée* of wood, lieutenant—I'll
ve it at your quarters ?'"
"De Beauvais," said I, gravely, "these
ks may be fatal to us both. My orders
positive, and if I disobey them there
no powerful friends nor high relatives
screen me from a deserving punish-
nt."
"What folly you speak, Burke! If I did
t know you better, I should say you
udged me the hospitality I have myself
ked you for. One night to rest—and I
ed it much, if you knew but all—and
e day to speak to Marie, and you have
ne with me. Is that too much ?"
"No—not if I did not betray a trust in
eltering you, far too little to speak of,
uch less thank me for; but—"
"Do spare me these scruples, and let us
ke the shortest way to your quarters; a
pper, and three chairs to sleep on, are
rth all your arguments, eloquent though
ey be."
We walked on together, almost in si-
nce; I overwhelmed with fear for the re-
lt should my conduct ever become known,
evidently chagrined at my reception of
im, and little disposed to make allowances
r scruples he would not have respected
imself.
"So here we are at last," said he, as he
rew himself on my little sofa, seemingly
orn out with exhaustion. I had now time
look at him by the light, and almost
arted back at the spectacle that presented
elf. His dress, which was that of the
eanest peasant, was ragged and torn; his
hoes scarce held together with coarse
hongs, and his beard, unshaven for weeks
ast, increased the haggard look of features
here actual want and starvation seemed
mpressed. "You are surprised at my
ostume," said he, with a sad smile; "and,
certes, Crillac would not court a customer
habited as I am just now; but what will you
ay when I assure you that the outward
man—and you will not accuse him of any
voluptuous extravagance—has a very great
advantage over the inner one? In plain
words, lieutenant, you'd hurry your cook,
if you knew I have not tasted food, save
what the hedges afford, for two days; not
from poverty neither; there's wherewithal
there to dine, even at Beauvilliers's." He
rattled a well-filled purse as he spoke.

"Come, come, De Beauvais, you accuse
me of doing the honors with a bad grace,
and, in truth, I wish I were your host
outside the pickets; but let me retrieve my
character a little—taste this capon."

"If you never dined with a wolf you
shall now," said he, drawing his chair to
the table and filling a large goblet with
Burgundy. For ten or fifteen minutes he
ate on like a man whom long starvation
had rendered half savage; then ceasing
suddenly, he looked up, and said: "Lieu-
tenant, the cuisine here might tempt a
more fastidious man than I am; and if
these people are not hospitable enough to
invite you to their *soirées*, they certainly
do not starve you at home."

"How knew you that I was not asked to
the château?" said I, reddening with a
sense of offended pride I could not con-
ceal.

"Know it? Why, man, these things
are known at once; people talk of them in
saloons and morning visits, and comment
on them in promenades; and though I
seem not to have been keeping company
with the *beau monde* latterly, I hear what
goes on there too. But trust me, boy, if
your favor stands not high with the Court
of to-day, you may perhaps be preparing
the road to fortune with that of to-mor-
row."

"Though you speak in riddle, De Beau-
vais, so long as I suspect that what you
mean would offer insult to those I serve,
let me say—and I say it in all temper but in
all firmness—you'll find no ready listener
in me. The highest favor I aspire to is
the praise of our great chief, General Bo-
naparte, and here I pledge his health."

"I'll drink no more wine to-night," said
he sulkily, pushing his glass before him.
"Is this to be my bed?"

"Of course not; mine is ready for you.
I'll rest on the sofa there; for I shall have
to visit my pickets by daybreak."

"In Heaven's name, for what?" said he,
with a half sneer. "What can that poor
Savary be dreaming of? Is there any one
about to steal the staircase of the Louvre,
or the clock from the pavilion of the Tui-
leries? or is it the savants of the Institute
he's afraid of losing?"

"Rail on, my good friend; you'll find
it very hard to make an old scholar of the
Polytechnique think poorly of the man that
gains battles."

"Well, well, I give up my faith in physiognomy. Do you remember that same evening in the Tuileries, when I asked your pardon, and begged to be your friend? I thought you a different fellow then from what I see you now; that silly hussar pelisse has turned many a head before yours."

"You wish to make me angry, De Beauvais, and you'll not succeed. A night's rest will bring you to a better temper with all the world."

"Will it, faith! In that case a tolerably large portion of it must take leave of it before morning; for I promise, you, my worthy hussar, there are some I don't expect to feel so very charitably toward as you expect."

"Well, well—what say you to bed?"

"I'll sleep where I am," said he, with some harshness in his tone. "Good-night." The words were scarcely uttered when he turned on his side, and, shading his eyes from the light with his hand, fell fast asleep.

It was already past midnight, and as I was fatigued with my day's walking, I soon retired to my bed, but not to rest. Whenever I closed my eyes, Beauvais's pale and worn face seemed before me—the haggard expression of suffering and privation; and then I fell to thinking what enterprise of danger could involve him in such necessities as these. It must be one of peril, or he had not become what now I saw him. His very voice was changed—its clear, manly tone was now harsh and dissonant; his frank and cheerful look was downcast and suspicious.

At last, worn out with thinking, I fell asleep, but was suddenly awakened by a voice shouting from the outer room. I sat up and listened. It was De Beauvais, calling wildly for help; the cry grew fainter, and soon sank into the long-drawn respiration of repose. Poor fellow! even in his dreams his thoughts were of strife and danger.

CHAPTER XXX.

A "WARNING."

THE day was just breaking when I was up and stirring, resolving to visit the pickets before De Beauvais awoke, for even still the tone of ridicule he assumed was strong before me. I passed stealthily through the room where he was still sleeping: the faint light streamed through the half-closed shutters, and fell upon a face so pale, so haggard, and so worn, that I started back in horror. How altered was he, indeed, from what I had seen him first! The cheek once ruddy with the flush of youth was now pinched and drawn in; the very lips were bloodless, as if not illness alone, but long fasting from food, had pressed upon him. His hair, too, which used to fall upon his shoulders and on his neck in rich and perfumed locks, silky and delicate as a girl's, was now tangled and matted, and hung across his face and temples wild and straggling. Even to his hands his changed condition was apparent; for they were torn and bleeding; while in the attitude of sleep, you could trace the heavy unconscious slumber of one utterly worn out and exhausted. His dress was of the coarse stuff the peasants wear in their blouses, and even that seemed old and worn. What strange career had brought him down to this I could not think; for poor as all seemed about him, his well-stocked purse showed that this costume was worn rather for disguise than necessity. Such was my first thought; my second, more painful still, recurred to her he loved, by whom he was, perhaps, beloved in turn. Oh! if anything can add to the bitter smart of jealousy, it is the dreadful conviction that she for whom our heart's best blood would flow to insure one hour of happiness, has placed her whole life's fortune on the veriest chance, bestowing her love on one whose life gives no guarantee for the future—no hope, no pledge, that the world's wildest schemes of daring and ambition are not dearer to his eyes than all her charms and affections. How does our own deep devotion come up before us contrasted with this! and how, in the consciousness of higher motives and more ennobling thoughts, do we still feel inferior to him who, if poor in all besides, is rich in her love. Such envious feelings filled my heart as I looked on him; and with slow, sad step I moved on, when by accident I came against a chair, and threw it down. The noise awoke him, and with a spring he was on his legs, and, drawing a pistol from his bosom, cried out,

"Ha!—what is't? Why, Burke, it's you! What hour is it?"

"Not four yet. I'm sorry to have disturbed you, De Beauvais; but the chair here—"

"Yes, yes, I placed it so last night. I felt so very heavy that I could not trust myself with waking to a slight noise. Where to, so early? Ah! these pickets—I forgot." And with that he lay down again, and before I left the house was fast asleep once more.

Some trifling details of duty detained me at one or two of the outposts, and it was beyond my usual time when I turned homeward. I had but just reached the broad alley that leads to the foot of the great terrace, when I saw a figure before me hastening onward toward the château. The flutter of the dress showed it to be a woman, and then the thought flashed on me—it was Mademoiselle de Meudon. Yes, it was her step—I knew it well. She had left the palace thus early to meet De Beauvais. Without well knowing what I did, I had increased my speed, and was now rapidly overtaking her, when the noise of my footsteps on the ground made her turn about and look back. I stopped short suddenly. An indistinct sense of something culpable on my part, in thus pursuing her, flitted across my mind, and I could not move. There she stood, too, motionless; but for a second or two only, and then beckoned to me with her hand. I could scarcely trust my eyes, nor did I dare to stir till she had repeated the motion twice or thrice.

As I drew near, I remarked that her eyes were red with weeping, and her face pale as death. For a moment she gazed steadfastly at me, and then, with a voice whose accent I can never forget, she said,

"And you, too, the dearest friend of my own Charles, whose very deathbed spoke of loyalty to him, how have you been drawn from your allegiance?"

I stood amazed and astounded, unable to utter a word in reply, when she resumed:

"For them there is reason, too. They lived, or their fathers did, in the sunshine of the old monarchy. Wealth, rank, riches, power—all were theirs: but you, who came amongst us with high hopes of greatness, where others have earned them on the field of battle—whose youth is a guarantee that base and unworthy thoughts should form no part of his motives, and whose high career began under the very eyes of him, the idol of every soldier's heart—oh! why turn from such a path as this, to dark and crooked ways, where low intrigue, and plot, and treachery are better weapons than your own stout heart, and your own bright sword?"

"Hear me, I pray you," said I, bursting into impatience—"hear me but one word, and know that you accuse me wrongfully. I have no part in, nor have I knowledge of, any treason."

"Oh, speak not thus to me. There are those who may call their acts by high-sounding titles, and say—'We are but restoring our own sovereigns to the land they owned;' but you are free to think and feel. No prestige of long years blinds your reason, or obstructs your sense of right."

"Once more I swear, that though I can but guess at where your suspicions point, my faith is now as true, my loyalty as firm, as when I pledged myself at your dear brother's side to be a soldier."

"Then why have you mixed yourself with their intrigues? Why are you already suspected? Why has Madame Bonaparte received orders to omit your name in all the invitations to the château?"

"Alas! I know not. I learn now, for the first time, that suspicion ever attached to me."

"It is said, too—for already such things are spoken of—that you know that dreadful man, whose very presence is contamination. Oh! does it not seem like fate, that his dark path should traverse every portion of my destiny?"

The sobs that burst from her at these words seemed to rend her very bosom.

"They say," continued she, while her voice trembled with strong emotion—"they say he has been here."

"I know not of whom you speak," said I, as a cold chill ran through my blood.

"Mehée de la Touche," replied she, with an effort.

"I never heard of him till now—the very name is unknown to me."

"Thank God for this," muttered she between her teeth. "I thought, perhaps, that De Beauvais had made you known to each other."

"No; De Beauvais never introduced me, save to some friends of his one evening at a supper, several months back; and only one of them have I ever seen since, an Abbé d'Ervan; and, indeed, if I am guilty of any breach of duty, I did not think the reproach was to come from you."

The bitterness of these last words was wrung from me in a moment of wounded pride.

"How! what mean you?" said she, impetuously. "No one has dared to call my fidelity into question, nor speak of me as false to those who cherish and protect me."

"You mistake my meaning," said I, sadly and slowly; then hesitating how far I should dare allude to De Beauvais's affection, I stopped, when suddenly her face became deeply flushed, and a tear started to her eye. "Alas, she loves him," said I to my heart, and a sickness like death passed over me.

"Leave me, leave me quickly," cried she. "I see persons watching us from the terrace." And with that, she moved hastily

on toward the château, and I turned into one of the narrow walks that led into the wood.

Two trains of thought struggled for mastery in my mind: how had I become suspected? how should I wipe out the stain upon my honor?

There was not an incident of my life since my landing in France I did not call to mind; and yet, save in the unhappy meeting with De Beauvais, I could see not the slightest probability that even malevolence could attach anything to my reputation. From D'Ervan, it is true, I heard more than once opinions that startled me; less, however, by anything direct in their meaning, than that they were totally new and strange; and yet the abbé, I had every reason to believe, was a friend of the present government—at least it was evident he was on terms of close intimacy with Monsieur Savary.

"De Beauvais must clear up some of these doubts for me," thought I; "he must inform me more particularly as to those to whom he introduced me. I shall endeavor to learn, too, something of their schemes, and thus guard myself against the mere chance of suspicion, for unquestionably he is not in ignorance of the movement, whatever it be." And with such intentions I hurried onward, eager to reach my quarters.

As I entered my room, a low, heavy sob broke on my ear; I started back with surprise. It was De Beauvais, who sat, his head buried in his hands, leaning on the table.

"Ha!" said he, springing up, and passing his hand hurriedly across his eyes, "so soon back! I scarcely expected you."

"It is past ten o'clock—a full hour later than my usual return."

"Indeed!" rejoined he, with an air of impertinent surprise. "So then your pickets have been arresting and detaining some poor devils gathering fagots or acorns; or have you unfathomed the depth of this terrible plot your Préfet de Police has become insane about?"

"Neither," said I, affecting a careless tone. "The government of the Consul is sufficiently strong to make men's minds easy on that score. Whatever intrigues are at work, they are as little likely to escape his keen eye as their perpetrators are, when taken, the fire of a grenadier company."

"*Ma foi*, sir, you speak confidently," replied he, in an accent of pride totally different from his former tone. "And yet I have heard of persons just as confident, too, who afterward confessed they had been mistaken. But, perhaps, it seems less strange to you that a sous-lieutenant of artillery should rule the destinies of France, than that the king of the country should resume the throne of his ancestors."

"Take care, De Beauvais, with whom you speak. I warn you; and be assured I'll not be trifled with. One word more, and I put you under arrest."

"Not here, surely," replied he, in a low and searching voice. "Not here. Let us walk out into the park—let it be in the great alley, or on the terrace yonder; or, better still, let the capture take place in the wood; but do not let your loyalty violate the hospitality of your home."

"Forgive me, I pray; I knew not what I said. You tempted me sorely, though. Think but for a moment, De Beauvais, how I stand here, and let your own heart judge me. I am an alien—a friendless stranger. There lives not one in all the length and breadth of France who would raise a finger, or speak one word to save me, were my head in peril. My sword and my fidelity are all my hope; that both should remain pure and unblemished is all my wish. The grade I have I owe to him—"

"Great cause for gratitude, truly," he broke in. "The chief *élève* of the Polytechnique is made a sous-lieutenant of cavalry, with functions of a sergeant of the *gendarmerie;* with orders to stop all travelers and search their pockets. Shame on it! It was not thus the rightful sovereigns of France regarded those who wore their epaulettes—not thus did they esteem the soldier's part. Think, for a second, what you are, and then reflect what you might be. Cold and unimpassioned as you call yourself, I know your heart better. There lives not one who treasures a higher ambition in his breast than you. Ah! your eyes sparkle already. Think, then, I say, what a career opens before you, if you have courage to embrace it. It's a great game that enables a man to spring from sous-lieutenant to colonel of a regiment. Come, Burke, I can have no reason, save your welfare, to press these considerations on you. What are you writing there?"

"A report to the Préfet de Police. I see now, however late it is, the unworthiness of the part I have acted, in remaining in a service where I've listened to statements such as these. I shall ask to have my grade withdrawn, and be reduced to the ranks; there, perhaps, I may be permitted to carry a soldier's musket without a stain upon my honor."

"You can do better, sir," interrupted he, as his face grew purple with passion,

and his eyes flashed fire—"far better: call up your dragoons yonder, and place me, where you threatened, under arrest; forward your report to the minister, that Henri de Beauvais, Marquis et Pair de France, when such things were, has been taken with the 'Croix de St. Louis' and the *cordon* in his possession." Here he took from his bosom the decoration, and waved it above his head. "Add, too, that he came prepared to tempt your loyalty with this." He drew forth at the words a parchment document, and dashed it on the table before me.

"There, sir, read it; it is the king's own handwriting—your brevet of colonel to a regiment of the Gardes. Such proofs of your devotion can scarcely go unrewarded. They may raise you to the rank of police spy. There is a lady yonder, too, who should also share in your elevation, as she does in your loyal sentiments—Mademoiselle de Meudon may be too quick for you. Lose no time, sir; such chances as these are not the fruit of every day. After all, I can scarcely go to the guillotine under better auspices than with my cousin and my *friend* as my betrayers. Mayhap, too, they'll do you the honor to make you mount guard beside the scaffold. Such an occasion to display your devotion should not escape you. David found it profitable to catch the expiring agonies of his own friends, as with easel and brush he sat beside the guillotine. The hint should not be lost."

The insulting emphasis with which he spoke the last words cut me to the very heart, and I stood speechless before him, trembling like a criminal.

"Let us part, De Beauvais," said I, at length, as I held my hand toward him. "Let us say adieu to each other, and forever. I can forgive all you have said to me far better than I could myself had I listened to your persuasions. What may be honorable and just in you would be black ingratitude and dark treachery in me. I shall now endeavor to forget we have ever met, and once more, good-by!"

"You are right," replied he, after a pause of some seconds, and in a tone of great sadness. "We never should have met. Adieu!"

"One word more, De Beauvais. I find that I have been suspected of some treasonable intercourse, that even here I am watched and spied upon; tell me, I beseech you, before you go, from what quarter comes this danger, that I may guard against it."

"In good truth, you give me credit for quicker perceptions than I have any right to. How so loyal a gentleman should lie under such an imputation, I cannot even guess."

"Your sneers shall not provoke me. The fact is as I state it; and if you will not help me to the discovery, tell me, at least, who are the persons to whom you introduced me formerly at Beauvilliers's?"

"Very excellent company! I trust none of them have cheated you at écarté."

"Pray, have done with jesting, and answer me. Who is your abbé?"

"*Ma foi*, he is the Abbé d'Ervan. What part of France he comes from—who are his family, friends, and resources—are all questions I have never thought proper to ask him, possibly because I am not so scrupulous on the score of my acquaintances as you are. He is a very clever, amusing, witty person—knows almost every one—has the *entrée* into every house in the Faubourg St. Germain—can compose a couplet, and sing it—make a mavonnaise or a madrigal better than any man I know—and, in fact, if he were one of these days to be a minister of France, I should not be so very much surprised as you appear this moment at my not knowing more about him. As to the other, the Russian Secretary, or spy, if you like the phrase better, he was unlucky enough to have one of his couriers robbed by a party of brigands, which, scandal says, were sent out for the purpose by Monsieur Talleyrand. His secret dispatches were opened and read; and as they were found to implicate the Russian government in certain intrigues carrying on, the Czar had only one course open, which was to recall the Sec., and disavow his whole proceedings. The better to evince his displeasure, I hear they have slit his nose, and sent him to pass the winter at Tobolsk. Lastly, the préfet—what shall I say of him, save that he was a préfet in the south, and wants to be one again. His greatest endeavors in any cause will be to pledge its success in Burgundy, or, if you wish, drink the downfall of its enemy; and as to his enthusiasm, he cares a devilish deal more for a change of weather than a change of dynasty, particularly in the truffle season, or when the vines are ripening. Such are the truly dangerous associates you have kept company with. It now only remains to speak of my humble self, whose history, I need scarcely say, is far more at your service than worth the hearing. Are you satisfied?"

"Quite so, as regards me; by no means so, however, as to your fate. Short as our intimacy has been, I have seen enough of you to know that qualities like yours should not be wasted in a mad or hopeless enterprise."

"Who told you it was either?" interrupted he, impetuously. "Who dares to say that the rule of a usurper is more firmly placed than the prestige of a monarchy, that goes back to Hugues Capet? Come, come! I will not discuss these questions with you, nor have I temper now left to do so. Give me the countersign to pass the sentry, and let us part."

"Not in anger, though, De Beauvais."

"Not in friendship, sir," replied he, proudly, as he waved back with his my proffered hand. "Adieu!" said he, in a softened tone, as he moved from the room, and then, turning quickly round, he added: "We may meet again hereafter, and scarcely can do so on equal terms. If fortune stand by you—I must be a beggar; should I win—yours is, indeed, a sorry lot. When that time comes, let him with whom the world goes best not forget the other. Good-by!" And with that he turned away, and left the house.

I watched him as he strode along the silent alleys, careless and free as though he had no cause for fear, till he disappeared in the dark wood, and then I sat down at the door to think over our interview. Never had my heart felt more depressed. My own weakness in having ever admitted the intimacy of men whose dangerous designs were apparent had totally undermined the strong principle of rectitude I should have relied upon in such a trial, and on which I could have thrown myself for support. What had I to guide me after all, save my devotion to the cause of Bonaparte himself? The prejudices of education—the leanings of family opinion—the inclinations of friends—exist not for the alien. He has to choose his allegiance—it is not born with him; his loyalty is not the growth of a hundred different sympathies, that have twined round his heart in childhood, and grown with him to manhood, speaking of home and infancy—of his own native streams and mountains—of a land that was his father's. No! with him it is not a conviction—it is but a feeling. Such was the substance of my reverie; and as I arose and strolled out into the park, it was with a deeply-uttered vow to be true to him and his fortunes whose name first lit the spark of ambition in my heart, and through weal or woe to devote myself to him.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE "CHATEAU."

THE same day that De Beauvais left me, the Court took its departure from Versailles. A sudden resolution of the Consul to visit the camp at Boulogne, where he was to be accompanied by Madame Bonaparte, was announced as the reason for this change, while a dark rumor ran that some detected scheme for his assassination had induced his friends to advise this step. Certain it was, the preparations were made with the utmost speed, and in less than an hour after the dispatch arrived from Paris, the Court was on its way back to the capital.

It was not without a sense of sadness that I watched the equipages as they rolled one by one from beneath the deep colonnade, and traversed the wide terrace, to disappear in the recesses of the dark forest. I strained my eyes to catch even a passing look at one, who to me had made every walk and every alley a thing to love. But I could not see her; and the last roll of the retiring wheels died away in the distance without one friendly voice to say adieu—one smile at parting.

Though I had not participated in the festivities of the château, nor even been noticed by any of the guests, the absence of its gay world, the glitter of its brilliant *cortége*, the neighing steeds in all their bright panoply, the clank of military music, the gorgeously dressed ladies who strolled along its terraced walks, made the solitude that followed appear dark and desolate indeed; and now, as I walked the park, whose avenues at noonday were silent as at midnight, the desertion imparted a melancholy feeling to my heart I could not explain. How often had I stopped beneath that balcony, striving to distinguish the soft tones of one gentle voice amid the buzz of conversation! How had I watched the crowded promenade every evening upon the terrace, to see one figure there among the rest!—and when my eye had fallen upon her, how has it followed and traced her as she went! And now I frequented each spot where I had ever seen her, pacing at sunset the very walk she used to take, dwelling on each word she ever spoke to me. The château, too, of which before I had not passed the door, I now revisited again and again, lingering in each room where I thought she had been, and even resting on the chairs, and calling up before me her image as though present.

Thus passed over weeks and months. The summer glided into the mellow autumn, and the autumn itself grew cold and chill, with grayish skies and sighing winds that swept the leaves along the dark walks, and moaned sadly among the tall

ech-trees. The still, calm waters of the tle lake, that reflected the bright foliage id the deep-blue sky, motionless as in a irror, was now ruffled by the passing reeze, and surged with a low, sad sound gainst its rocky sides; and as I watched hese changes, I sorrowed less for the depart-ng season, than that every trace of her I oved was fading from before me. The are and skeleton branches now threw their aunt shadows where I had seen her walk t noonday, enveloped in deep shade. Dark, watery clouds were hurrying across he surface of the stream where I had seen er fair form mirrored. The cold winds f coming winter swept along the princely errace, where not a zephyr rustled her lress as she moved; and, somehow, I ould not help connecting these changes with my own sensations, and feeling that a gloomy winter was approaching to my wn most cherished hopes.

Months passed over with me thus, in which, save on my round of duty, I never spoke to any one. D'Ervan did not return as he promised—a circumstance which, with all my solitude, I sincerely rejoiced at—and of De Beauvais I heard nothing; and yet, on one account, I could have wished much to learn where he was. Unhappily, in the excitement of the morning I last saw him, he forgot on the table at my quarters the commission of colonel, by which he had endeavored to tempt my ambition, and which I never noticed till several hours after his departure. Unwilling to destroy, and yet fearful of retaining it in my possession, I knew not well what to do, and had locked it up in my writing-desk, anxiously looking for an opportunity to forward it to him. None such, however, presented itself, nor did I ever hear from him from the hour he left me.

The unbroken solitude in which I lived disposed me to study, and I resumed the course which, in earlier days, had afforded me so much interest and amusement; and by this, not only was my mind drawn off from the contemplation of the painful circumstances of my own loneliness, but gradually my former ardor for military distinction came back in all its force; and thus did I learn, for the first time, how many of the griefs that our brains beget find their remedies in the source they spring from—the exercise of the intellect being like that of the body, an essential to a healthy state of thinking and feeling. Each day imparted fresh energy to me in the path I followed; and in these solitary hours I made those acquisitions in knowledge, which, in after-life, were to render me the most important services, and prepare me for the contingencies of a soldier's career.

While thus engaged, time rolled over, and already the dark and gloomy month of January set in with clouded skies and nights of storm and rain. Everything wore its most cheerless aspect. Not only were the trees leafless and bare, the roads broken up and fissured with streams of water, but the neglected look of the château itself bespoke the sad and gloomy season. The closed shutters, the closely-barred doors, the statues covered up with mats to protect them from the weather, the conservatories despoiled of all their gay habitants, betrayed that the time was past when, in the warm air of summer, happy groups wandered hither and thither, inhaling the rich odors of the flowers, and gazing on the brilliant landscape.

It was about nine o'clock at night. The storm that usually began each evening at the same hour was already stirring in fitful gusts among the bare branches of the trees, or sending a sudden plash of rain against the windows when, as I drew closer to my fire, and was preparing to enjoy myself for the evening over my book, I heard the regular tramping sound of a cavalry horse approaching along the terrace—the jingle of the accoutrements was a noise I could not mistake. I arose, but before I reached the door I heard a deep voice call out,

"The Sous-Lieutenant Burke—a dispatch from Paris."

I took the paper, which was sealed and folded in the most formal manner, and returning to the room opened it. The contents ran thus:

"Sous-Lieutenant,—On receipt of this you are commanded to station four dragoons of your party, with a corporal, on the road leading from Chaillot to Versailles, who shall detain all persons passing that way, unable to account satisfactorily for their presence. You will also station a picket of two dragoons at the cross-road from the Tron to St. Cloud for the like purpose. The remainder of your party to be under arms during the night, and, if requisite, at the disposal of Captain Lepelletier. For the execution of which the present order will be your responsibility.

(Signed)

"Savary,

"Colonel de Gendarmerie d'Elite.

"Given at the Tuileries, Jan. 14, 1804."

"So," thought I, "there is, then, some-

thing astir after all. These precautions all indicate minute and accurate information; and now to perform my part." Just at that instant I perceived at my feet a small note, which apparently had fallen from the envelope as I opened it—I took it up. It was addressed—"Sous-Lieutenant Burke," with the words "in haste" written in the corner. Tearing it open at once, I read the following:

"All is discovered—Pichegru arrested—Moreau at the Temple. A party have left this to capture the others at the Château d'Ancre; they cannot be there before midnight; you may then yet be in time to save H. de B., who is among them. Not an instant must be lost."

There was no signature to this strange epistle, but I knew from whom it came. Marie alone could venture on such a step to save her lover. My own determination was taken at once; should my head be on it, I'd do her bidding. While I sent for the sergeant to give him the orders of the colonel, I directed my servant to bring round my horse to the door as lightly equipped as possible, and, save the holsters, nothing of his usual accoutrements. Meanwhile I prepared myself for the road by loading my pistols and fastening on my sword; the commission, too, which De Beauvais had left behind, I did not forget, but taking it from my desk, I placed it safely in my bosom; nor was the brief billet omitted, which, having read and reread, I placed in the lining of my cap for safety. One difficulty still presented itself—where was the château, and how in the darkness of a winter's night should I find it? I just then remembered that my troop sergeant, a sharp, intelligent fellow, had been for some weeks past engaged in procuring forage about the neighborhood for several miles round. I sent for him at once and asked him if he knew it.

"Yes, lieutenant, perfectly. It was an old seigneurie once; and though much dismantled, has a look of respectability still about it. I've often been there to buy corn; but the gruff old farmer, they say, hates the military, and it's not easy to get him to deal with us at all."

"What's the distance from here."

"Two leagues and a half, almost three—indeed you may count it as much, the road is so bad."

"Now then for the way—describe it—be as brief as you can."

"You know the cross on the high-road beyond Ypres?"

"I do. Proceed."

"Passing the cross and the little shrine, go forward for a mile or something more, till you come to a small cabaret on the roadside, at the end of which you'll find a '*chemin de traverse*,' a clay road, which will lead you up the fields about half a league, to a large pond, where they water the cattle; cross this and continue till you see the lights of a village to your left; the barking of the dogs will guide you if the lights be out; don't enter the village, but go on till you meet an old gateway covered with ivy, enter there, and you are in the avenue of the château; the high-road is full five leagues about, but you'll easily find this way. There's a mastiff there you should be on your guard against, though you must not fire on him either; they were going to take my life once, that I half drew a pistol from my holster against him, and I heard one of the fellows say to another, that monseigneur's dog was well worth a '*bleu*' any day, whatever he meant by that."

Very few minutes sufficed to give my orders respecting the picket, and I was in my saddle and ready for the road; and although my departure excited no surprise among my men, coupled as it was with the orders I had just given, I overheard the troop sergeant mutter to another as I passed out—"*Parbleu*, I always suspected there was something wrong about that old château yonder—come what weather it would, they'd never let you take shelter within the walls of it."

The night was so dark, that when I turned into the road I could not even distinguish my horse's head; heavy drifts of rain, too, went sweeping along, and the wind roared through the forest with a noise like the sea in a storm.

I now put spurs to my horse, and the animal, fresh from long pampering, sprang forward madly, and dashed onward. The very beating of the rain, the adverse wind, seemed to chafe his spirit and excite his courage. With head bent down, and hands firmly grasping the reins, I rode on, till the faint glimmering of a light caught my eye at a distance. A few miles brought me beside it. It was a little candle that burned in the shrine above the image of the Virgin. Some pious but humble hand had placed it there, regardless of the rain and storm; and there it was now burning secure from the rude assaults of the harsh night, and throwing its yellow light on the few cheap trinkets which village devotion had consecrated to the beloved saint. As I looked at the little altar, I thought of

e perilous enterprise I was engaged in. could have wished my heart to have elded to the influence of a superstition, hich for every moment of life seems to ave its own apt consolation and succor. or, when as wayworn travelers refresh eir parched lips at some roadside well, nd bless the charity that carved the little asin in the rock—so, followers of this ith have ever and anon before their eyes ome *material* evidence of their Church's enevolence—now arming them against he arrows of the world—now rendering hem grateful for benefits received—now axing their selfishness by sacrifices which levate them in their own esteem—now omforting them by examples which make hem proud of their afflictions. It is this irect appeal from the human heart to the ourly consolations of religion that forms he stronghold of belief in Catholic countries.

These thoughts were passing through my mind long after I left the little shrine behind me. "So," said I, "here must be the cabaret the sergeant spoke of," as I heard the sound of a voice issuing from a small house on the roadside. For a second or two I hesitated whether I should not dismount and ask the way; but a moment's consideration satisfied me it were better to risk nothing by delay; and, cautiously advancing, I heard by the sound of my horse's feet that we had left the high-road, and were now on the clay path I looked for.

Again I dashed onward at a gallop, my powerful horse splashing through the deep ground, or striding boldly across the heavy furrows—now breasting some steep and rugged ascent, where the torn-up way gave passage to a swollen rivulet; now plunging down into some valley, where the darkness seemed thicker and more impenetrable still. At last I could see, far down beneath me, the twinkling light of the village, and began to deliberate with myself at what point I should turn off leftward. Each moment the path seemed to lead me in the direction of the light, while I felt that my road led straight onward. I drew my rein to deliberate what course I should take, when directly in front of me I thought I could detect the clank of a sabre flapping against the flank of a horse. I lowered my head on a level with my horse's mane, and could now distinctly hear the sound I suspected, and, more still, the deep tones of a soldier's voice interrogating some one, who, by the *patois* of his answer, I guessed to be a peasant.

"You are certain, then, we have not come wrong," said the horseman.

"Ah! I know the way too well for that—traveling it daylight and dark since I was a boy. I was born in the village below. We shall soon reach the little wooden bridge, and then, turning to the left, beside Martin Guichard's—"

"What care I for all that?" interupted the other roughly. "How far are we now from the château? Is it still a league off?"

"*Parbleu!*—No! nor the half of it. When you rise the hill yonder, you'll see a light; they always have one burning in the tourelle there—and that's the château."

"Thank Heaven for that!" muttered I; "and now only let me pass them, and all is safe."

The figures before me, whom I could now dimly trace in the darkness, were descending step by step a rugged and narrow path, where a tall hedge formed a wall on either side. To get before them here, therefore, was out of the question; my only chance was by a *détour* through the fields to come down upon the village, and, if possible, gain the bridge he spoke of before them. Quick as the thought, I turned from the deep road to the still deeper earth of the plowed field beside it. My horse—a strong and powerful Norman—needed but the slightest movement of the hand to plunge hotly on. My eyes bent upon the twinkle of the few lights that still marked the little hamlet, I rode fearlessly forward; now tearing madly through some low osier fence—now slipping in the wet and plashy soil, where each stride threatened to bring us both to the earth. The descent became soon almost precipitous; but the deep ground gave a footing, and I never slackened my speed. At length, with a crashing sound, I found that we had burst the little inclosure of some village garden, and could dimly trace the outline of a cottage at some distance in front. Dismounting now, I felt my way cautiously for the path that usually conducts at the end of the cabin to the garden. This I soon made out, and the next minute was in the street. Happily, the storm, which raged still as violently as before, suffered no one to be without doors; and save the rare glimmer of a light, all was sunk in darkness.

I walked on beside my horse for some minutes, and at last I heard the rushing sound of a swollen river, as it tore along in its narrow bed; and approaching step by step discovered the little bridge, which simply consisted of two planks, unprotected by any railing at either side. With a

little difficulty I succeeded in leading my horse across, and was just about to mount, when the sound of the trooper's voice from the village street again reached me.

A sudden thought flashed through my mind. Each moment might now be precious; and stooping down, I lifted the end of the plank, and sent it with a crash into the stream; the other soon followed it; and before I was in my saddle again the torrent was carrying them along amid the rocks of the stream.

"Here is a misfortune," cried the peasant, in a tone of misery; "the bridge has been carried away by the flood."

"*Tonnerre de ciel!* And is there no other way across?" said the dragoon, in a voice of passion.

I waited not to hear more, but giving the spur to my horse, dashed up the steep bank, and the next moment saw the light of the château, for such I guessed to be a bright star that twinkled at a distance. "Speed now will do it," said I, and put my strong Norman to his utmost. The wind tore past me scarce faster than I went, while the beating rain came round me. The footway soon altered, and I found that we were crossing a smooth turf like a lawn. "Ha! this is the old gate," thought I, as a tall archway, overhung with ivy and closed by a strong door, opposed further progress. I beat loudly against it with the heavy handle of my whip, but to no purpose; the hoarse voice of the storm drowned all such sounds. I dismounted, and endeavored to make myself heard by knocking with a large stone. I shouted, I cried aloud, but all in vain. My terror increased every instant. What was to be done? The dragoon might arrive at any moment, and then I myself must share the ruin of the others. Maddened by the emergency that each moment grew more pressing, I sprang into the saddle, and, following the direction of the wall, rode round to the other side of the château, seeking some open spot, some break whereby to enter.

I had not gone far, when I saw a portion of the wall which, broken and dilapidated, afforded the opportunity I desired. I hesitated not, but dashed wildly at it. My horse, unaccustomed to such an effort, chested the barrier, and came rolling headforemost to the earth, throwing me several yards before him. A cry of pain escaped me as I fell; and I scarcely could gain my knees to rise, when the hoarse bay of a savage dog broke upon my ear, and I heard the animal tearing through the brushwood toward me. I drew my sabre in a trice, and scarce knowing at what side to defend myself, laid wildly about me, while I shouted with all my might for help. The furious beast sprang like a tiger at my throat, and, though wounded by a chance cut, seized me in his terrible fangs. Fortunately the strong collar of my uniform served to protect me; but the violence of the assault carried me off my balance, and we rolled one over the other to the ground. Grasping his throat with both hands I endeavored to strangle him, while he vainly sought to reach my face. At this critical moment my cries were heard within, and numerous lights flitted up and down in front of the château, and a crowd of persons, all armed, were quickly about me. Seizing the dog by his collar, a peasant tore him away; while another, holding a lantern to my face, cried out in a voice of terror, "They are upon us! We are lost!"

"*Parbleu!* you should let Colbert finish his work—he is a 'blue:' they are but food for dogs any day."

"Not so," said another, in a low, determined voice; "this is a surer weapon."

I heard the cock of a pistol click as he spoke.

"Halt there!—Stop, I say!" cried a voice, in a tone of command. "I know him—I know him well. It's Burke. Is it not?"

It was De Beauvais spoke, while at the same moment he knelt down beside me on the grass, and put his arm round my neck. I whispered one word into his ear. He sprang to his feet, and, with a hasty direction to assist me toward the house, disappeared. Before I could reach the door he was again beside me.

"And you did this to save me, dear friend?" said he, in a voice half stifled with sobs. "You have run all this danger for my sake?"

I did not dare to take the merit of an act I had no claim to, still less to speak of her for whose sake I risked my life, and leaned on him without speaking, as he led me within the porch.

"Sit down here for a moment—but one moment," said he, in a whisper, "and I'll return to you."

I sat down upon a bench, and looked about me. The place had all the evidence of being one of consequence in former days: the walls, wainscoted in dark walnut wood, were adorned with grotesque carvings of hunting scenes and instruments of "venerie;" the ceiling in the same taste, displayed trophies of weapons, intermingled with different emblems of the "chasse," while in the center, and inclosed within a garter, were the royal arms of the Bour-

ons: the gilding that once shone on them as tarnished and faded; the *fleur-de-lis*, oo, were broken and dilapidated, while ut a stray letter of the proud motto remained, as if not willing to survive the lownfall of those on whom it was now less a boast than a sarcasm. As I sat thus, the wide hall was gradually filled with men, whose anxious and excited faces betokened the fears my presence had excited, while not one ventured to speak or address a word to me. Most of them were armed with cutlasses, and some carried pistols in belts round their waists; while others had rude pikes, whose coarse fashion betokened the handiwork of a village smith. They stood in a semicircle round me; and while their eyes were riveted upon me with an expression of most piercing interest, not a syllable was spoken. Suddenly a door was opened at the end of a corridor, and De Beauvais called out,

"This way, Burke—come this way!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

"THE CHATEAU D'ANCRE."

BEFORE I had time to collect myself I was hurried on by De Beauvais into a room, when, the moment I had entered, the door was closed and locked behind me. By the light of a coarse and rudely-formed chandelier that occupied the middle of a table, I saw a party of near a dozen persons who sat around it—the head of the board being filled by one whose singular appearance attracted all my attention. He was a man of enormous breadth of chest and shoulders, with a lofty massive head, on either side of which a quantity of red hair fell in profusion; a beard of the same color descended far on his bosom, which, with his overhanging eyebrows, imparted a most savage and ferocious expression to features, which of themselves were harsh and repulsive. Though he wore a blouse in peasant fashion, it was easy to see that he was not of the lower walk of society. Across his brawny chest a broad belt of black leather passed, to support a strong straight sword, the heavy hilt of which peeped above the arm of his chair. A pair of handsomely-mounted pistols lay before him on the table: and the carved handle of a poniard could be seen projecting slightly from the breast-pocket of his vest. Of the rest who were about him I had but time to perceive that they were peasants—but all were armed, and most of them wearing a knot of white ribbon at the breast of their blouses.

Every eye was turned toward me, as I stood at the foot of the table astonished and speechless—while De Beauvais quitting my arm, hastened to the large man's side, and whispered some words in his ear. He rose slowly from his chair, and in a moment each face was turned to him. Speaking in a deep guttural tone, he addressed them for some minutes in a patois of which I was totally ignorant—every word he uttered seemed to stir their very hearts, if I were to judge from the short and heavy respiration—the deep-drawn breath—the flushed faces and staring eyes around me. More than once some allusion seemed made to me—at least, they turned simultaneously to look at me; once, too, at something he said, each man carried his hand round to his sword-hilt, but dropped it again, listlessly, as he continued. The discourse over, the door was unlocked, and one by one they left the room, each man saluting the speaker with a reverence as he passed out. De Beauvais closed the door, and barred it, as the last man disappeared, and turning hastily round, called out,

"What now?"

The large man bent his head down between his hands, and spoke not in reply—then suddenly springing up, he said,

"Take my horse, he is fresh, and ready for the road, and make for Quillebœuf: the ford at Montgorge will be swollen—but he'll take the stream for you;—at the farmer's house, that looks over the river, you can stop."

"I know it, I know it," said De Beauvais; "but what of you, are you to remain behind?"

"I'll go with him," said he, pointing toward me. "As his companion, I can reach the Bois de Boulogne—in any case, as his prisoner—once there, you may trust me for the rest."

De Beauvais looked at me for a reply. I hesitated what to say, and at last said: "For your sake, Henri de Beauvais, and yours only, have I ventured on a step which may, in all likelihood, be my ruin. I neither know, nor wish to know, your plans—nor will I associate myself with any one, be he who he may, in your enterprise."

"Jacques Tisserand, the tanner," continued the large man, as if not heeding nor caring for my interruption, "will warn Armand de Polignac of what has happened; and Charles de la Rivière had better remain near Biville for the English cutter—she'll lie off the coast to-morrow or next day. Away—lose not a moment."

"And my dear friend here," said De Beauvais, turning to me, "who has risked

his very life to rescue me, shall I leave him thus?"

"Can you save him by remaining?" said the other, as he coolly examined the priming of his pistols. "We shall all escape, if you be but quick."

A look from De Beauvais drew me toward him, when he threw his arms around my neck, and in a low, broken voice, muttered, "When I tell you that all I lived for exists to me no longer—the love I sought refused me—my dearest ambition thwarted—you will not think that a selfish desire for life prompts me now; but a solemn oath to obey the slightest command of that man, sworn before my sovereign, binds me, and I must not break it."

"Away, away, I hear voices at the gate below," cried the other.

"Adieu! adieu forever," said De Beauvais, as he kissed my cheek, and sprang through a small doorway in the wainscot, which closed after him as he went.

"Now for our movements," said the large man, unhooking a cloak that hung against the wall. "You must tie my hands with this cord in such a way that, although seemingly secure, I can free myself at a moment; place me on a horse, a fast one too, beside you; and order your troopers to ride in front and rear of us. When we reach the Bois de Boulogne, leave the allée des Chasseurs, and turn toward St. Cloud. *Tonnerre de ciel*, they're firing yonder!" An irregular discharge of small-arms, followed by a wild cheer, rang out above the sound of the storm. "Again, did you hear that? there are the carbines of cavalry—I know their ring. Accursed dogs, that would not do my bidding," cried he, stamping with passion on the ground, while, throwing off his blouse, he stuck his pistols in a belt around his waist, and prepared for mortal combat. Meanwhile, pistol-shots, mingled with savage shouts and wild hurrahs, were heard approaching nearer and nearer; and at length a loud knocking at the front door, with a cry of "They're here—they're here!"

The large man, now fully armed, and with his drawn sword in his hand, unlocked the door. The passage without was full of armed peasants, silent and watchful for his commands. A few words in the former patois seemed sufficient to convey them, and their answer was a cheer that made the walls ring.

The chief moved rapidly from place to place through the crowds, who, at his bidding, broke into parties: some of them occupied doorways which enfiladed the hall—others knelt down to suffer some to fire above their heads; here were two posted, armed with hatchets, at the very entrance itself; and six of the most determined-looking were to dispute the passage with their muskets. Such was the disposition of the force, when suddenly the light was extinguished, and all left in utter darkness—the deep breathing of their anxious breasts alone marked their presence—when, without doors, the sounds of strife gradually died away, and the storm alone was heard.

As for me, I leaned against a doorway, my arms folded on my bosom, my head sunk, while I prayed for death, the only exit I could see to my dishonor.

There was a terrible pause—the very hurricane seemed to abate its violence, and only the heavy rain was heard as it fell in torrents—when, with a loud crash, the door in front was burst open, and fell with a bang upon the floor—not a word from those within, not a motion betrayed their presence, while the whispered tones of a party without showed that the enemy was there. "Bring up the torches quickly here," called out a voice like that of an officer; and as he spoke the red flare of lighted pine-branches was seen moving through the misty atmosphere. The light fell upon a strong party of dismounted dragoons and gendarmerie, who, carbine in hand, stood waiting for the word to dash forward. The officer, whose figure I could distinguish as he moved along the front of his men, appeared to hesitate, and for a few seconds all stood motionless. At length, as if having resolved on his plan, he approached the doorway, a pine-torch in his hand—another step, and the light must have disclosed the dense array of armed peasants that stood and knelt around the hall—when a deep, low voice within uttered the one word, "Now!" and quick, as if by his breath the powder had been ignited, a volley rang out, pattering like hail on the steel breast-plates, and through the branches of the trees; a mingled shout of rage and agony rose from those without, and, without waiting for a command, they rushed onward. The peasants, who had not time to reload their pieces, clubbed them in their strong hands, and laid wildly about them. The fight was now hand to hand; for, narrow as was the doorway, some three or four dragoons pressed every moment in, and gradually the hall became a dense mass of indiscriminate combatants. The large man fought like one possessed, and cleft his way toward the entrance with a long straight dagger, as if regardless of friends or foes. "*A moi! à moi!*" cried a

tall and powerful man, as he sprang at his throat, "this is he." The words were his last, as, stabbed to the very heart, he sprang backward in his death agony; but at the moment, a perfect shower of bullets rattled around the large man, one of which alone took effect in his shoulder. Still he strove onward, and at last, with a spring like a savage tiger, he lowered his head, and bounded clean out into the court. Scarcely, however, had his foot touched the wet grass, when he slipped forward, and fell heavily on his back. A dozen swords flashed above him as he lay, and only by the most immense efforts of the officer was he spared death in a hundred wounds. The defeat of their leader seemed to subdue all the daring courage of his party; the few who were able to escape dashed hither and thither, through passages and doorways they were well acquainted with; while the flagged floor was bathed in blood from the rest, as they lay in mangled and frightful forms, dead and dying on every side.

Like one in some dreadful dream, I stood spectator of this savage strife, wishing that some stray bullet had found my heart, yet ashamed to die with such a stain upon my honor. I crossed my arms before my breast, and waited for my doom. Two gendarmes passed quickly to and fro with torches, examining the faces and looks of those who were still likely to live, when suddenly one of them cried out, as he stood before me,

"What's this? An officer of hussars here!"

The exclamation brought an officer to the spot, who, holding a lantern to my face, said quickly,

"How is this, sir?—how came you here?"

"Here is my sword, sir," said I, drawing it from the scabbard. "I place myself under arrest. In another place, and to other judges, I must explain my conduct."

"*Parbleu!* Jacques," said the officer, addressing another who sat, while his wounds were being bound up, on a chair near, "this affair is worse than we thought of. Here's one of the '*huitième*' in the thick of it."

"I hope, sir," said I, addressing the young man, whose arm was bleeding profusely from a sabre wound—"I hope, sir, your wound may not be of consequence."

He looked up suddenly, and, while a smile of the most insulting sarcasm curled his bloodless lip, answered,

"I thank you, sir, for your sympathy; but you must forgive me if, one of these days, I cannot bandy consolations with you."

"You are right, lieutenant," said a dragoon, who lay bleeding from a dreadful cut in the forehead. "I'd not exchange places with him myself this minute for all his epaulettes."

With an overwhelming sense of my own degraded position, when to such taunts as these I dared not reply, I stood mute and confounded. Meantime the soldiers were engaged in collecting together the scattered weapons, fastening the wrists of the prisoners with cords, and ransacking the house for such proofs of the conspiracy as might criminate others at a distance. By the time these operations were concluded, the day began to break, and I could distinguish in the court-yard several large covered carts or *charrettes* destined to convey the prisoners. One of these was given up entirely to the chief, who, although only slightly wounded, would never assist himself in the least, but lay a heavy, inert mass, suffering the others to lift him and place him in the cart. Such as were too badly wounded to be moved were placed in a room in the château, a guard being left over them.

A sergeant of the gendarmerie now approached me as I stood, and commenced, without a word, to examine me for any papers or documents that might be concealed about my person.

"You are in error," said I, quietly. "I have nothing of what you suspect."

"Do you call this nothing?" interrupted he, triumphantly, as he drew forth the parchment commission I had placed in my bosom, and forgot to restore to De Beauvais. "*Parbleu!* you'd have had a better memory had your plans succeeded."

"Give it here," said an officer, as he saw the sergeant devouring the document with his eyes. "Ah!" cried he, starting, "he was playing a high stake, too. Let him be closely secured."

While the orders of the officer were being followed up, the various prisoners were secured in the carts, mounted dragoons stationed at either side, their carbines held unslung in their hands. At last my turn came, and I was ordered to mount into a *charrette* with two gendarmes, whose orders respecting any effort at escape on my part were pretty clearly indicated by the position of two pistols carried at either side of me.

A day of heavy, unremitting rain, without any wind or storm, succeeded to the night of tempest. Dark inky clouds lay motionless near the earth, whose surface became blacker by the shadow. A weighty and lowering atmosphere added to the gloom

I felt; and neither in my heart within, nor in the world without, could I find one solitary consolation.

At first I dreaded lest my companions should address me—a single question would have wrung my very soul—but happily they maintained a rigid silence, nor did they even speak to each other during the entire journey. At noon we halted at a small roadside *caöaret*, where refreshments were provided, and relays of horses in waiting, and again set out on our way. The day was declining when we reached the Bois de Boulogne, and entered the long avenue that leads to the Barrière de l'Etoile. The heavy wheels moved noiselessly over the even turf; and, save the jingle of the troopers' equipments, all was hushed. For above an hour we had proceeded thus, when a loud shout in front, followed by a pistol-shot, and then three or four others quickly after it, halted the party; and I could mark through the uncertain light the mounted figures dashing wildly here and there, and plunging into the thickest of the wood.

"Look to the prisoners," cried an officer, as he galloped down the line; and, at the word, every man seized his carbine, and held himself on the alert. Meanwhile the whole cavalcade was halted, and I could see that something of consequence had occurred in front, though of what nature I could not even guess. At last a sergeant of the gendarmes rode up to our side splashed and heated.

"Has he escaped?" cried one of the men beside me.

"Yes!" said he, with an oath, "the brigand has got away, though how he cut the cords on his wrists, or by what means he sprang from the *charrette* to the road, the devil must answer. Ha! there they are firing away after him. The only use of their powder is to show the fellow where they are."

"I would not change places with our captain this evening," cried one of the gendarmerie. "Returning to Paris without the red beard—"

"*Ma foi*, you're not wrong there. It will be a heavy reckoning for him with dark Savary; and as to taking a Breton in a wood—"

The word to march interrupted the colloquy, and again we moved forward.

By some strange sympathy I cannot account for, I felt glad that the chief had made his escape. The gallantry of his defense, the implicit obedience yielded him by the others, had succeeded in establishing an interest for him in my mind; and the very last act of daring courage by which he effected his liberty, increased the feeling. By what an easy transition, too, do we come to feel for those whose fate has any similarity with our own. The very circumstance of common misfortune is a binding link; and thus I was not without an anxious hope that the chief might succeed in his escape, though, had I known his intrigue or his intentions, such interest had scarcely found a place in my heart.

Such reflections as these led me to think how great must be the charm to the human mind of overcoming difficulty or confronting danger, when even for those of whom we know nothing we can feel, and feel warmly, when they stand before us in such a light as this. Heroism and bravery appeal to every nature; and bad must be the cause in which they are exerted, before we can venture to think ill of those who possess them.

The lamps were beginning to be lighted as we reached the Barrière, and halted to permit the officer of the party to make his report of who we were. The formality soon finished, we defiled along the Boulevard, followed by a crowd that, increasing each moment, at last occupied the entire road, and made our progress slow and difficult. While the curiosity of the people to catch sight of the prisoners demanded all the vigilance of the guards to prevent it, a sad and most appalling stillness pervaded the whole multitude, and I could hear a murmur as they went, that it was Generals Moreau and Pichegru who were taken. At length we halted, and I could see that the foremost *charrette* was entering a low archway, over which a massive portcullis hung. The gloomy shadow of a dark, vast mass, that rose against the inky sky, lowered above the wall, and, somehow, seemed to me as if well known.

"This is the 'Temple?'" said I to the gendarme on my right.

A nod was the reply, and a half-expressive look that seemed to say, "In that word you have said your destiny."

About two years previous to the time I now speak of, I remember one evening, when returning from a solitary walk along the Boulevard, stopping in front of a tall and weather-beaten tower, the walls black with age, and pierced here and there with narrow windows, across which strong iron stanchions ran transversely. A gloomy fosse, crossed by a narrow drawbridge, surrounded the external wall of this dreary building, which needed no superstition to invest it with a character of crime and misfortune. This was the Temple; the ancient castle of the knights whose cruelties

were written in the dark *oubliettes* and the noisome dungeons of that dread abode. A terrace ran along the tower on three sides. There, for hours long, walked in sadness and in sorrow the last of France's kings, Louis XVI., his children at his side. In that dark turret the Dauphin suffered death. At the low casement yonder, Madame Royale sat hour by hour, the stone on which she leaned wet with her tears. The place was one of gloomy and sinister repute: the neighborhod spoke of the heavy roll of carriages that passed the drawbridge at the dead of night, of strange sounds and cries, of secret executions, and even of tortures that were inflicted there. Of these dreadful missions a corps called the "Gendarmes d'élite" were vulgarly supposed the chosen executors, and their savage looks and repulsive exterior gave credibility to the surmise, while some affirmed that the Mameluke Guard the Consul had brought with him from Egypt had no other function than the murder of the prisoners confined there.

Little thought I then, that in a few brief months I should pass beneath that black portcullis, a prisoner. Little did I anticipate, as I wended my homeward way, my heart heavy and my step slow, that the day was to come when, in my own person, I was to feel the sorrows over which I then wept for others.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE "TEMPLE."

This was the second morning of my life which opened in the narrow cell of a prison; and when I awoke and looked upon the bare, bleak walls, the barred window, the strongly bolted door, I thought of the time when, as a boy, I slept within the walls of Newgate. The same sad sounds were now about me; the measured tread of sentinels; the tramp of patrols; the cavernous clank of door-closing, and the grating noise of locking and unlocking heavy gates, and then that dreary silence, more depressing than all, how they came back upon me now, seeming to wipe out all space, and bring me to the hours of my boyhood's trials. Yet what were they to this?—what were the dangers I then incurred to the inevitable ruin now before me? True, I knew neither the conspirators nor their crime; but who would believe it? How came I among them? Dare I tell it, and betray her whose honor was dearer to me than my life? Yet it was hard to face death in such a cause; no sense of high though unsuccessful daring to support me; no strongly-roused passion to warm my blood, and teach me bravely to endure a tarnished name. Disgrace and dishonor were all my portion, in that land, too, where I once hoped to win fame and glory, and make for myself a reputation among the first and greatest. The deep roll of a drum, followed by the harsh turning of keys in the locks along the corridor, interrupted my sad musings; and the next minute my door was unbolted, and an official, dressed in the uniform of the prison, presented himself before me.

"Ah! Monsieur, awake and dressed already!" said he, in a gay and smiling tone, for which the place had not prepared me. "At eight we breakfast here; at nine you are free to promenade in the garden or on the terrace—at least, all who are not *au secret;* and I have to felicitate Monsieur on that pleasure."

"How, then; I am not a prisoner?"

"Yes, *parbleu!* you are a prisoner, but not under such heavy imputation as to be confined apart. All in this quarter enjoy a fair share of liberty: live together, walk, chat, read the papers, and have an easy time of it; but you shall judge for yourself. Come along with me."

In a strange state of mingled hope and fear I followed the jailer along the corridor, and across a paved court-yard into a low hall, where basins and other requisites for a prison-toilet were arranged around the walls. Passing through this, we ascended a narrow stair, and finally entered a large, well-lighted room, along which a table, plentifully but plainly provided, extended the entire length. The apartment was crowded with persons of every age, and apparently every condition, all conversing noisily and eagerly together, and evidencing as little seeming restraint as though within the walls of a café.

Seated at a table, I could not help feeling amused at the strange medley of rank and country about me. Here were old *militaires*, with bushy beards and moustaches, side by side with ruddy-faced peasants, whose long, yellow locks bespoke them of Norman blood; hard, weather-beaten sailors from the coast of Bretagne, talking familiarly with venerable seigneurs in all the pomp of powder and a queue; priests with shaven crowns; young fellows, whose easy looks of unabashed effrontery betrayed the careless Parisian; all were mingled up together, and yet not one among the number did I see whose appear-

ance denoted sorrow for his condition or anxiety for his fate.

The various circumstances of their imprisonment, the imputation they lay under, the acts of which they were accused, formed the topics of conversation in common with the gossip of the town, the news of the theatres, and the movements in political life. Never was there a society with less restraint: each man knew his neighbor's history too well to make concealment of any value, and frankness seemed the order of the day. While I was initiating myself into so much of the habit of the place, a large, flat, florid personage, who sat at the head of the table, called out to me for my name.

"The governor desires to have your name and rank for his list," said my neighbor at the right hand.

Having given the required information, I could not help expressing my surprise how, in the presence of the governor of the prison, they ventured to speak so freely.

"Ha," said the person I addressed, "he is not the governor of the Temple; that's merely a title we have given him among ourselves. The office is held always by the oldest *détenu*. Now, he has been here ten months, and succeeded to the throne about a fortnight since. The abbé yonder, with the silk scarf round his waist, will be his successor in a few days."

"Indeed! Then he will be at liberty so soon. I thought he seemed in excellent spirits.

"Not much, perhaps, on that score," replied he. "His sentence is hard labor for life at the Bagne de Toulon."

I started back with horror, and could not utter a word.

"The abbé," continued my informant, "would be right happy to take his sentence. But the governor is speaking to you."

"Monsieur le sous-lieutenant," said the governor, in a deep, solemn accent, "I have the honor to salute you, and bid you welcome to the Temple, in the name of my respectable and valued friends here about me. We rejoice to possess one of your cloth amongst us. The last was, if I remember aright, the Captain de Lorme, who boasted he could hit the Consul at sixty paces with a pistol-bullet."

"*Pardon*, governor," said a handsome man in a braided frock; "we had Ducaisne since."

"So we had, commandant," said the Governor, bowing politely, "and a very pleasant fellow he was; but he only stopped one night here."

"A single night, I remember it well," grunted out a thick-lipped, rosy-faced little fellow, near the bottom of the table. "You'll meet him soon, governor; he's at Toulon. Pray present my respects—"

"A fine! a fine!" shouted out a dozen voices in a breath.

"I deny it, I deny it," replied the rosy-faced man, rising from his chair. "I appeal to the governor if I am not innocent. I ask him if there were anything which could possibly offend his feelings in my allusion to Toulon, whither, for the benefit of his precious health, he is about to repair?"

"Yes," replied the Governor, solemnly, you are fined three francs. I always preferred Brest; Toulon is not to my taste."

"Pay! pay!" cried out the others; while a pewter dish, on which some twenty pieces of money were lying, was passed down the table.

"And to resume," said the Governor, turning toward me, "the secretary will wait on you after breakfast to receive the fees of initiation, and such information as you desire to afford him for your coming amongst us, both being perfectly discretionary with you. He who desires the privilege of our amicable reunion soon learns the conditions on which to obtain it. The enjoyments of our existence here are cheap at any price. Le Père d'Oligny, yonder, will tell you life is short—very few here are likely to dispute the assertion—and perhaps the Abbé Thomas may give you a strong hint how to make the best of it."

"*Parbleu*, governor! you forget the abbé left us this morning."

"True, true—how my memory is failing me—the dear abbé did leave us, sure enough."

"Where for?" said I, in a whisper.

"La Plaine de Grenelle," said the person beside me, in a low tone. "He was guillotined at five o'clock."

A sick shudder ran through me; and, though the governor continued his oration, I heard not a word he spoke, nor could I arouse myself from the stupor, until the cheers of the party, at the conclusion of the harangue, awoke me.

"The morning looks fine enough for a walk," said the man beside me. "What say you to the gardens?"

I followed him without speaking across the court and down a flight of stone steps into a large open space, planted tastefully with trees, and adorned by a beautiful fountain. Various walks and alleys traversed the garden in every direction, along which parties were to be seen walking—some

laughing, some reading aloud the morning papers—but all engaged, and, to all seeming, pleasantly. Yet did their reckless indifference to life, their horrible carelessness of each other's fate, seem to me far more dreadful than any expression of sorrow, however painful; and I shrank from them as though the contamination of their society might impart that terrible state of unfeeling apathy they were given up to. Even guilt itself had seemed less repulsive than this shocking and unnatural recklessness. Pondering thus, I hurried from the crowded path, and sought a lonely, unfrequented walk which led along the wall of the garden. I had not proceeded far, when the low but solemn notes of church music struck on my ear. I hastened forward, and soon perceived, through the branches of a beech hedge, a party of some sixteen or eighteen persons kneeling on the grass, their hands lifted as if in prayer, while they joined in a psalm tune—one of those simple but touching airs which the peasantry of the south are so attached to. Their oval faces bronzed with the sun, their long, flowing hair, divided on the head and falling loose on either shoulder, their dark eyes and long lashes, bespoke them all from that land of Bourbon loyalty, La Vendée, even had not their yellow jackets, covered with buttons along the sleeves, and their loose hose, evinced their nationality. Many of the countenances I now remembered to have seen the preceding night; but some were careworn and emaciated, as if from long imprisonment.

I cannot tell how the simple piety of these poor peasants touched me, contrasted, too, with the horrible indifference of the others. As I approached them, I was recognized; and, whether supposing that I was a well-wisher to their cause, or attracted merely by the tie of common misfortune, they saluted me respectfully, and seemed glad to see me. While two or three of those I had seen before moved forward to speak to me, I remarked that a low, swarthy man, with a scar across his upper lip, examined me with marked attention, and then whispered something to the rest. At first he seemed to pay little respect to whatever they said—an incredulous shake of the head, or an impatient motion of the hand, replying to their observations. Gradually, however, he relaxed in this, and I could see that his stern features assumed a look of kinder meaning.

"So, friend," said he, holding out his tanned and powerful hand toward me, "it was thou saved our chief from being snared like a wolf in a trap. *Le bon Dieu* will remember the service hereafter; and the good king will not forget thee, if the time ever comes for his better fortune."

"You must not thank me," said I, smiling; "the service I rendered was one instigated by friendship only. I know not your plans; I never knew them. The epaulette I wear I never was false to."

A murmur of dissatisfaction ran along the party, and I could mark that in the words they interchanged feelings of surprise were mingled with displeasure. At last, the short man, commanding silence with a slight motion of the hand, said, "I am sorry for it; your courage merited a better cause; however, the avowal was at least an honest one; and now tell us, why came you here?"

"For the very reason I've mentioned. My presence at the château last night, and my discovery during the attack, were enough to impute guilt. How can I clear myself, without criminating those I would not name?"

"That matters but little. Doubtless, you have powerful friends—rich ones, perhaps, and in office; they will bear you harmless."

"Alas! you are wrong. I have not in all the length and breadth of France one who, if a word would save me from the scaffold, would care to speak it. I am a stranger and an alien."

"Ha!" said a fair-haired, handsome youth, starting from the grass where he had been sitting, "what would I not give now your lot was mine. They'd not make my heart tremble if I could forget the cabin I was born in."

"Hush! Philippe," said the other, "the weapon is not in their armory to make a Vendean tremble—But, hark! there is the drum for the inspection. You must present yourself each day at noon, at the low postern, yonder, and write your name; and mark me, before we part, it cannot serve *us*, it may ruin *you*, if we are seen to speak together. Trust no one here. Those whom you see yonder are half of them *moutons*."

"How?" said I, not understanding the phrase.

"Ay, it was a prison word I used," resumed he. "I would say they are but spies of the police, who, as if confined for their offenses, are only here to obtain confessions from unguarded, unsuspecting prisoners. Their frankness and sincerity are snares that have led many to the guillotine; beware of them. You dare not carry your glass to your lip, but the murmured toast might be your condemnation. Adieu!"

said he; and as he spoke he turned away and left the place, followed by the rest.

The disgust I felt at first for the others was certainly not lessened by learning that their guilt was stained by treachery the blackest that can disgrace humanity; and now, as I walked among them, it was with a sense of shrinking horror I recoiled from the very touch of the wretches, whose smiles were but lures to the scaffold.

"Ha! our lost and strayed friend," said one, as I appeared, "come hither, and make a clean breast of it. What amiable weaknesses have introduced you to the Temple?"

"In truth," said I, endeavoring to conceal my knowledge of my acquaintances' real character, "I cannot even guess, nor do I believe that any one else is wiser than myself."

"*Parbleu!* young gentleman," said the Abbé, as he spied me impertinently through his glass, "you are excessively old-fashioned for your years. Don't you know that spotless innocence went out with the Bourbons? Every one since that dies in the glorious assertion of his peculiar wickedness, with certain extenuating circumstances, which he calls human nature."

"And now, then," resumed the first speaker, "for your mishap—what was it?"

"I should only deceive you were I to give any other answer than my first. Mere suspicion there may be against me—there can be no more."

"Well, well, let us have the suspicions. The *Moniteur* is late this moring, and we have nothing to amuse us."

"Who are you?" cried another, a tall, insolent-looking fellow, with a dark moustache. "That's the first question. I've seen a *mouton* in a hussar dress before now."

"I am too late a resident here," answered I, "to guess how far insolence goes unpunished; but if I were outside these walls, and you also, I'd teach you a lesson you have yet to learn, sir."

"*Parbleu!*" said one of the former speakers, "Jacques, he has you there, though it was no great sharpness to see you were a blanc-bec."

The tall fellow moved away, muttering to himself, as a hearty laugh broke forth among the rest.

"And now," said the Abbé, with a simper, "pardon the liberty; but have you had any trifling inducement for coming to pass a few days here? Were you making love to Madame la Consulesse? or did you laugh at General Bonaparte's grand dinners? or have you been learning the English grammar? or what is it?"

I shook my head, and was silent.

"Come, come, be frank with us; unblemished virtue fares very ill here. There was a gentleman lost his head this morning, who never did anything all his life other than keep the post-office at Tarbes; but somehow he happened to let a letter pass into the bag addressed to an elderly gentleman in England, called the Count d'Artois, not knowing that the Count's letters are always 'to the care of Citizen Bonaparte.' Well, they shortened him by the neck for it. Cruel! you will say; but so much for innocence."

"For the last time then, gentlemen, I must express my sincere sorrow that I have neither murder, treason, nor any other infamy on my conscience, which might qualify me for the distinguished honor of associating with you. Such being the case, and my sense of my deficiency being so great, you will, I'm sure, pardon me, if I do not obtrude on society of which I am unworthy, and which I have now the honor to wish a good-day to." With this, and a formal bow, returned equally politely by the rest, I moved on, and entered the tower.

Somber and sad as were my own reflections, yet did I prefer their company to that of my fellow-prisoners, for whom already I began to conceive a perfect feeling of abhorrence.

Revolting, indeed, was the indifference to fame, honor, and even life, which I already witnessed among them; but what was it compared with the deliberate treachery of men who could wait for the hour when the heart, overflowing with sorrow, opened itself for consolation and comfort, and then search its every recess for proofs of guilt that should bring the mourner to the scaffold?

How any government could need—how they could tolerate such assassins as these, I could not conceive. And was this *his* doing—were these *his* opinions, whose high-souled chivalry had been my worship and my idolatry? No, no! I'll not believe it. Bonaparte knows not the dark and terrible secrets of these gloomy walls. The hero of Arcole, the conqueror of Italy, wots not of the frightful tyranny those dungeons: did he but know the what a destiny would wait on those who thus stain with crime and treachery the fame of that "Belle France" he made so great.

Oh! that in the hour my accusation—in the very last of my days, were it on the step of the guillotine—could but speak with words to reach him, and say, how glory like his must be tarnished, if such

deeds went on unpunished; that while thousands and thousands were welcoming his path with cries of wild enthusiasm and joy, in the cold cells of the Temple there were breaking hearts, whose sorrow-wrung confessions were registered—whose prayers were canvassed for evidences of desires that might be converted into treason. He could have no sympathy with men like these: not such the brave who followed him at Lodi; not kindred souls were they who died for him at Marengo. Alas! alas! how might men read of him hereafter, if by such acts the splendor of his greatness was to suffer stain. While thoughts like these filled my mind, and in the excitement of awakened indignation I trod my little cell backward and forward, the jailer entered, and, having locked the door behind him, approached me.

"You are the Sous-Lieutenant Burke: is it not so? Well, I have a letter for you; I promised to deliver it on one condition only—which is, that when read, you shall tear it in pieces. Were it known that I did this, my head would roll in the Plaine de Grenelle before daybreak to-morrow. I also promised to put you on your guard: speak to few here; confide in none; and now here is your letter."

I opened the billet hastily, and read the few lines it contained, which evidently were written in a feigned hand: "Your life is in danger—any delay may be your ruin—address the minister at once as to the cause of your detention, and for the charges under which you are committed; demand permission to consult an advocate, and, when demanded, it can't be refused. Write to Monsieur Baillot, of 4 Rue Chantereine, in whom you may trust implicitly, and who has already instructions for your defense. Accept the inclosed, and believe in the faithful attachment of a sincere friend." A *billet de banque* for three thousand francs was folded in the note, and fell to the ground as I read it.

"*Parbleu!* I'll not ask you to tear this, though," said the jailer, as he handed it to me; and now let me see you destroy the other."

I read and re-read the few lines over and over, some new meaning striking me at each word, while I asked myself from whom it could have come. Was it De Beauvais? or dare I hope it was one dearest to me of all the world? Who then, in the saddest hour of my existence could step between me and my sorrow, and leave hope as my companion in the dreary solitude of a prison.

"Again, I say, be quick," cried the jailer; "my being here so long may be remarked. Tear it at once."

He followed with an eager eye every morsel of paper as it fell from my hand, and only seemed at ease as the last dropped to the ground; and then, without speaking a word, unlocked the door and withdrew.

The shipwrecked sailor, clinging to some wave-tossed raft, and watching with blood-shot eye the falling day, where no friendly sail has once appeared, and at last, as every hope dies out one by one within him, he hears a cheer break through the plashing of the sea, calling on him to live, may feel something like what were my sensations, as once more alone in my cell I thought of the friendly voice that could arouse me from my cold despair, and bid me hope again.

What a change came over the world to my eyes: the very cell itself no longer seemed dark and dreary; the faint sunlight that fell through the narrow window seemed soft and mellow; the voices I heard without struck me not as dissonant and harsh; the reckless gayety I shuddered at, the dark treachery I abhorred, I could now compassionate the one, and openly despise the other; and it was with that stout determination at my heart that I sallied forth into the garden where still the others lingered, waiting for the drum that summoned them to dinner.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE "CHOUANS."

WHEN night came, and all was silent in the prison, I sat down to write my letter to the minister. I knew enough of such matters to be aware that brevity is the great requisite; and, therefore, without any attempt to anticipate my accusation by a defense of my motives, I simply, but respectfully, demanded the charges alleged against me, and prayed for the earliest and most speedy investigation into my conduct. Such were the instructions of my unknown friend, and, as I proceeded to follow them, their meaning at once became apparent to me. Haste was recommended, evidently to prevent such explanations and inquiries into my conduct as more time might afford. My appearance at the château might still be a mystery to them, and one which might remain unfathomable, if any plausible reason were put forward. And what more could be laid to my charge? True, the brevet of colonel found on my person; but this I could with truth allege had never been ac-

cepted by me. They would scarcely condemn me on such testimony, unsupported by any direct charge; and who could bring such save De Beauvais? Flimsy and weak as such pretexts were, yet were they enough in my then frame of mind to support my courage and nerve my heart; but more than all I trusted in the sincere loyalty I felt for the cause of the government and its great chief—a sentiment which, however difficult to prove, gave myself that inward sense of safety which only can flow from strong convictions of honesty. "It may so happen," thought I, "that circumstances may appear against me, but I know and feel my heart is true and firm, and, even at the worst, such a consciousness will enable me to bear whatever may be my fortune."

The next morning my altered manner and happier look excited the attention of the others, who by various endeavors tried to fathom the cause, or learn any particulars of my fate; but in vain, for already I was on my guard against even a chance expression, and, save on the most commonplace topics, held no intercourse with any. Far from being offended at my reserve, they seemed rather to have conceived a species of respect for one whose secresy imparted something of interest to him; and while they tried, by the chance allusion to political events and characters, to sound me, I could see that though baffled, they by no means gave up the battle.

As time wore on, this half persecution died away—each day brought some prisoner or other amongst us, or removed some of those we had to other places of confinement, and thus I became forgotten in the interests of newer events. About a week after my entrance we were walking as usual about the gardens, when a rumor ran, that a prisoner of great consequence had been arrested the preceding night, and conveyed to the Temple; and various surmises were afloat as to who he might be, or whether he should be *au secret* or at large. While the point was eagerly discussed, a low door from the house was opened, and the jailer appeared, followed by a large, powerful man, whom in one glance I remembered as the chief of the Vendean party at the château, and the same who effected his escape in the Bois de Boulogne. He passed close to where I stood, his arm folded on his breast—his clear blue eye bent calmly on me—yet never by the slightest sign did he indicate that we had ever met before. I divined at once his meaning, and felt grateful for what I guessed might be a measure necessary to my safety.

"I tell you," said a shriveled old fellow, in a worn dressing-gown and slippers, who held the *Moniteur* of that day in his hand—"I tell you it is himself; and see, his hand is wounded—though he does his best to conceal the bandage in his bosom."

"Well, well—read us the account: where did it occur?" cried two or three in a breath.

The old man seated himself on a bench, and, having arranged his spectacles, and unfolded the journal, held out his hand to proclaim silence, when suddenly a wild cheer broke from the distant part of the garden, whither the newly-arrived prisoner had turned his steps—a second louder followed, in which the cry of "Vive le Roi" could be distinctly heard.

"You hear them," said the old man. "Was I right now? I knew it must be him."

"Strange enough, too, he should not be *au secret*," said another. "The generals have never been suffered to speak to any one since their confinement. But read on, let us hear it."

"'On yesterday morning,'" said the little man, reading aloud, "'Picot, the servant of George, was arrested, and although every endeavor was made to induce him to confess where his master was—"

"Do you know the meaning of that phrase, Duchos?" said a tall, melancholy-looking man, with a bald head—"that means the torture; thumbscrews and flint vices are the mode once more; see here." As he spoke he undid a silk handkerchief that was wrapped around his wrist, and exhibited a hand that seemed actually mashed into fragments—the bones were forced in many places through the flesh, which hung in dark-colored and blood-stained pieces about.

"I would show that hand at the tribunal," muttered an old soldier in a faded blue frock. "I'd hold it up when they'd ask me to swear."

"Your head would only fare the worse for doing so," said the Abbé. "Read on, Monsieur Duchos."

"Oh, where was I?—*Pardieu*, colonel, I wish you would cover that up: I shall dream of that terrible thumb all night.—Here we are—'Though nothing could be learned from Picot, it was ascertained that the brigand—'"

"Ha, ha," said a fat little fellow in a blouse, "they call them all brigands—Moreau is a brigand—Pichegru is a brigand too."

"'That the brigand had passed Monday night near Chaillot, and on Tuesday,

toward evening, was seen at Sainte-Geneviève, where it was suspected he slept on the mountain; on Wednesday the police traced him to the cabriolet stand at the end of the Rue de Condé, where he took a carriage and drove toward the Odéon.'"

"Probably he was going to the spectacle. What did they play that night?" said the fat man. "'*La Mort de Barberousse*,' perhaps."

The other read on.—"'The officer cried out, as he seized the bridle, "*Je vous arrête!*" when George leveled a pistol and shot him through the forehead, and then springing over the dead body dashed down the street. The butchers of the neighborhood, who knew the reward offered for his apprehension, pursued and fell upon him with their hatchets; a hand-to-hand encounter followed, in which the brigand's wrist was nearly severed from his arm, and thus disabled and overpowered he was secured and conveyed to the Temple.'"

"And who is this man?" said I in a whisper to the tall person near me.

"The General George Cadoudal—a brave Breton, and a faithful follower of his king," replied he; "and may Heaven have pity on him now." He crossed himself piously as he spoke, and moved slowly away.

"George Cadoudal!" repeated I to myself, "the same whose description figured on every wall of the capital, and for whose apprehension immense rewards were offered;" and with an inward shudder I thought of my chance intercourse with the man—to harbor whom was death—the dreaded chief of the Chouans—the daring Breton—of whom Paris rung with stories. And this was the companion of Henri de Beauvais. Revolving such thoughts, I strolled along unconsciously, until I reached the place where, some days before, I had seen the Vendeans engaged in prayer. The loud tone of a deep voice arrested my steps. I stopped and listened. It was George himself who spoke; he stood, drawn up to his full height, in the midst of a large circle who sat around on the grass. Though his language was a *patois* of which I was ignorant, I could catch here and there some indication of his meaning, as much perhaps from his gesture, and the look of those he addressed, as from the words themselves. It was an exhortation to them to endure with fortitude the lot that had befallen them—to meet death when it came without fear, as they could do so without dishonor—to strengthen their courage by looking to him, who would always give them an example of what they should be. The last words he spoke were in a plainer dialect, and almost these—"Throw no glance on the past. We are where we are—we are where God in his wisdom, and for his own ends, has placed us. If this cause be just, our martyrdom is a blessed one; if it be not so, our death is our punishment; and never forget that you are permitted to meet it from the same spot where our glorious monarch went to meet his own."

A cry of *Vive le Roi!* half stifled by sobs of emotion, broke from the listeners, and they rose, and pressed around him.

There he stood in the midst, while, like children, they came to kiss his hand—to hear him speak one word—even to look on him. Their swarthy faces, where hardship and suffering had left many a deep line and furrow, beamed with smiles as he turned toward them; and many a proud look was bent on the rest by those to whom he addressed a single word. One I could not help remarking above the others, a slight, pale, and handsome youth, whose almost girlish cheek the first down of youth was shading. George leaned his arm round his neck, and called him by his name, and in a voice almost tremulous from emotion. "And you, Bouvet de Lozier, whose infancy wanted nothing of luxury and enjoyment—for whom all that wealth and affection could bestow were in abundance—how do you bear these rugged reverses, my dear boy?"

The youth looked up with eyes bathed in tears; the hectic spot in his face gave way to the paleness of death, and his lips moved without a sound.

"He has been ill—the count has," said a peasant, in a low voice.

"Poor fellow," said George; "he was not meant for trials like these; the cares he used to bury in his mother's lap met other consolations than our ruder ones. Look up, Bouvet, my man, and remember you are a man."

The youth trembled from head to foot, and looked fearfully around, as if dreading something, while he clutched the strong arm beside him, as though for protection.

"Courage, boy—courage," said George. "We are together here—what can harm you?"

Then dropping his voice, and turning to the rest, he added:

"They have been tampering with his reason—his eye betrays a wandering intellect. Take him with you, Claude—he loves you—and do not leave him for a moment."

The youth pressed George's fingers to

his pale lips, and, with his head bent down and listless gait, moved slowly away.

As I wandered from the spot, my heart was full of all I witnessed. The influence of their chief had surprised me on the night of the attack on the château. But how much more wonderful did it seem now, when confined within the walls of a prison—the only exit to which was the path that led to the guillotine. Yet was their reliance on all he said as great, as implicit their faith in him, as warm their affection, as though success had crowned each effort he suggested, and that fortune had been as kind as she had proved adverse to his enterprise.

Such were the Chouans in the Temple. Life had presented to their hardy natures too many vicissitudes to make them quail beneath the horrors of a prison—death they had confronted in many shapes, and they feared it not even at the hands of the executioner. Loyalty to the exiled family of France was less a political than a religious feeling—one inculcated at the altar, and carried home to the fireside of the cottage. Devotion to their king was a part of their faith. The sovereign was but a saint the more in their calendar. The glorious triumphs of the revolutionary armies—the great conquests of the Consulate—found no sympathy within their bosoms; they neither joined the battle nor partook of the ovation. They looked on all such as the passing pageant of the hour—and muttered to each other, that the *bon Dieu* could not bless a nation that was false to its king.

Who could see them, as they met each morning, and not feel deeply interested in these brave but simple peasants? At daybreak they knelt together in prayer, their chief officiating as priest; their deep voices joined in the hymn of their own native valleys, as with tearful eyes they sang the songs that reminded them of home. The service over, George addressed them in a short speech—some words of advice and guidance for the coming day—reminding them that ere another morning shone, many might be summoned before the tribunal to be examined, and from thence led forth to death; exhorting them to fidelity to each other, and loyalty to their glorious cause. Then came the games of their country, which they played with all the enthusiasm of liberty and happiness. These were again succeeded by hours passed in hearing and relating stories of their beloved Bretagne—of its tried faith and its ancient bravery—while through all they lived a community apart from the other prisoners, who never dared to obtrude upon them; nor did the most venturesome of the police spies ever transgress a limit that might have cost him his life.

Thus did two so different currents run side by side within the walls of the Temple, and each regarding the other with distrust and dislike.

While thus I felt a growing interest for these bold but simple children of the forest, my anxiety for my own fate grew hourly greater. No answer was ever returned to my letter to the minister, nor any notice taken of it whatever; and though each day I heard of some one or other being examined before the "Tribunal Spécial," or the *Préfet de Police*, I seemed as much forgotten as though the grave inclosed me. My dread of anything like acquaintance or intimacy with the other prisoners prevented my learning much of what went forward each day, and from which, from some source or other, they seemed well informed. A chance phrase—an odd word now and then dropped—would tell me of some new discovery by the police, or some recent confession by a captured conspirator; but of what the crime consisted, and who were they principally implicated, I remained totally ignorant.

It was well known that both Moreau and Pichegru were confined in a part of the tower that opened upon the terrace, but neither suffered to communicate with each other, nor even to appear at large like the other prisoners. It was rumored, too, that each day one or both were submitted to long and searching examinations, which, it was said, had hitherto elicited nothing from either, save total denial of any complicity whatever, and complete ignorance of the plots and machinations of others.

So much we could learn from the *Moniteur*, which reached us each day; and, while assuming a tone of open reprobation regarding the Chouans, spoke in terms the most cautious and reserved respecting the two generals, as if probing the public mind how far their implication in treason might be credited, and with what faith the proofs of their participation might be received.

At last the train seemed laid; the explosion was all prepared, and nothing wanting but the spark to ignite it. A letter from Moreau to the Consul appeared in the columns of the government paper, in which, after recapitulating in terms most suitable the services he had rendered the Republic while in command of the army of the Rhine, the confidence the Convention had always placed in him, the frequent occasions which had presented themselves to him of grati-

fying ambitious views (had he conceived such), he adverted in brief but touching terms to his conduct on the 18th Brumaire, in seconding the adventurous step taken by Bonaparte himself, and attributed the neglect his devotion had met with rather to the interference and plotting of his enemies, than to any real estrangement on the part of the Consul. Throughout the whole of the epistle there reigned a tone of reverence for the authority of Bonaparte most striking and remarkable; there was nothing like an approach to the equality which might well be supposed to subsist between two great generals—albeit, the one was at the height of power, and the other sunk in the very depth of misfortune. On the contrary, the letter was nothing more than an appeal to old souvenirs and former services—to one who possessed the power, if he had the will, to save him; it breathed throughout the sentiments of one who demands a favor, and that favor his life and honor, at the hands of him who had already constituted himself the fountain of both.

While such was the position of Moreau—a position which resulted in his downfall—chance informed us of the different ground occupied by his companion in misfortune, the General Pichegru.

About three days after the publication of Moreau's letter, we were walking as usual in the garden of the Temple, when a *huissier* came up, and, beckoning to two of the prisoners, desired them to follow him. Such was the ordinary course by which one or more were daily summoned before the tribunal for examination, and we took no notice of what had become a matter of every-day occurrence, and went on conversing as before about the news of the morning. Several hours elapsed without the others having returned, and at last we began to feel anxious about their fate, when one of them made his appearance—his heightened color and agitated expression betokening that something more than common had occurred.

"We were examined with Pichegru," said the prisoner, who was an old quartermaster in the army of the Upper Rhine, as he sat down upon a bench and wiped his forehead with his handkerchief.

"Indeed!" said the tall Colonel, with the bald head; "before Monsieur Réal, I suppose?"

"Yes, before Réal. My poor old general!—there he was, as I used to see him formerly, with his hand in the breast of his uniform, his pale, thin features as calm as ever, until at last, when roused, his eyes flashed fire, and his lip trembled before he broke out into such a torrent of attack—"

"Attack, say you!" interrupted the Abbé; "a bold course, my faith! in one who has need of all his powers for defense."

"It was ever his tactique to be the assailant," said a bronzed, soldier-like fellow, in a patched uniform; "he did so in Holland."

"He chose a better enemy to practice it with then, than he has done now," resumed the Quartermaster, sadly.

"Whom do you mean?" cried half a dozen voices together.

"The Consul."

"The Consul! Bonaparte! Attack *him!*" repeated one after the other, in accents of surprise and horror. "Poor fellow, he is deranged."

"So I almost thought myself, as I heard him," replied the Quartermaster; "for, after submitting with patience to a long and tiresome examination, he suddenly, as if endurance could go no further, cried out—'*Assez!*' The préfet started, and Thuriot, who sat beside him, looked up terrified, while Pichegru went on. 'So, the whole of this negotiation about Cayenne is then a falsehood. Your promise to make me governor there, if I consented to quit France forever, was a trick to extort confession, or a bribe to silence. Be it so. Now come what will, I'll not leave France; and, more still, I'll declare everything before the judges openly at the tribunal. The people shall know, all Europe shall know, who is my accuser, and what he is. Yes, your Consul himself treated with the Bourbons in Italy; the negotiations were begun, continued, carried on, and only broken off by his own excessive demands. Ay, I can prove it; his very return from Egypt through the whole English fleet—that happy chance, as you were wont to term it—was a secret treaty with Pitt for the restoration of the exiled family on his reaching Paris. These facts, and facts you shall confess them, are in my power to prove; and prove them I will in the face of all France."

"Poor Pichegru," said the Abbé, contemptuously. "What an ill-tempered child a great general may be after all! Did he think the hour would ever come for him to realize such a dream?"

"What do you mean?" cried two or three together.

"The Corsican never forgets a vendetta," was the cool reply, as he walked away.

"True," said the Colonel, thoughtfully—"quite true."

To me these words were riddles. My

only feeling toward Pichegru was one of contempt and pity that, in any depth of misfortune, he could resort to such an unworthy attack upon him who still was the idol of all my thoughts; and for this, the conqueror of Holland stood now as low in my esteem as the most vulgar of the rabble gang that each day saw sentenced to the galleys.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE REIGN OF TERROR UNDER THE CONSULATE.

On the morning that followed the scene I have spoken of came the news of the arrest, the trial, and the death of the Duc d'Enghien. That terrible tragedy, which yet weighs, and will weigh forever on the memory of the period, reached us in our prison with all the terrible force of circumstances to make it a day of sorrow and mourning. Such details as the journals afforded but little satisfied our curiosity. The youth, the virtues, the bravery of the prince, had made him the idol of his party; and while his death was lamented for his own sake, his followers read in it the determination of the government to stop at nothing in their resolve to exterminate that party. A gloomy silence sat upon the Chouans, who no longer moved about as before, regardless of their confinement to a prison. Their chief remained apart; he neither spoke to any one, nor seemed to notice those who passed: he looked stunned and stupefied, rather than deeply affected, and when he lifted his eyes, their expression was cold and wandering. Even the other prisoners, who rarely gave way to feeling of any kind, seemed at first overwhelmed by these sad tidings; and doubtless many who before had trusted to rank and influence for their safety, saw how little dependence could be placed on such aid, when the blow had fallen upon a "Condé" himself.

I, who neither knew the political movements of the time, nor the sources of the danger the Consul's party anticipated, could only mourn over the unhappy fate of a gallant prince whose daring had cost him his life, and never dreamed for a moment of calling in question the honor or good faith of Bonaparte in an affair of which I could have easily believed him totally ignorant. Such, indeed, was the representation of the *Moniteur;* and whatever doubts the hints about me might have excited, were speedily allayed by the accounts I read of the Consul's indignation at the haste and informality of the trial, and his deep anger at the catastrophe that followed it.

"Savary will be disgraced for this," said I to the abbé, who leaned over my shoulder while I read the paper. "Bonaparte can never forgive him."

"You mistake, my dear sir," replied he, with a strange expression I could not fathom; "the Consul is the most forgiving of men; he never bears malice."

"But here was a dreadful event—a crime, perhaps."

"Only a fault," resumed he. "By-the-by, colonel, this order about closing the barriers will be excessively inconvenient to the good people of Paris."

"I have been thinking over that, too," said an over-dressed, affected-looking youth, whose perfumed curls and studied costume formed a strange contrast with the habits of his fellow-prisoners. "If they shut up the Barrière de l'Etoile, what are they to do for Longchamps?"

"*Parbleu*, that did not strike me," interposed the colonel, tapping his forehead with his finger. "I'll wager a crown they haven't thought of that themselves."

"The Champs Elysées are surely long enough for such tomfoolery," said the Quartermaster, in a gruff, savage tone.

"Not one half," was the imperturbable reply of the youth; "and Longchamps promised admirably this year. I had ordered a *calèche*—light blue, with gilt circles on the wheels, and a bronze carving to the pole—like an antique chariot."

"*Parbleu*, you are more likely to take your next airing in a simpler conveyance," said the Quartermaster, with a grin.

"I was to have driven la Comtesse de Beauflers to the Bois de Boulogne."

"You must content yourself with the Count de la Marque"—the prison name of the executioner—"instead," growled out the other.

I turned away, no less disgusted at the frivolity that could only see in the dreadful event that took place the temporary interruption to a vain and silly promenade, than at the savage coarseness that could revel in the pain common misfortune gave him the privilege of inflicting.

Such, however, was the prevalent tone of thinking and speaking there. The death of friends—the ruin of those best loved and cared for—the danger that each day came nearer to themselves—were all casualties to which habit, recklessness of life, and libertinism had accustomed them; while about former modes of life, the pleasures of the capital, its delights and dissipation, they

conversed with the most eager interest. It is thus, while in some natures misfortunes will call forth into exercise the best and noblest traits that in happier circumstances had never found the necessity that gave them birth; so, in others, adversity depresses and demoralizes those weaker temperaments that seemed formed to sail safely on the calm waters, but never destined to brave the stormy seas of life.

With such associates I could have neither sympathy nor friendship; and my life passed on in one unbroken and dreary monotony—day succeeding day, and night following night—till my thoughts, turned ever inward, had worn as it were a track for themselves, in which the world without and its people had no share whatever. Not only was my application to the minister unanswered, but I was never examined before any of the tribunals; and sometimes the dreadful fate of those prisoners who, in the Reign of Terror, passed their whole life in prison, their crimes, their very existence forgotten, would cross my mind, and strike me with terror unspeakable.

If, in the somber atmosphere of the Temple a sad and cheerless monotony prevailed, events followed fast on each other in that world from which its gloomy walls excluded us; every hour was some new feature of the dark conspiracy brought to light; the vigilance of Monsieur Réal slept not night or day; and all that bribery, terror, or torture could effect, was put into requisition to obtain full and precise information as to every one concerned in the plot.

It was a bright, fresh morning in April, the sixth of the month—the day is graven on my memory—when, on walking forth into the garden, I was surprised to see the prisoners standing in a circle round a tree on which a placard was fastened, with glances eagerly turned toward the paper, or bent sadly to the ground. They stood around, sad and silent: to my question of what had occurred, a significant look at the tree was the only reply I received, while in the faces of all I perceived that some dreadful news had reached them. Forcing my way with difficulty through the crowd, I at length approached near enough to read the placard, on which, in large letters, was writtten:

"Charles Pichegru, ex-Général Républicain, s'est étranglé dans sa prison.

"6 Avril. Le Temple."

"And did Pichegru, the great conqueror of Holland, die by his own hand?" said I, as my eye rested on the fatal bulletin.

"Don't you read it, young man?" replied a deep, solemn voice beside me, which I at once knew was that of General George himself. "Can you doubt the accuracy of information supplied by the police?"

The by-standers looked up with a terrified and frightened expression, as if dreading lest the very listening to his words might be construed into an acquiescence in them.

"Trust me, he is dead," continued he. "They who have announced his fate here have a right to be relied on. It now only remains to be seen how he died. These prison maladies have a strange interest for us who live in the infected climate; and, if I mistake not, I see the *Moniteur* yonder, a full hour before its usual time. See what a blessing, gentlemen, you enjoy in a paternal government, which, in moments of public anxiety, can feel for your distress, and hasten to alleviate it."

The tone of sarcasm he spoke in, the measured fall of every word, sank into the hearers' minds, and though they stood mute, they did not even move from the spot.

"Here is the *Moniteur* now," said the Quartermaster, opening the paper and reading aloud.

"'To his oft-repeated assurances that he would make no attempt upon his life—'"

A rude burst of laughter from George interrupted the reader here.

"I ask your pardon, sir," said he, touching his cap; "proceed. I promise not to interrupt you again."

"'That he would make no attempt upon his life, General Pichegru obtained permission that the sentries should be stationed outside his cell during the night. Having provided himself with a fagot, which he secreted beneath his bed, he supped as usual in the evening of yesterday, eating heartily at eleven o'clock, and retiring to rest by twelve. When thus alone he placed the stick within the folds of the black silk cravat he generally wore round his neck, in such a manner as, when twisted, to act like a tourniquet; and having turned it with such a degree of force as to arrest the return of blood from the head, he fastened it beneath his head and shoulders, and in this manner, apoplexy supervening, expired.'"

"Par St. Louis, sir," cried George, "the explanation is admirable, and most

satisfactorily shows how a man may possess life long enough to be certain he has killed himself. The only thing wanting is for the general to assist in dressing the *procès-verbal*, when doubtless his own views of his case would be equally edifying and instructive; and see, already the ceremony has begun."

As he spoke, he pointed to a number of persons who crossed the terrace, preceded by Savary, in his uniform of the *gendarmes d'élite*, and who went in the direction of the cell where the dead body lay.

The prisoners now fell into little knots and groups, talking beneath their breath, and apparently terrified at every stir about them. Each compared his sensation of what he thought he heard during the night with the other's. Some asserted that they distinctly heard the chains of the drawbridge creak long after midnight; others vouched for the quick tramp of feet along the corridors, and the sounds of strange voices; one whose cell was beneath that of Pichegru, said that he was awoke before day by a violent crash overhead, followed by a harsh sound like coughing, which continued for some time, and then ceased entirely. These were vague, uncertain signs, yet what horrible thoughts did they not beget in each listener's mind!

As I stood terror-struck and speechless, I felt a tap on my shoulder. I turned; it was the abbé, who, with a smile of peculiar irony, stood behind me.

"Poor Savary!" said he, in a whisper; "how will he ever get over this blunder, and it so very like the former one?"

He did not wait for a reply, but moved away.

"Who is to be the next, sir?" cried George, with a deep voice, as he saw the assemblage thus accidentally collected about to break up—"Moreau, perhaps. One thing I bid you all bear witness to: suicide is a crime I'll never commit. Let no narrative of a cravat and a fagot—"

"Do you never eat mushrooms, general?" said the Abbé, dryly; and, whether from the manner of the speaker, or the puzzled look of him to whom the speech was addressed, the whole crowd burst into a fit of laughter—the emotion seemed like one in which relief was felt by all. They laughed long and loud—and now the faces that a minute before were marked by every character of deep affliction, looked merry and happy. Each had some story, some apropos to tell, or some smart witticism to let off against his neighbor; and to hear them you would say that never was there a subject more suggestive of drollery than the one of suicide and sudden death.

And thus was it ever. No event, however dreadful—no circumstance, however shocking, could do more than momentarily affect those whose life possessed no security, was governed by no principle. Levity and unbelief—unbelief that extended not only to matters of religion, but actually penetrated every relation of life, rendering them skeptical of friendship, love, truth, honor, and charity—were the impulses under which they lived; and they would have laughed him to scorn who should have attempted to establish another code of acting or thinking. Such feelings, if they made them but little suited to all the habits and charities of life, certainly rendered them most indifferent to death; and much of that courage so much lauded and admired on the scaffold, had no other source than in the headlong recklessness the prison had inculcated—the indifference to everything, where everything was questionable and doubtful.

I struggled powerfully against the taint of such a consuming malady. I bethought me of my boyhood and its early purpose—of him who first stirred my soul to ambition—and asked myself what would he have thought of me had I yielded to such a trial as this? I pictured before me a career, when such devotion as I felt, aided by a stout heart, must win its way to honor: and when roused to thought, these low, depressing dreams, these dark hours of doubt and despair, vanished before it. But gradually my health gave way—my lethargic apathy increased upon me—the gloomy walls of my cell had thrown their shadow over my spirit, and I sank into a state of moping indifference, in which I scarcely marked the change of day and night; and felt at length that had the sentence been pronounced which condemned me for life to the walls of the Temple, I could have heard it without emotion.

"Come, sous-lieutenant, it's your turn now!" said the turnkey, entering my cell one morning, where I sat alone at breakfast; "I have just received the orders for your appearance."

"How! where?" said I, scarcely able to do more than guess at the meaning of his words; "before the préfet, is it?"

"No, no, a very different affair, indeed: you are summoned with the Chouan prisoners to appear at the Palais de Justice."

"The Palais!" said I, as for the first time for weeks past a sentiment of fear crept through me. "Are we to be tried without having a list of the charges alleged against us?"

"You'll hear them time enough in court."

"Without an advocate to defend us."

"The president will name one for that purpose."

"And can the jury—"

"Jury! there is no jury; the Consul has suspended trial by jury for two years. Come, come, don't be downhearted—your friends without are singing away as gayly as though it were a festival. My faith, that General George is made of iron I believe. He has been confined *au secret* these ten day—his rations diminished to almost a starvation level; and yet there is he now, with his countenance as calm, and his look as firm, as if he were at large on the hills of La Vendée. Cheer up, then—let the example of your chief—"

"Chief! he is no chief of mine."

"That's as it may, or may not be," replied he, gruffly, as though wounded by what he deemed a want of confidence in his honor; "however, make haste and dress, for the carriages will be here to convey you to the Palais—and there now are the *gendarmes d'élite* assembling in the court."

As I proceeded to dress, I could see from the window of my cell that a squadron of gendarmes, in full uniform, were drawn up in the square of the prison, along one side of which were several carriages standing, each with two gendarmes seated on the box. The prisoners were confined to their walls; but at every window some face appeared peering anxiously at the proceedings beneath, and watching, with inquisitive gaze, every, even the slightest, movement.

Just as the clock struck nine the door of my cell was opened, and a greffier of the court entered, and, taking from a black portmanteau at his side a roll of paper, began, without delay, to repeat in a sing-song recitative tone a formal summons of the Grand Tribunal for the "surrender of the body of Thomas Burke, sous-lieutenant of the *huitième* hussars, now in the prison of the Temple, and accused of the crime of treason."

The last word made me shudder as it fell from him; and not all my stoical indifference of weeks past was proof against such an accusation. The jailer having formally listened to the document, and replied by reading aloud another, delivered me over to the officer, who desired me to follow him.

In the court beneath the greater number of the prisoners were already assembled. George, among the number, was conspicuous, not only by his size and proportions, but by a handsome uniform, in the breast of which he wore his decoration of St. Louis, from which descended a bright bow of crimson ribbon. A slight bustle at one of the doorways of the tower suddenly seemed to attract his attention, and I saw that he turned quickly round, and forced his way through the crowd to the place. Eager to learn what it was, I followed him at once. Pushing with some difficulty forward, I reached the doorway, on the step of which lay a young man in a fainting fit. His face, pale as death, had no color save two dark circles round the eyes, which, though open, were upturned and filmy. His cravat had been hastily removed by some of the bystanders, and showed a purple welt around his neck, on one side of which a mass of blood escaped beneath the skin, made a dreadful-looking tumor. His dress denoted a person of condition, as well as the character of his features; but never had I looked upon an object so sad and woe-begone before. At his side knelt George—his strong arm round his back, while his great massive hand patted the water on his brow. The stern features of the hardy Breton, which ever before had conveyed to me nothing but daring and impetuous passion, were softened to a look of womanly kindliness—his blue eye beaming as softly as though it were a mother leaning over her infant.

"Bouvet, my dear, dear boy, remember *thou* art a Breton—rally thyself, my child—bethink thee of the cause."

The name of the youth at once recalled him whom I had seen some months before among the Chouan prisoners; and who, sad and sickly as he then seemed, was now much further gone toward the tomb.

"Bouvet," cried George, in an accent of heartrending sorrow, "this will disgrace us forever."

The youth turned his cold eyes round till they were fixed on the other's face; while his lips, still parted, and his cheek pale and flattened, gave him the appearance of a corpse suddenly called back to life.

"There, my own brave boy," said George, kissing his forehead—"there, thou art thyself again." He bent over till his lips nearly touched the youth's ear, and then whispered—"Dost thou forget the last words Monseigneur spoke to thee, Bouvet?—'Conserve-toi pour tes amis, et contre nos ennemis communs.'"

The boy started up at the sounds, and looked wildly about him, while his hands were open wide with a kind of spasmodic motion.

"*Tonnerre de ciel,*" cried George, with frantic passion, "what have they done with him—his mind is gone. Bouvet—Bouvet de Lozier—knowest thou this?" He tore from his bosom a miniature, surrounded with large brilliants, and held it to the eyes of the youth.

A wild shriek broke from the youth as he fell back in strong convulsions. The dreadful cry seemed like the last wail of expiring reason—so sad, so piercing was its cadence.

"Look, see," said George, turning a savage scowl upon the crowd, "they have taken away his mind—he is an idiot."

"The General George Cadoudal," cried a loud voice from the center of the court.

"Here," was the firm reply.

"This way, sir—the carriage yonder."

"Monsieur Sol de Gisolles."

"Here," replied a tall, aristocratic-looking personage, in deep mourning.

Sous-Lieutenant Burke was the next name called, and I followed the others, and soon found myself seated in a close *calèche*, with a gendarme beside me, while two mounted men of the corps sat at either side of the carriage with drawn swords. Picot, the servant of George, the faithful Breton, was next summoned, and Lebourgeois, an old but handsome man, in the simple habit of a farmer, with his long white hair, and soft kind countenance. Many other names were called over, and nearly an hour elapsed before the ceremony was concluded, and the order was given to move forward.

At last the heavy gates were opened, and the procession issued forth. I was surprised to see that the entire Boulevard was lined with troops, behind which thousands of people were closely wedged—all the windows, and even the house-tops, being filled with spectators.

When we reached the quays, the crowd was greater still; and it required all the efforts of the troops to keep it back sufficiently to permit an open space for the carriages—while at all the streets that opened at the quays, mounted dragoons were stationed, to prevent any carriage passing down. Never had I beheld such a vast multitude of people; and yet, through all that crowded host, a deep, solemn silence prevailed—not a cry, nor a shout, was heard in all the way. Once only, at the corner of the Pont Neuf, a cry of "Vive Moreau!" was given by some one in the crowd; but it was a solitary voice—and the moment after I saw a gendarme force his way through the mass, and seizing a miserable-looking creature by the neck, hurry him along beside his horse toward the guard-house.

On crossing the bridge, I saw that a company of artillery and two guns were placed in position beside Desaix's monument, so as to command the Pont Neuf: all these preparations clearly indicating that the government felt the occasion such as to warrant the most energetic measures of security. There was something in the earnest look of the cannoniers, as they stood with their lighted matches beside the guns, that betrayed the resolve of one whose quick determination was ever ready for the moment of danger.

The narrow streets of the Isle St. Louis, more densely crowded than any part of the way, slackened our pace considerably, and frequently the gendarmes were obliged to clear the space before the carriages could proceed. I could not help feeling struck, as we passed along these miserable and dark alleys—where vice and crime, and wretchedness of every type, herded together—to hear, at every step, some expressions of pity or commiseration from those who, themselves, seemed the veriest objects of compassion. "*Ah, voilà,*" cried an old creature in rags, on whose cotton bonnet a faded and dirty tricolored ribbon was fastened—"*voilà* Moreau. I'd know his proud face any day. Poor general, I hope it will not go hard with you to-day!"

"Look there," screamed a hag, as the carriage in which Bouvet sat passed by. "Look at the handsome youth that's dying—Holy Virgin! he'll not be living when they reach the gate of the Palais!" "And there," cried another, "there's a hussar officer, pale enough, I trow he is; come, I'll say a prayer or two for him there, it can do him no harm, anyhow."

The hoarse rattle of a drum in front mingled with the noise of the cavalcade, and I now could hear the clank of a guard turning out. The minute after we stood before a colossal gateway, whose rich tracery shone in the most gorgeous gilding; it was in the splendid taste of Louis XIV., and well became the entrance of what once had been a royal palace. "Alas!" thought I, "how unlike those who once trod this wide court is the melancholy *cortége* that now enters it."

As each carriage drew up at the foot of a wide flight of stone steps, the prisoners descended, and, escorted by gendarmes on each side, were led into the building. When all had reached the hall, the order was given to move forward, and we walked on till we came to a long gallery. On either side was a range of massive pillars, between which

views were obtained of various spacious, but dimly-lighted chambers, apparently neglected and unused; some benches here and there, an old cabinet, and a deal table, were all the furniture. Here we halted for a few moments, till a door opening at the extreme end, a sign was made for us to advance, and now we heard a low rushing sound, like the distant breaking of the sea in a calm night. It grew louder as we went, till we could mark the mingling of several hundred voices, as they conversed in a subdued and under tone.

Then, indeed, a dreadful thrill ran through me, as I thought of the countless mass before whom I was to stand forth a criminal, and it needed every effort in my power to keep my feet.

A heavy curtain of dark cloth yet separated us from a view of the court, but we could hear the voice of the president commanding silence, and the monotonous intonation of the clerk reading the order for the proceedings. This concluded, a deep voice called out, "Introduce the prisoners," and the words were repeated still louder by a huissier at the entrance; and at a signal the line moved forward, the curtain was drawn back, and we advanced into the court.

The crowd of faces that filled the vast space from the body of the court below to the galleries above, turned, as we passed on to the bench, at one side of the raised platform, near the seat of the judges. A similar bench, but unoccupied, ran along the opposite side, while directly in front of the judges were ranged the advocates in rows closely packed as they could sit; a small desk, somewhat advanced from the rest, being the seat reserved for the procureur-général of the court.

The vast multitude of spectators—the pomp and circumstance of a court of justice—the solemn look of the judges arrayed in their dark robes and square black caps, reminding one of the officers of the Inquisition, as we see them in old paintings; the silence where so many were assembled—all struck me with awe, and I scarcely dared to look up, lest in the glances bent upon me I should meet some whose looks might seem to condemn me.

"Proclaim the *séance*," said the President.

And with a loud voice the huissier of the court made proclamation that the tribunal had commenced its sitting. This concluded, the procureur-général proceeded to read the names of the accused, beginning with Général Moreau, Armand de Polignac, Charles de Rivière, Sol de Gisolles, George Cadoudal, and some twenty others of less note, among which I heard with a sinking heart my own name pronounced. Some customary formalities seemed now to occupy the court for a considerable time; after which, the huissier called silence once more.

"Général Moreau," said the President, in a deep voice that was heard throughout the entire court. "Rise up, sir," added he, after a few seconds' pause. I looked down the bench, at the farthest end of which I saw the tall and well-knit figure of a man in the uniform of a general of the Republic; his back was turned toward me, but his bearing and carriage were quite enough to distinguish the soldier.

"Your name and surname," said the President.

Before an answer could be returned, a dull sound, like something heavy falling, resounded through the court, and in an instant several persons around me stood up. I bent forward to see, and beheld the figure of Bouvet de Lozier stretched insensibly upon the ground; beside him his faithful friend George was stooping, and endeavoring to open his vest and give him air.

"Bring some water here quickly," cried the hardy Breton, in a tone that showed little respect for where he stood. "Your absurd ceremonial has frightened the poor boy out of his senses."

"Respect the court, sir, or I commit you!" said the President, in a voice of anger.

A contemptuous look, followed by a still more contemptuous shrug of the shoulders, was his reply.

"Remove the prisoner," said the President, pointing to the still fainting youth, "and proclaim silence in the court."

The officers of the tribunal carried the death-like figure of the boy down the steps, and bore him to some of the chambers near.

This little incident, slight and passing as it was, seemed much to affect the auditory, and it was some time before perfect silence could be again restored.

"So much for the régime of the Temple," said George, aloud, as he looked after the insensible form of his friend.

"Silence, sir!" cried one of the judges, M. Thuriot, a harsh and severe-looking man, whose hatred to the prisoners was the subject of much conversation in the prison.

"Ah, it is you, Tue-Roi!" cried George, punning upon his name, for he had been one of the regicides. "You there—I thought they had found you out long ere this."

A burst of laughter that nothing could repress, broke through the crowded court, and it was not until some five or six persons were forcibly removed by the gendarmes that order was again restored.

"Read the act of accusation," said the President in a deep, solemn voice.

"In the name of the Republic, one and indivisible—"

"Monsieur le Président," interrupted the Procureur-Général, "I would submit to the court that, as in the first accusation there are several of the prisoners not included, they should not remain during the recital of the indictment."

A conversation of some minutes now took place between the judges, during which again the silence was unbroken in the court. I turned gladly from the gaze of the thousand spectators to the bench where my fellow-prisoners were seated; and, however varied by age, rank, and occupation, there seemed but one feeling amongst them—a hardy and resolute spirit to brave every danger without flinching.

"Which of the prisoners are not accused under the first act?" said Thuriot.

"Charles Auguste Rebarde, *dit le Noir*, Guillaume Lebarte, and Thomas Burke, sous-lieutenant in the 8th Regiment of Hussars."

"Let them withdraw," said the President.

A slight bustle ensued in the body of the court as the gendarmes advanced to make a passage for our exit; and for a moment I could perceive that the attention of the assembly was drawn toward us. One by one we descended from the platform, and, with a gendarme on either side, proceeded to pass out, when suddenly the deep, mellow voice of Cadoudal called aloud:

"Adieu, my friends, adieu! If we are not to be better treated than our prince, we shall never see you again."

"Silence, sir!" cried the President, severely; and then, turning toward the bar of advocates, he continued, "If that man have an advocate in this court, it would well become him to warn his client that such continued insult to the tribunal can only prejudice his cause."

"I have none, and I wish for none," replied George, in a tone of defiance. "This mockery is but the first step of the guillotine, and I can walk it without assistance."

A renewed call of "silence!" and a deep murmur through the assembly, was all I heard, as the door of the court opened and closed behind us. As we marched along a low vaulted corridor, the sounds of the court grew fainter and fainter; and at last the echoes of our own steps were the only noises.

The room to which we were conducted was a small whitewashed chamber, around which ran a bench of unpainted wood. A deal table stood in the center, on which was a common-looking earthenware jar of water, and some tin goblets. The window was several feet from the ground, and strongly barred with iron.

"La salle d'attente is gloomy enough," said one of my companions, "and yet some of us may be very sorry to leave it."

"Not I, at least," cried the other, resolutely. "The basket beneath the guillotine will be an easier couch than I have slept on these three months."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE "PALAIS DE JUSTICE."

"It will go hard with Moreau to-day," said the elder of the two prisoners—a large, swarthy-looking Breton, in the dress of a sailor; "the Consul hates him."

"Whom does he not hate?" said the younger—a slight and handsome youth. "Whom does he not hate that ever rivaled him in glory? What love did he bear to Kléber or Desaix?"

"It is false," said I fiercely. "Bonaparte's greatness stands far too high to feel such rivalry as theirs—the conqueror of Italy and of Egypt—"

"Is a Corsican," interrupted the elder.

"And a tyrant," rejoined the other, in the same breath.

"These words become you well," said I, bitterly; "would that no stain lay on my honor, and I could make you eat them."

"And who are you that dare to speak thus?" said the younger; "or how came one like you mixed up with men whose hearts were in a great cause, and who came to sell their lives upon it?"

"I tell you, boy," broke in the elder, in a slow and measured tone, "I have made more stalwart limbs than thine bend, and stronger joints crack, for less than thou hast ventured to tell us; but sorrow and suffering are hard masters, and I can bear more now than I was wont to do. Let us have no more words."

As he spoke, he leaned his head upon his hand, and turned toward the wall; the other, too, sat down in a corner of the cell,

and was silent, and thus we remained for hours long.

The dreary stillness, made more depressing by the presence of the two prisoners, whose deep-drawn breathings were the only sounds they uttered, had something unspeakably sad and melancholy in it, and more than once I felt sorry for the few words I had spoken, which separated those whose misfortunes should have made them brothers.

A confused and distant hum, swelling and falling at intervals, now filled the air; and gradually I could distinguish the shouts of people at a distance. This increased as it came nearer, and then I heard the tramping noise of many feet, as of a great multitude of people passing in the street below, and suddenly a wild cheer broke forth—"Vive le Consul!" "Vive Bonaparte!" followed the next instant by the clanking sound of a cavalry escort, while the cry grew louder and louder, and the *vivas* drowned all other sounds.

"You hear them, Guillaume, you hear them," said the sailor to the other prisoner. "That shout is our death-cry. Bonaparte comes not here to-day but to see his judges do his bidding."

"What care I?" said the other, fiercely. "The guillotine or the sabre, the axe or the bayonet—it is all one. We knew what must come of it."

The door opened as he spoke, and a greffier of the tribunal appeared with four gendarmes.

"Come, Messieurs," said he, "the court is waiting for you."

"And how go matters without, sir?" said the elder, in an easy tone.

"Badly for the prisoners," said the greffier, shaking his head; "Monsieur Moreau, the general's brother, has done much injury—he has insulted the Consul."

"Bravely done!" cried the younger man, with enthusiasm. "It is well he should hear truth one day, though the tongue that uttered it should be cold the next."

"Move on, sir," said the greffier, sternly. "Not you," added he, as I pressed forward after the rest. "Your time has not come."

"Would that it had," said I, as the door closed upon me, and I was left in total solitude.

The day was over, and the evening already late, when a turnkey appeared, and desired me to follow him. A moody indifference to everything had settled on me, and I never spoke, as I walked behind him down corridor after corridor, and across a court, into a large, massive-looking building, whose grated windows and strongly-barred doors reminded me of the Temple.

"Here is your cell," said he, roughly, as he unlocked a low door near the entrance.

"It is gloomy enough," said I, with a sad smile.

"And yet many have shed tears to leave it before now," rejoined he, with a savage twinkle of his small eyes.

I was glad when the hoarse crash of the closed door told me I was alone, and I threw myself upon my bed and buried my face in my hands.

There is a state which is not sleep, and yet is akin to it, into which grief can bring us—a half dreary stupor, where only sorrows are felt, and even they come dulled and blunted, as if time and years had softened down their sting. But no ray of hope shines there—a dreary waste, without a star; the cold, dark sea, boundless and bleak, is not more saddening than life then seems before us. There is neither path to follow nor goal to reach, and an apathy worse than death creeps over all our faculties; and yet when we awake we wish for this again. Into this state I sank, and when morning came felt sorry that the light should shine into my narrow cell, and rouse me from my stupor. When the turnkey entered to bring me breakfast, I turned toward the wall, and trembled lest he should speak to me; and it was with a strange thrill I heard the door close as he went out. The abandonment to one's sorrow—that daily, hourly indulgence in grief, which the uncheered solitude of a prison begets—soon brings the mind to the narrow range of one or two topics. With the death of hope all fancy and imagination perish—the springs of all speculation are dried up—and every faculty bent toward one point—the reason, like a limb unexercised, wastes and pines, and becomes paralyzed.

Now and then the thought would flash across me, "What if this were madness?" and I shuddered not at the thought: such had my prison made me.

Four days and nights passed over thus—a long, monotonous dream, in which I counted not the time, and I lay upon my straw-bed watching the expiring light of the candle with that strange interest one attaches to everything within the limits of a prison-cell. The flame waned and flickered: now lighting up for a second the cold gray walls, scratched with many a prisoner's name; now subsiding, it threw strange and fitful shapes upon them—figures that seemed to move and to beckon to each other—goblin outlines, wild and fan-

ciful ; then came a bright flash as the wick fell, and all was dark.

"If the dead do but sleep!" was the first thought that crossed my mind as the gloom of total night wrapped every object about me, and a stillness most appalling prevailed. Suddenly I heard the sounds of a heavy bolt withdrawn, and a door opening, then a low, rushing noise, like wind blowing through a narrow corridor, and at last the marching sounds of feet, and the accents of men speaking together; nearer and nearer they came, and at length halted at the door of my cell. A cold, faint feeling—the sickness of the heart—crept over me ; the hour —the sounds reminded me of what so often I had heard men speak of in the Temple, and the dread of assassination made me tremble from head to foot. The light streamed from beneath the door, and reached to my bed ; and I calculated the number of steps it would take before they approached me. The key grated in the lock, and the door opened slowly, and three men stood at the entrance. I sprang up wildly to my feet—a sudden impulse of self-defense seized me —and, with a wild shout for them to come on, I rushed forward ; my foot, however, caught the angle of the iron bedstead, and I fell headlong and senseless to the ground. Some interval elapsed ; and, when next I felt consciousness, I was lying full length on my bed—the cell lit up by two candles on the table, beside which sat two men, their heads bent eagerly over a mass of papers before them. One was an old and venerable-looking man, his white hair and long queue so bespeaking him ; he wore a loose cloth cloak that covered his entire figure, but I could see that a brass scabbard of a sword projected beneath it ; on the chair beside him, too, there lay a foraging cap. The other, much younger, though still not in youth, was a thin, pale, careworn man ; his forehead was high, and strongly marked ; and there was an intensity and determination in his brow and about the angles of his mouth most striking; he was dressed in black, with deep ruffles at his wrist.

"It is quite clear, general," said he, in a low and measured voice, where each word fell with perfect distinctness—"it is quite clear that they can press a conviction here if they will. The allegations are so contrived as rather to indicate complicity than actually establish it. The defense in such cases has to combat shadows, not overturn facts ; and believe me, a procureur-général, aided by a police, is a dexterous enemy."

"I have no doubt of it," said the General, rapidly, "but what are the weak points?—where is he most assailable?"

"Everywhere," said the other. "To begin—the secret information of the outbreak between Lord Whitworth and the Consul—the frequent meetings with the Marquis De Beauvais—the false report to the chef de police—the concealment of this abbé—By-the-by, I am not quite clear about that part of the case ; why have the prosecution not brought this abbé forward? It is plain they have his evidence, and can produce him if they will : and I see no other name in the act of accusation than our old acquaintance, Mehée de la Touche—"

"The villain!" cried the General, with a stamp of indignation, while a convulsive spasm seemed to shake every fiber of his frame.

"Mehée de la Touche!" said I to myself. "I have heard that name before;" and like a lightning flash it crossed my mind that such was the name of the man Marie de Meudon charged me with knowing.

"But still," said the General, "what can they make of all these? that of indiscretion, folly, breach of discipline, if you will; but—"

"Wait a little," said the other, quietly; "then comes the night of the château, in which he is found among the Chouan party in their very den, taking part in the defense."

"No, no! Lamoricière, who commanded the cuirassiers, can establish the fact beyond question—that Burke took no part in the affray, and delivered his sword at once when called on."

"At least they found him there, and on his person the brevet of colonel, signed by Monsieur himself."

"Of that I can give no explanation," replied the General; "but I am in possession of such information as can account for his presence at the château, and establish his innocence on that point."

"Indeed!" cried the advocate, for such he was ; "with that much may be done."

"Unhappily, however," rejoined the General, "if such a disclosure is not necessary to save his life, I cannot venture to give it ; the ruin of another must follow the explanation."

"Without it he is lost," said the advocate, solemnly.

"And would not accept of life with it," said I, boldly, as I started up in my bed, and looked fixedly at them.

The general sprang back, astonished and speechless ; but the advocate, with more command over his emotions, cast his eyes upon the paper before him, and quickly asked, "And the commission—how do you account for that?"

I SPRANG UP WILDLY TO MY FEET—A SUDDEN IMPULSE OF SELF DEFENCE SEIZED ME—AND, WITH A WILD SHOUT FOR THEM TO COME ON, I RUSHED FORWARD (P 384)

"It was offered to and refused by me. He who made the proposal forgot it on my table, and I was about to restore it when I was made prisoner."

"What condition was attached to your acceptance of it?"

"Some vague, indistinct proposals were made to me to join a conspiracy of which I was neither told the object nor intentions. Indeed, I stopped any disclosure by rejecting the bribe."

"Who made these same proposals?"

"I shall not tell his name."

"No matter," said the advocate, carelessly; "it was the Marquis de Beauvais;" and then, as if affecting to write, I saw his sharp eyes glance over toward me, while a smile of gratified cunning twitched his lip. "You will have no objection to say how first you became acquainted with him?"

The dexterity of this query, by replying to which I at once established his preceding assumption, completely escaped me, and I gave an account of my first meeting with De Beauvais, without ever dreaming of the inferences it led to.

"An unhappy rencontre, sir," said the advocate, as if musing; "better have finished the intimacy, as you first intended, at the Bois de Boulogne."

"It may be as you say, sir," said I, irritated by the flippancy of his remark; "but perhaps I may ask the name of the gentleman who takes such interest in my affairs, and by what right he meddles in them?"

The general started back in his chair, and was about to speak, when the advocate laid his hand gently on his arm to restrain him, and, in a voice of the most unruffled smoothness, replied, "As to my name, sir, it is Laurence Baillot; my rank is simple *avocat* to the Cours et Tribunaux; and the 'right' by which I interfere in matters personal to you, is the consideration of fifty louis which accompanied this brief."

"And my name, young man, is Lieutenant-Général d'Auvergne," said the old man, proudly, as he stared me steadfastly in the face. I arose at once, and saluted the general with a deep and respectful obeisance. It was the same officer who reviewed us at the Polytechnique the day of my promotion.

"You are now, I hope, satisfied with the reasons of our presence, and that nothing but considerations of your interest can have influenced our visit." said the *avocat*, with calmness. "Such being the case, sit down here, and relate all you can of your life since your leaving the Polytechnique; be brief, too, for it is now three o'clock—the court opens at ten, your case will be called the second, and I must at least have three hours of sleep."

The general pointed to a seat beside him; I sat down, and without any delay proceeded to give a rapid account of all my adventures and proceedings to the hour we were then assembled, only omitting all mention of Mademoiselle de Meudon's name, and such allusions to De Beauvais as might lead to his crimination.

The advocate wrote down, as rapidly as I spoke them, the principal details of my history, and when I had concluded, perused the notes he had taken with a quick eye. "This will never do," said he, with more impatience in his manner than I had yet witnessed; "here are a mass of circumstances all unexplained, and all suspicious. It is now entirely a question of the feeling of the court. The charges, if pressed, must lead to a conviction. Your innocence, sir, may satisfy—indeed, it has satisfied General d'Auvergne, who else had not been here this night, but the proofs are not before us." He paused for a moment, and then continued in a lower tone, addressing himself directly to the general: "We must entreat a delay; a day—two days, certainly—will establish the proofs against George and his accomplices; they will be condemned and executed at once. It is most likely that the court will not recur to capital punishment again. The example being made, any further demonstration will be needless. I see you put little faith in this maneuver; but trust me, I know the temper of the tribunal; besides, the political stroke has already succeeded. Bonaparte has conquered all his enemies; his next step will be to profit by the victory." These words were riddles to me at the time, though the day soon came when their meaning was palpable. "Yes, two days will do it," said he, confidently raising his voice as he spoke; "and then, whether there be a hussar the more, or one the less, in France, will little trouble the current of events."

"Then how to obtain the time—that is the question," said the General.

"Oh, we shall try something; there can always be a witness to be called; some evidence all essential not forthcoming; some necessary proof not quite unraveled. What if we summon this same abbé? The court will make proclamation for him. D'Ervan is the name?"

"Yes; but if by so doing he may be involved—"

"Fear nothing on that score; he'll never turn up, believe me. We can affect to show that his evidence is all important. Yes,

we'll make the Abbé d'Ervan our first witness. Where shall we say he resides? Rouen, I suppose, will do. Yes, Rouen." And so, without waiting for a reply, he continued to write. "By this, you perceive," he remarked, "we shall disconcert their plans. They are evidently keeping this abbé up for some greater occasion; they have a case against himself, perhaps, in which the proofs are not yet sufficient for conviction. We'll trouble their game, and they may be glad to compromise with us."

The general looked as much confounded as myself at these schemes of the lawyer, but we both were silent.

A few questions more followed, to which he wrote down my answers as I gave them, and then starting up, he said, "And now, general, I must hasten home to bed. Be ready, at all events, for appearing before the tribunal, Mr. Burke; at ten you will be called, and so good-night." He bowed formally to me, as he opened the door to permit the general to pass out first.

"I'll follow you in a moment," said the General, while he closed the door after him, and remained behind with me in the cell. "It was only this evening, sir," said he, in a low voice, "at the return of Madame Bonaparte from Boulogne, that Mademoiselle de Meudon learned you were not at liberty. She has made me acquainted with the circumstances by which your present risk has been incurred, and has put me in possession of wherewithal to establish your innocence as regards the adventure at the Château d'Ancre. This disclosure, if it exculpates *you*, will of course criminate *her*, and among those, too, where she has been received and admitted on terms of the closest friendship. The natural desire to save her cousin's life will not cover the act by which so horrible a conspiracy might have escaped punishment. Bonaparte never forgives! Now, I'm in possession of this proof, and if you demand it, it shall be in your keeping. I have no hesitation in saying that the other charges against you can easily be got over—this one being refuted. What do you say?"

"Nothing could make me accept of such an exculpation," said I, resolutely; "and were it offered in spite of me, I'll plead guilty to the whole act, and suffer with the rest."

The old man's eyes glistened with pleasure, and I thought I saw a tear fall on his cheek. "Now," cried he, as he grasped my hand in both his—"now I feel that you are innocent, my brave boy, and come what will, I'll stand by you." With that he hurried from the cell, and followed the advocate, who was already calling with some impatience to have the doors unlocked.

I was again alone. No, not alone—for in my narrow cell hope was with me now.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE "TRIAL."

So doubtful was the government of the day in what way the people of Paris would be disposed to regard the trial of the Chouan prisoners, how far public sympathy might side with misfortune and heroism, and in what way they would regard Moreau, whose career in arms so many had witnessed with pride and enthusiasm, that for several days they did not dare to strike the decisive blow which was to establish their guilt, but advanced with slow and cautious steps, gradually accumulating a mass of small circumstances, on which the *Moniteur* each day commented, and the other journals of less authority expatiated, as if to prepare the public mind for further and more important revelations.

At last, however, the day arrived in which the mine was to be sprung. The secret police—whose information extended to all that went on in every class of the capital, and who knew the chit-chat of the highest circles, equally as they did the grumblings of the Faubourg St. Antoine—pronounced the time had come when the fatal stroke might no longer be withheld, and when the long-destined vengeance should descend on their devoted heads.

The want of energy on the part of the prosecution—the absence of important witnesses, and of all direct evidence whatever, which marked the first four days of the trial, had infused a high hope and a strong sense of security into the prisoners' hearts. The proofs which they so much dreaded, and of whose existence they well knew, were not forthcoming against them. The rumored treachery of some of their party began, at length, to lose its terror for them—while in the lax and careless proceedings of the procureur-général they saw, or fancied they saw, a desire on the part of the government to render the public uninterested spectators of the scene, and thus prepare the way for an acquittal, while no danger of any excitement existed.

Such was the state of matters at the close of the fourth day. A tiresome and desul-

tory discussion on some merely legal question had occupied the court for several hours, and many of the spectators, wearied and tired out, had gone home disappointed in their expectations, and secretly resolving not to return the following day.

This was the moment for which the party in power had been waiting—the interval of false security, as it would seem, when all danger was past, and no longer any apprehension existed. The sudden shock of the newly discovered proofs would then come with peculiar force, while, no matter how rapid any subsequent step might be, all charge of precipitancy or undue haste had been disproved by the tardy nature of the four first days' proceedings.

For the change of scene about to take place an early edition of the *Moniteur* prepared the public; and by daybreak the walls of Paris were placarded with great announcements of the discoveries made by the government—how, by their untiring efforts, the whole plot, which was to deluge France with blood, and subvert the glorious institutions of freedom they had acquired by the revolution, had been laid open—new and convincing evidence of the guilt of the Chouans had turned up—and a frightful picture of anarchy and social disorganization was displayed, all of which was to originate in an effort to restore the Bourbons to the throne of France.

While, therefore, the galleries of the court were crowded to suffocation at an early hour, and every avenue leading to the tribunal crammed with people, anxious to be present at this eventful crisis, the prisoners took their places on the "bench of the accused," totally unaware of the reason of the excitement they witnessed, and strangely puzzled to conceive what unknown circumstance had reinvested the proceedings with a new interest.

As I took my place among the rest, I stared with surprise at the scene—the strange contrast between the thousands there whose strained eyes and feverish faces betokened the highest degree of excitement, and that little group on which every look was turned—calm, and even cheerful. There sat George Cadoudal in the midst of them, his hands clasped in those at either side of him; his strongly-marked features perfectly at rest, and his eyes bent with a steady stare on the bench where the judges were seated. Moreau was not present, nor did I see some of the Chouans whom I remembered on the former day.

The usual formal proclamation of the court being made, silence was called by the crier—a useless precaution, as throughout that vast assembly not a whisper was to be heard. A conversation of some minutes took place between the procureur and the counsel for the prisoners, in which I recognized the voice of Monsieur Baillot, my own advocate, which was interrupted by the president, desiring that the proceedings should commence.

The procureur-général bowed, and took his seat, while the President, turning toward George, said,

"George Cadoudal, you have hitherto persisted in a course of blank denial regarding every circumstance of the conspiracy with which you are charged. You have asserted your ignorance of persons and places with which we are provided with proof to show you are well acquainted. You have neither accounted for your presence in suspected situations, nor satisfactorily shown what were the objects of your intimacy with suspected individuals. The court now desires to ask you whether, at this stage of the proceedings, you wish to offer more explicit revelations, or explain any of the dubious events of your career?"

"I will answer any question you put to me," replied George, sternly; "but I have lived too long in another country not to have learned some of its usages, and I feel no desire to become my own accuser. Let him there" (he pointed to the procureur-général) "do his office—he is the paid and salaried assailant of the innocent."

"I call upon the court," said the Procureur, rising; when he was suddenly interrupted by the President, saying, "We will protect you, Monsieur le Procureur. And once again we would admonish the accused, that insolence to the authorities of this court is but a sorry plea in vindication of his innocence, and shall be no recommendation to our mercy."

"Your mercy!" said George, in a voice of scorn and sarcasm. "Who ever heard of a tiger's benevolence or a wolf's charity? And even if you wished it, he whose slaves you are—"

"I call upon you to be silent," said an advocate, rising from a bench directly behind him. "Another interruption of this kind, and I shall abandon the defense."

"What!" said George, turning quickly round and staring at him with a look of withering contempt, "and have they bought *you* over too?"

"Call the first witness," said the President, and an indistinct murmur was heard, and a slight confusion seen to agitate the crowd, as the gendarmes opened a path toward the witness bench; and then I saw

two men carrying something between them, which I soon perceived to be a man. The legs, which were alone apparent, hung down listlessly like those of a corpse, and one arm, which fell over the shoulder of the bearer, moved to and fro, as they went, like the limb of a dead man. Every neck was stretched from the galleries above, and along the benches beneath, to catch a glimpse of the mysterious figure, which seemed like an apparition from the grave come to give evidence. His face, too, was concealed by a handkerchief; and as he was placed in a chair provided for the purpose, the assistants stood at either side to support his drooping figure.

"Let the witness be sworn," said the President; and, with the aid of an officer of the court, a thin, white hand was held up, on which the flesh seemed almost transparent from emaciation. A low, muttering sound followed, and the President spoke again: "Let the witness be uncovered. George Cadoudal, advance!"

As the hardy Chouan stepped forward the handkerchief fell from the witness's face, while his head slowly turned round toward the prisoner. A cry, like the yell of a wounded animal, broke from the stout Breton, as he bounded into the air and held up both his arms to their full height. "*Toi, toi!*" screamed he, in accents that seemed the very last of a heart wrung to agony, while he leaned forward and fixed his eyes on him, till the very orbs seemed bursting from their sockets. "*Oui,*" added he, in a lower tone, but one which was felt in every corner of that crowded assemblage —"*oui, c'est lui.*" Then clasping his trembling hands together, as his knees bent beneath him, he turned his eyes upward, and said, "*Le bon Dieu,* that makes men's hearts and knows their thoughts, deals with us as he will; and I must have sinned sorely toward him when such punishment as this has fallen upon me. Oh! my brother, my child, my own Bouvet de Lozier."

"Bouvet de Lozier!" cried the other prisoners, with a shout wild as madness itself, while every man sprang forward to look at him. But already the head had fallen back over the chair; the limbs stretched out rigidly, and the arm fell heavily down. "He is dying!" "He is dead!" were the exclamations of the crowd, and a general cry for a doctor was heard around. Several physicians were soon at his side, and by the aid of restoratives he was gradually brought back to animation, but cold and speechless he lay, unable to understand anything, and was obliged to be conveyed back again to his bed.

It was some time before the excitement of this harrowing scene was over; and when order at length was restored in the court, George Cadoudal was seen seated, as at first, on the bench, while around him his faithful followers were grouped. Like children round a beloved father, some leaned on his neck, others clasped his knees—some covered his hands with kisses, and called him by the most endearing names. But though he moved his head from side to side, and tried to smile upon them, a cold vacancy was in his face; his lips were parted, and his eyes stared wildly before him; his very hair stood out from his forehead, on which the big drops of sweat were seen.

"Father, dear father, it is but one who is false—see, look how many of your children are true to you—think on us who are with you here, and will go with you to death without shrinking."

"He is but a child, too, father, and they have stolen away his reason from him," said another.

"Yes, they have brought him to this by suffering," cried a third, as with a clenched hand he menaced the bench where sat the judges.

"Order in the court!" cried the President; but the command was reiterated again and again before silence could be obtained; and when again I could observe the proceedings, I saw the procureur-général addressing the tribunal, to demand a postponement, in consequence of the illness of the last witness, whose testimony was pronounced all-conclusive.

A discussion took place on the subject between the counsel for the prisoners and the prosecution, and at length it was ruled that this trial should not be proceeded with till the following morning.

"We are, however, prepared to go on with the other cases," said the Procureur, "if the court will permit."

"Certainly," said the President.

"In that case," continued the Procureur, "we shall call on the accused Thomas Burke, lieutenant of the *huitième* hussars, now present." For some minutes nothing more could be heard, for the crowded galleries, thronged with expectant hundreds, began now to empty. Mine was a name without interest for any; and the thronged masses rose to depart, while their over-excited minds found vent in words which drowned all else. It was in vain silence and order were proclaimed—the proceedings had lost all interest, and with it all respect, and for full ten minutes the uproar lasted. Meanwhile, M. Baillot, taking his place at my side, produced some most volu-

minous papers, in which he soon became deeply engaged. I turned one look throughout the now almost deserted seats, but not one face there was known to me. The few who remained seemed to stay rather from indolence than any other motive, as they lounged over the vacant benches, and yawned listlessly; and much as I dreaded the gaze of that appalling multitude, I sickened at the miserable isolation of my lot, and felt overwhelmed to think that for me there was not one who should pity or regret my fall. At last order was established in the court, and the procureur opened the proceeding by reciting the act of my accusation, in which all the circumstances already mentioned by my advocate were dwelt and commented on with the habitual force and exaggeration of bar oratory. The address was short, however, scarcely fifteen minutes long; and by the tone of the speaker, and the manner of the judges, I guessed that my case excited little or no interest to the prosecution, either from my own humble and insignificant position, or the certainty they felt of my conviction.

My advocate rose to demand a delay, even a short one, pleading most energetically against the precipitancy of a proceeding in which the indictment was but made known the day previous. The president interrupted him roughly, and with an assurance that no circumstance short of the necessity to produce some important evidence not then forthcoming, would induce him to grant a postponement.

M. Baillot replied at once: "Such, sir, is our case; a witness, whose evidence is of the highest moment, is not to be found; a day or two might enable us to obtain his testimony; it is upon this we ground our hope, our certainty of an acquittal. The court will not, I am certain, refuse its clemency in such an emergency as this?"

"Where is this same witness to be found? Is he in Paris?—is he in France?"

"We hope in Paris, Monsieur le Président."

"And his name?"

"The Abbé d'Ervan."

A strange murmur ran along the bench of judges at the words, and I could see that some of them smiled in spite of their efforts to seem grave, while the procureur-général did not scruple to laugh outright.

"I believe, sir," said he, addressing the president, "that I can accommodate my learned brother with this so-much-desired testimony perhaps more speedily—I will not say than he wishes—but than he expects."

"How is this?" said my advocate, in a whisper to me; "they have this abbé then—has he turned against his party?"

"I know nothing of him," said I, recklessly; "falsehood and treachery seem so rife here, that it can well be as you say."

"The Abbé d'Ervan," called a loud voice, and with the words the well-known figure moved rapidly from the crowd and mounted the steps of the platform.

"You are lost," said Baillot, in a low, solemn voice. "It is Mehée de la Touche himself!"

Had the words of my sentence rung in my ears I had not felt them more; that name, by some secret spell, had such terror in it.

"You know the prisoner before you, sir?" said the President, turning toward the abbé.

Before he could reply, my advocate broke in:

"Pardon me, sir, but previous to the examination of this respectable witness, I would ask under what name he is to figure in this process? Is he here the Abbé d'Ervan, the agreeable and gifted frequenter of the Faubourg St. Germain?—is he the Chevalier Maupret, the companion and associate of the house of Bourbon?—or is he the no less celebrated and esteemed citizen Mehée de la Touche, whose active exertions have been of such value in these eventful times, that we should think no recompense sufficient for them, had he not been paid by both parties? Yes, sir," continued he, in an altered tone, "I repeat it, we are prepared to show that this man is unworthy of all credit; that he whose testimony the court now calls, is a hired spy and bribed calumniator—the instigator to the treason he prosecutes—the designer of the schemes for which other men's blood has paid the penalty. Is this abbé without and gendarme within to be at large in the world, ensnaring the unsuspecting youth of France by subtle and insidious doctrines disguised under the semblance of after-dinner gayety? Are we to feel that on such evidence as this, the fame, the honor, the life of every man is to rest? He who earns his livelihood by treason, and whose wealth is gathered in the bloody sawdust beneath the guillotine!"

"We shall not hear these observations longer," said the President, with an accent of severity. "You may comment on the evidence of the witness hereafter, and, if you are able to do so, disprove it. His character is under the protection of the court."

"No, sir," said the advocate, with

energy, "no court, however high—no tribunal beneath that of Heaven itself, whose decrees we dare not question—can throw a shield over a man like this. There are crimes which stain the nation they occur in—which, happening in our age, make men sorry for their generation, and wish they had lived in other times."

"Once more, sir, I command you to desist," interrupted the President.

"If I dare to dictate to the honorable court," said the so-called Abbé, in an accent of the most honeyed sweetness, and with a smile of the most winning expression, "I would ask permission for the learned gentleman to proceed. These well-arranged paragraphs, this indignation got by heart, must have vent, since they're paid for; and it would save the tribunal the time which must be consumed in listening to them hereafter."

"If," said the advocate, "the coolness and indifference to blood which the headsman exhibits, be a proof of guilt in the victim before him, I could congratulate the prosecution on their witness. But," cried he, in an accent of wild excitement, "great Heavens! are we again fallen on such times as to need atrocity like this? Is the terrible ordeal of blood through which we have passed to be renewed once more? Is the accusation to be hoarded, the calumnious evidence secreted, the charge held back, till the scaffold is ready?—and then the indictment, the slander, the sentence, and the death to follow on one another like the flash and the thunder? Is the very imputation of having heard from a Bourbon to bear its prestige of sudden death?"

"Silence, sir," cried the President, to whom the allusion to the Duc D'Enghien was peculiarly offensive, and who saw in the looks of the spectators with what force it told. "You know the prisoner?" said he, turning toward D'Ervan.

"I have that honor, sir," said he, with a bland smile.

"State to the court the place and the occasion of your first meeting him."

"If I remember correctly, it was in the Palais Royal, at Beauvilliers's. There was a meeting of some of the Chouan party arranged for that evening, but from some accident only three or four were present. The sous-lieutenant, however, was one."

"Repeat, as far as your memory serves you, the conduct and conversation of the prisoner during the evening in question."

In reply, the abbé recapitulated every minute particular of the supper; scarcely an observation the most trivial he did not recall and apply, by some infernal ingenuity, to the scheme of the conspiracy. Although never, even in the slightest instance, falsifying any speech, he tortured the few words I did say into such a semblance of criminality, that I started, as I heard the interpretation which now appeared so naturally to attach to them.

During all this time my advocate never interrupted him once, but occupied himself in writing as rapidly as he could follow the evidence.

The chance expression which concluded the evening, the hope of meeting soon, was artfully construed into an arranged and recognized agreement that I had accepted companionship amongst them, and formally joined their ranks. From this he passed on to the second charge, respecting the conversation I had overheard at the Tuileries, and which I so unhappily repeated to Beauvais. This the abbé dwelt upon with great minuteness, as evidencing my being an accomplice, showing how I had exhibited great zeal in the new cause I had embarked in, and affecting to mark how very highly the service was rated by those in whose power lay the rewards of such an achievement.

Then followed the account of my appointment at Versailles, in which I heard, with a sinking heart, how thoroughly even there the toils were spread around me. It appeared that the reason of the neglect I then experienced was an order from the minister that I should not be noticed in any way; that the object of my being placed there was to test my fidelity, which already was suspected; that it was supposed such neglect might naturally have the effect of throwing me more willingly into the views of the conspirators, and, as I was watched in every minute particular, of establishing my own guilt and leading to the detection of others. Then came a narrative of his visits to my quarters, in which the omission of all mention of his name in my report was clearly shown as an evidence of my conscious culpability; and to my horror and confusion a new witness was produced, the sentinel, Pierre Dulong, who mounted guard at the gate of the château on the morning when I passed the abbé through the park.

With an accuracy beyond my belief he repeated all our conversations, making the dubious hints and dark suggestions which he himself threw out as much mine as his own; and having at length given a full picture of my treacherous conduct, he introduced my intimacy with Beauvais as the crowning circumstance of my guilt. "I

shall pause here," said he, with a cool malignity, but ill concealed beneath a look of affected sorrow—"I shall pause here, and, with the permission of the court, allow the accused to make, if he will, a full confession of his criminality; or, if he refuse this, I shall proceed to the disclosure of other circumstances, by which it will be seen that these dark designs met favor and countenance in higher quarters, and among those, too, whose sex, if nothing else, should have removed them beyond the contamination of confederacy with assassination."

"The court," said the President, sternly, "will enter into no compromise of this kind. You are here to give such evidence as you possess—fully, frankly, and without reserve; nor can we permit you to hold out any promises to the prisoner that his confession of guilt can afford a screen to the culpability of others."

"I demand," cried the Procureur-Général, "a full disclosure from the witness of everything he knows concerning this conspiracy."

"In that case I shall speak," said the Abbé.

At this instant a noise was heard in the hall without; a half murmur ran through the court; and suddenly the heavy curtain was drawn aside, and a loud voice called out:

"In the name of the Republic—one and indivisible—an order of council."

The messenger, splashed and covered with mud, advanced through the court, and delivered a packet into the hands of the president, who, having broken the large seals, proceeded leisurely to read it over. At the same moment I felt my arm gently touched, and a small pencil note was slipped into my hand. It ran thus:

"DEAR SIR,—Burke is safe. An order for his transmission before a military tribunal has just been signed by the First Consul. Stop all the evidence at once, as he is no longer before the court. The court-martial will be but a formality, and in a few days he will be at liberty.—Yours,

"D'AUVERGNE, Lieutenant-General."

Before I could recover from the shock of such glad tidings the President rose, and said,

"In the matter of the accused Burke this court has no longer cognizance, as he is summoned before the tribunal of the army. Let him withdraw, and call on the next case, Auguste Leconisset."

D'Ervan stooped down and whispered a few words to the procureur-général, who immediately demanded to peruse the order of council. To this my advocate at once objected, and a short and animated discussion on the legal question followed. The president, however, ruled in favor of my defender; and at the same instant a corporal's guard appeared, into whose charge I was formally handed over, and marched from the court.

Such was the excited state of my mind—in such a confused whirl were all my faculties, that I knew nothing of what was passing around me; and save that I was ordered to mount into a carriage, and driven along at a rapid pace, I remembered no more. At length we reached the quay Voltaire, and entered the large square of the barrack. The tears burst out and ran down my cheeks, as I looked once more on the emblems of the career I loved. We stopped at the door of a large stone building, where two sentries were posted; and the moment after I found myself the occupant of a small barrack-room, in which, though under arrest, no feature of harsh confinement appeared, and from whose windows I could survey the movement of the troops in the court, and hear the sounds which for so many a day had been the most welcome to my existence.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"THE CUIRASSIER."

ALTHOUGH my arrest was continued with all its strictness, I never heard one word of my transmission before the military tribunal; and a fortnight elapsed, during which I passed through every stage of expectancy, doubt, and at last indifference; no tidings having ever reached me as to what fortune lay in store for me.

The gruff old invalid that carried my daily rations seemed but ill-disposed to afford me any information, even as to the common events without, and seldom made any other reply to my questioning than an erect position as if on parade, a military salute, and "*Connais pas, mon lieutenant*"—a phrase which I actually began to abhor from its repetition. Still his daily visits showed I was not utterly forgotten; while from my window I had a view of all that went on in the barrack-yard. There—for I had neither books nor newspapers—I spent my entire day watching the evolutions of the soldiers: the parade at daybreak, the relieving guards, the drill, the exercise, the

very labors of the barrack-square—all had their interest for me, and at length I began to know the very faces of the soldiers, and could recognize the bronzed and weather-beaten features of the veterans of the republican armies.

It was a cuirassier regiment, and one that had seen much service; most of the *sous-officiers* and many of the men were decorated; and their helmets bore the haughty device of "*Dix contre un!*" in memory of some battle against the Austrians, where they repulsed and overthrew a force of ten times their own number.

At first their heavy equipments and huge unwieldy horses seemed strange and uncouth to my eyes, accustomed to the more elegant and trim style of a hussar corps, but gradually I fancied there was something almost more soldierlike about them; their dark faces harmonized too with the great black cuirass; and the large massive boot mounting to the middle of the thigh, the long horse-haired helmet, the straight sword, and peculiar, heavy, plodding step, reminded me of what I used to read of the Roman centurion; while the horses, covered with weighty and massive trappings, moved with a warlike bearing, and a tramp as stately as their riders.

When evening came, and set the soldiers free from duty, I used to watch them for hours long, as they sat in little groups and knots about the barrack-yard, smoking and chatting—occasionally singing too. Even then, however, their distinctive character was preserved: unlike the noisy boisterous merriment of the hussar, the staid cuirassier deemed such levity unbecoming the dignity of his arm of the service, and there reigned a half solemn feature over all their intercourse, which struck me forcibly. I knew not then—as I have learned full well since—how every department of the French army had its distinctive characteristic, and that Napoleon studied and even encouraged the growth of these singular manners to a great extent; doubtless, too, feeling a pride in his own thorough intimacy with their most minute traits, and that faculty with which, by a single word, he could address himself to the cherished feeling of a particular corps. And the tact by which the monarch wins over and fascinates the nobles of his court, was here exercised in the great world of a camp, and with far more success too: a phrase, a name, some well-known battle, the date of a victory, would fall from his lips as he rode along the line, and be caught up with enthusiasm by thousands, who felt in the one word a recognition of past services. "Thou"—he always addressed the soldiers in the second person—"thou wert with me at Cairo;" "I remember thee at Arcole," were enough to reward wounds, suffering, mutilation itself; and he to whom such was addressed became an object of veneration among his fellows.

Certain corps preserved more studiously than others the memories of past achievements—the heirlooms of their glory; and to these Bonaparte always spoke with a feeling of friendship most captivating to the soldier's heart, and from them he selected the various regiments that composed his "Guard." The cuirassiers belonged to this proud force; and even an unmilitary eye could mark, in their haughty bearing and assured look, that they were a favored corps.

Among those with whose faces I had now grown familiar there was one whom I regarded with unusual interest: he seemed to me the very type of his class. He was a man of gigantic size, towering by half a head above the very tallest of his fellows, while his enormous breadth of chest and shoulder actually seemed to detract from his great height. The lower part of his face was entirely concealed by a beard of bright red hair that fell in a huge mass over the breast of his cuirass, and seemed by its trim and fashion to be an object of no common pride to the wearer; his nose was marked by a sabre-cut that extended across one entire cheek, leaving a deep blue welt in its track: but saving these traits—wild and savage enough—the countenance was singularly mild and pleasing; he had large and liquid blue eyes, soft and lustrous as any girl's; the lashes, too, were long and falling; and his forehead, which was high and open, was white as snow. I was not long in remarking the strange influence this man seemed to possess over the rest—an ascendancy not in any way attributable to the mark on his sleeve, which proclaimed him a corporal. It seemed as though his slightest word, his least gesture, was attended to; and though evidently taciturn and quiet, when he spoke I could detect in his manner an air of promptitude and command that marked him as one born to be above his fellows. If he seemed such in the idle hours, on parade he was the *beau idéal* of a cuirassier. His great war-horse, seemingly small for the immense proportions of the heavy rider, bounded with each movement of his wrist, as if instinct with the horseman's wishes.

I waited with some impatience for the invalid's arrival, to ask who this remarkable soldier was, certain that I should hear

of no common man. He came soon after; and as I pointed out the object of my curiosity, the old fellow drew himself up with pride, and, while a grim effort at a smile crossed his features, replied:

"That's Pioche—*le gros Pioche!*"

"Pioche!" said I, repeating the name aloud, and endeavoring to remember why it seemed well known to me.

"Yes, Pioche," rejoined he, gruffly. "If Monsieur had ever been in Egypt, the name would scarcely sound so strange in his ears." And with this sarcasm he hobbled from the room and closed the door, while I could hear him grumbling along the entire corridor, in evident anger at the ignorance that did not know "Pioche."

Twenty times did I repeat the name aloud, before it flashed across me as the same Madame Lefebvre mentioned at the *soirée* in the palace. It was Pioche who shouldered the brass field-piece, and passed before the general on parade. The gigantic size, the powerful strength, the strange name—all could belong to no other; and I felt as though at once I had found an old acquaintance in the great cuirassier of the Guard.

If the prisoner in his lonely cell has few incidents to charm his solitary hours, in return he is enabled by some happy gift to make these the sources of many thoughts. The gleam of light that falls upon the floor, broken by the iron gratings of his window, comes laden with storied fancies of other lands—of far-distant countries, where men are dwelling in their native mountains free and happy; forgetful of his prison, the captive wanders in his fancy through valleys he has seen in boyhood, and with friends to be met no more. He turns gladly to the past, of whose pleasures no adverse fortune can deprive him, and ives over again the happy hours of his youth; and thinks, with a melancholy not devoid of its own pleasure, of what *they* would feel who loved him, could they but see him now. He pictures *their* sympathy and *their* sorrow, and his heart feels lighter, though his eyes drop tears.

In this way the great cuirassier became an object for my thoughts by day and my dreams by night. I fancied a hundred stories of which he was the hero; and these imaginings served to while away many a tedious hour, and gave me an interest in watching the little spot of earth that was visible from my barred window. It was in one of these reveries I sat one evening, when I heard the sounds of feet approaching along the corrider that led to my room; the clank of a sabre and the jingle of spurs sounded not like my gruff visitor. My door was opened before I had time for much conjecture, and General D'Auvergne stood before me.

"Ah! *mon lieutenant*," cried he, gayly, "you have been thinking very hardly of me since we met last, I'm sure; charging me with forgetfulness, and accusing me of great neglect."

"Pardon me, general" said I, hurriedly; "your former kindness, for which I never can be grateful enough, has been always before my mind. I have not yet forgotten that you saved my life; more still—you rescued my name from dishonor."

"Well, well; that's all past and gone now. Your reputation stands clear at last. De Beauvais has surrendered himself to the authorities at Rouen, and made a full confession of everything, exculpating you completely in every particular, save the indiscretion of your intercourse with Mehée de la Touche—or, as you know him better, the Abbé d'Ervan."

"And poor De Beauvais, what is to become of him?" said I, eagerly.

"Have no fears on his account," said he, with something like confusion in his manner; she—that is, Madame Bonaparte—has kindly interested herself in his behalf, and he is to sail for Guadaloupe in a few days—his own proposition and wish."

"And does General Bonaparte know now that I was guiltless?" cried I, with enthusiasm.

"My dear young man," said he, with a bland smile, "I very much fear that the General has little time at this moment to give the matter much of his attention. Great events have happened—are happening while we speak. War is threatening on the side of Austria. Yes, it is true; the camp of Boulogne has received orders to break up; troops are once more on their march to the Rhine; all France is arming."

"Oh, when shall I be free?"

"You are free!" cried he, clapping me gayly on the shoulder. "An annesty against all untried prisoners for state offenses has been proclaimed. At such a moment of national joy—"

"What do you mean?"

"What! and have I not told you my great news? The senate have presented to Bonaparte an address, praying his acceptance of the throne of France—or, in their very words, to make his authority eternal."

"And he?" said I, breathless with impatience to know the result.

"He," continued the General, "has replied as became him, desiring them to state clearly their views—by what steps they pro-

pose to consolidate the acquired liberties of the nation; and while avowing that no higher honor or dignity can await him than such as he has already received at the hands of the people—'Yet,' added he, 'when the hour arrives that I can see such to be the will of France, when one voice proclaims it from Alsace to the Ocean—from Lisle to the Pyrenees, then shall I be ready to accept the throne of France.'"

The general entered minutely into all the circumstances of the great political change, and detailed the effect which the late conspiracy had had on the minds of the people, and with what terror they contemplated the social disorders that must accrue from the death of their great ruler; how nothing short of a government based on a monarchy, with the right of succession established, could withstand such a terrific crisis. As he spoke, the words I had heard in the Temple crossed my mind, and I remembered that such was the anticipation of the prisoners, as they said among themselves, "When the guillotine has done its work, they'll patch up the timbers into a throne."

"And George Cadoudal and the others?" said I.

"They are no more. Betrayed by their own party, they met death like brave men, and as worthy of a better cause. But let us not turn to so sad a theme. The order for your liberation will be here to-morrow; and as I am appointed to a brigade on active service, I have come to offer you the post of aide-de-camp."

I could not speak; my heart was too full for words. I knew how great the risk of showing any favor to one who stood in such a position as I did, and I could but look my gratitude, while the tears ran down my cheeks.

"Well," cried he, as he took my hand in his, "so much is settled. Now to another point, and one in which my frankness must cause you no offense. You are not rich—neither am I; but Bonaparte always gives us opportunities to gather our epaulettes—ay, and find the bullion to make them, too. Meanwhile, you may want money—"

"No, general," cried I, eagerly; "here are three thousand francs some kind friend sent me. I know not whence they came; and even if I wanted, did not dare to spend them; but now—"

The old man paused, and appeared confused, while he leaned his finger on his forehead, and seemed endeavoring to recall some passing thought.

"Did they come from you, sir?" said I, timidly.

"No, not from me," repeated he, slowly. "You say you never found out the donor?"

"Never," said I, while a sense of shame prevented my adding what rose to my mind—Could they not be from Mademoiselle de Meudon?

"Well, well," said he, at length, "be it so. And now till to-morrow: I shall be here at noon, and bring the minister's order with me. And so, good-by."

"Good-by," said I, as I stood overcome with happiness. "Let what will come of it, this is a moment worth living for."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A MORNING AT "THE TUILERIES."

TRUE to his appointment, the general appeared the following day as the hour of noon was striking. He brought the official papers from the minister of war, as well as the formal letter naming me his aide-de-camp. The documents were all perfectly regular, and being read over by the military commission, I was sent for, when my sword was restored to me by the colonel of the regiment in garrison, and I was free once more.

"You have received a severe lesson, Burke," said the General, as he took my arm to lead me toward his carriage, "and all owing to the rashness with which, in times of difficulty and danger, you permitted yourself to form intimacies with men utterly unknown to you. There are epochs when weakness is the worst of evils. You are very young, to be sure, and I trust the experience you have acquired here will serve for a lifetime."

"Still, sir, in all this sad business, my faith never wavered; my attachment to the Consul was unshaken."

"Had it been otherwise, do you think you had been here now?" said he, dryly. "Were not the evidences of your fidelity set off against your folly, what chance of escape remained for you? No, no; she who befriended you so steadily throughout this tangled scheme for your ruin, had never advocated your cause were there reason to suppose you were involved in the conspiracy against her husband's life."

"Who do you mean?" said I. "I scarcely understand."

"The Consulesse, of course. But for Madame Bonaparte you were lost; even since I saw you last, I have learned how deeply interested she became in your for-

tunes. The letter you received in the Temple came from her, and the inclosure also. And now, with your leave, we can do nothing better than pay our respects to her, and make our acknowledgments for such kindness. She receives at this hour, and will, I know, take your visit in good part."

While I professed my readiness to comply with the suggestion, we drove into the court of the Tuileries. It was so early that, except the officers of the Consul's staff, and some of those on guard, we were the only persons visible.

"We are the first arrivals," said the General, as we drew up at the door of the pavilion. "I am not sorry for it; we shall have our audience over before the crowd assembles."

Giving our names to the usher, we mounted the stairs, and passed on from room to room until we came to a large *salon*, in which seats were formally arranged in a semicircle, an arm-chair somewhat higher than the rest occupying the center. Several full-length portraits of the generals of the revolutionary armies adorned the walls, and a striking likeness of the Consul himself, on horseback, held the principal place. I had but time to see thus much, when the two sides of the folding-doors were flung open, and Madame Bonaparte, followed by Mademoiselle de Meudon, entered. Scarcely were the doors closed, when she said, smiling,

"I heard of your arrival, general, and guessed its purport, so came at once. Monsieur Burke, I am happy to see you at liberty once more."

"That I owe it to you, madame, makes it doubly dear to me," said I, faltering.

"You must not overrate my exertions on your behalf," replied the Consulesse, in a hurried voice. "There was an *amende* due to you for the treatment you met with at Versailles—all Savary's fault; and now I am sincerely sorry I ever suffered myself to become a party to his schemes. Indeed, I never guessed them, or I should not. General d'Auvergne has made you his aide-de-camp, he tells me."

"Yes, madame; my good fortune has showered favors on me most suddenly. Your kindness has been an augury of success in everything."

She smiled, as if pleased, and then said, "I have a piece of advice to give you, and hope you'll profit by it." Then, turning toward the general, who all this time was deeply engaged in talking to Mademoiselle de Meudon, she added, "Don't you think, general, that it were as well Monsieur Burke should not be in the way of meeting the Consul for some short time to come? Is there any garrison duty, or any service away from Paris, where, for a week or so, he could remain?"

"I have thought of that, madame," said the General. "Two of the regiments in my brigade are to march to-morrow for the east of France, and I intend my young friend to proceed to Strasbourg at once."

"This is not meant for banishment," said she to me, with a look of much sweetness; "but Bonaparte will now and then say a severe thing, likely to dwell in the mind of him to whom it was addressed long after the sentiment which dictated it has departed. A little time will efface all memory of this sad affair, and then we shall be happy to see you here again."

"Or events may happen soon, madame, by which he may make his own peace with General Bonaparte."

"True, very true," said she, gravely. "And as to that, general, what advices are there from Vienna?"

She drew the general aside into one of the windows, leaving me alone with Mademoiselle de Meudon. But a minute before, and I had given the world for such an opportunity, and now I could not speak a syllable. She, too, seemed equally confused, and bent over a large vase of moss-roses, as if totally occupied by their arrangement. I drew nearer, and endeavored to address her, but the words would not come, while a hundred gushing thoughts pressed on me, and my heart beat loud enough for me to hear it. At last I saw her lips move, and thought I heard my name; I bent down my head lower; it was her voice, but so low as to be scarcely audible.

"I cannot thank you, sir, as I could wish," said she, "for the service you rendered me, at the risk of your own life and honor. And though I knew not the dangers you were to incur by my request, I asked it as of the only one I knew who would brave such danger at my asking." She paused for a second, then continued: "The friend of Charles could not but be the friend of Marie de Meudon. There is now another favor I would beg at your hands," said she, while a livid paleness overspread her features.

"Oh, name it!" said I, passionately. "Say, how can I serve you?"

"It is this," said she, with an accent whose solemnity sank into the very recesses of my heart: "We have ever been an unlucky race. De Meudon is but a name for misfortune; not only have we met little else in our own lives, but all who have be-

friended us have paid the penalty of their friendship. My dear brother knew this well; and I—" She paused, and then, though her lips moved, the words that followed were inaudible. "There is but one on earth," continued she, as her eyes, brimful of tears, were turned toward Madame Bonaparte, who still stood talking in the window, "over whose fortunes my affection has thrown no blight. Heaven grant it may be ever so!" Then suddenly, as if remembering herself, she added: "What I would ask is this—that we should meet no more. Nay, nay, look not so harshly at me. If I, alone in the world, ask to be deprived of his friendship who loved my brother so—"

"Oh! if you be alone in the world, feel for one like me, who has not even a country he can call his own. Take not the one hope from my heart, I ask you. Leave me the thought that there is one, but one, in all this land, to whom my name, if ever mentioned with praise, can bring one moment's pleasure—who can say, 'I knew him.' Do not forget that Charles, with his dying breath, said you would be my sister."

The door of the *salon* opened suddenly, and a name was announced, but in my confusion I heard not what. Madame Bonaparte, however, advanced toward the new arrival with an air of welcome, as she said,

"We were just wishing for you, general. Pray tell us all the news of Paris."

The person thus addressed was a very tall and singularly handsome man, whose dark eyes, and dark whiskers meeting in the middle of his chin, gave him the appearance of an Italian. He was dressed in a hussar uniform whose gorgeous braiding of gold was heightened in effect by a blaze of orders and stars that covered the entire breast; the scarlet pantaloons, tight to the leg, displayed to advantage the perfect symmetry of his form, while his boots of yellow morocco, bound and tasseled with gold, seemed the very coquetry of military costume. A sabre, the hilt actually covered with precious stones, clanked at his side, and the *aigrette* of his plumed hat was a large diamond. There was something almost theatrical in the manner of his approach, as with a stately step and a deep bow he took Madame Bonaparte's hand and kissed it; a ceremony he repeated to Mademoiselle de Meudon, adding, as he did so:

"And my fair *Rose de Provence*—more beautiful than ever!—how is she?"

"What flattery is he whispering, Marie?" said the Consulesse, laughing. "Don't you know, general, that I insist on all the compliments here being paid to myself? What do you think of my robe? your judgment is said to be perfect."

"Charming — absolutely charming!" said he, in an attitude of affected admiration. "It is only such taste as yours could have devised anything so beautiful. Yet the roses—I half think I should have preferred them white."

"You can scarcely imagine that vain fellow with the long ringlets the boldest soldier of the French army," said the General, in a low whisper, as he drew me to one side.

"Indeed! and who is he, then?"

"You a hussar, and not know him! Why, Murat, to be sure."

"So then, Madame, all my news of Monsieur Talleyrand's ball, it seems, is stale already. You've heard that the Russian and Austrian ministers both sent apologies?"

"Oh dear!" said she, sighing; "have I not heard it a thousand times, and every reason for it canvassed, until I wished both of their excellencies at—at Madame Lefebvre's dinner-party?"

"That was perfect," cried Murat, aloud; "a regular bivouac in a *salon*. You'd think that the silver dishes and the gilt candelabras had just been captured from the enemy, and that the *cuisine* was made by beat of drum."

"The general is an honest man and a brave officer," said D'Auvergne, somewhat nettled at the tone Murat spoke in.

"No small boast either," replied the other, shrugging his shoulders carelessly, "in the times and the land we live in."

"And what of Cambacérès's *soirée*? how did it go off?" interposed Madame Bonaparte, anxious to relieve the awkward pause that followed.

"Like everything in his hotel—somber, stately, and stupid; the company all dull, who would be agreeable everywhere else; the tone of the reception labored and affected, and every one dying to get away to Fouché's. It was his second night for receiving."

"Was that pleasanter, then?"

"A hundred times. There are no parties like his—one meets everybody. It is a kind of neutral territory for the Faubourg and the Jacobin—the partisan of our people, and the followers of Heaven knows who. Fouché slips about, whispering the same anecdote in confidence to every one, and binding each to secrecy. Then, as every one comes there to spy his neighbor, the host has an excellent opportunity of pumping all in turn; and while they all persist in telling him nothing but lies, they

forget that with him no readier road could lead to the detection of truth."

"The Consul!" said a servant, aloud, as the door opened and closed with a crash, and Bonaparte, dressed in the uniform of the Chasseurs of the Guard, and covered with dust, entered.

"Was Decrès here?" And then, without waiting for a reply, continued—"It is settled—all finally arranged; I told you, Madame, the 'pear was ripe.' I start to-morrow for Boulogne. You, Murat, must accompany me. D'Auvergne, your division will march the day after. Who is this gentleman?"

This latter question, in all its abruptness, was addressed to me, while a dark and ominous frown settled on his features.

"My aide-de-camp, sir," said the old General, hastily, hoping thus to escape further inquiry.

"Your name, sir?" said the Consul, harshly, as he fixed his piercing eyes upon me.

"Burke, sir; sous-lieutenant—"

"Of the 8th Hussars," continued he. "I know the rest, sir. Every conspiracy is made up of knaves and fools; you figured in the latter capacity. Mark me, sir, your name is yet to make; the time is approaching when you may have the opportunity; still, General D'Auvergne, it is not in the ranks of a Chouan plot I should have gone to select my staff."

"Pardon me, sir, but this young man's devotion to you—"

"Is on record, general; I have seen it in Mehée de la Touche's own writing," added Bonaparte, with a sneer. "Give me the fidelity, sir, that has no tarnish—like your own, D'Auvergne. Go, sir," said he, turning to me, while he waved his hand toward the door. "It will need all your bravery and all your heroism to make me acquit General D'Auvergne of an act of folly."

I hung my head in shame, and with a low reverence and a tottering step moved from the room and closed the door behind me.

I had just reached the street when the general overtook me.

"Come, come, Burke," said he, "you must not mind this. I heard Lannes receive a heavier reproof, because he only carried away three guns of an Austrian battery, when there were four in all."

"Bonaparte never forgets, sir," muttered I between my teeth, as the well-remembered phrase crossed my mind.

"Then there's but one thing to do, my boy; give him a pleasanter *souvenir* to look back upon. Besides," added he in a lower tone, "the general is ever harsh at the moment of victory; and such is the present. In a few days more, France will have an emperor; the Senate has declared, and the army wait but for the signal to salute their monarch. And now for your own duties. Make your arrangements to start to-night by post for Mayence; I shall join you there in about ten days. You are, on your arrival, to report yourself to the general in command, and receive your instructions from him. A great movement toward the Rhine is in contemplation, but of course, everything awaits the progress of political changes in Paris."

Thus conversing, we reached the corner of the Rue de Rohan, where the general's quarters were.

"You'll be here then punctually at eight to-night," said he; and we parted.

I walked on for some time without knowing which way I went, the strange conflict of my mind so completely absorbed me—hope and fear, pride, shame, and sorrow alternately swaying me with their impulses. I noticed not the gay and splendid streets through which I passed, nor the merry groups which poured along. At length I remembered that but a few hours remained for me to make some purchases necessary for my journey. My new uniform as aide-de-camp, too, was yet to be ordered; and by some strange hazard I was exactly at the corner of the Rue de Richelieu on the Boulevard, at the very shop of Monsieur Crillac, where, some months before, began the singular current of ill-luck that had followed me ever since. A half-shudder of fear passed across me for a second as I thought of all the dangers I had gone through, and the next moment I felt ashamed of my cowardice, and pushing the glass door before me, walked in. I looked about me for the well-known face of the proprietor, but he was nowhere to be seen. A lean and wasted little old man, hung round with tapes and measures, was the only person there. Saluting me with a most respectful bow, he asked my orders.

"I thought this was Crillac's," said I, hesitatingly.

A shrug of the shoulders and a strange expression of the eyebrows was the only reply.

"I remember he lived here some eight or ten months ago," said I again, curious to find out the meaning of the man's ignorance of his predecessor.

"Monsieur has been away from Paris for some time then?" was the cautious question of the little man, as he peered curiously at me.

"Yes; I have been away," said I, after a pause.

"Monsieur knew Crillac probably when he was here?"

"I never saw him but once," said I.

"Ha!" cried he, after a long silence. "Then you probably never heard of the Chouan conspiracy to murder the chief Consul and overthrow the Government, nor of their trial at the Palais de Justice?"

I nodded slightly, and he went on.

"Monsieur Crillac's evidence was of great value in the proceeding: he knew Jules de Polignac and Charles de la Rivière well; and but for him, San Victor would have escaped."

"And what has become of him since?"

"He is gone back to the south; he has been promoted."

"Promoted!—what do you mean?"

"*Parbleu!* it is easy enough to understand. He was made *chef de bureau* in the department of ——"

"What!—was he not a tailor then?"

"A tailor!—no," said the little man, laughing heartily, "he was a *mouchard*, a police spy, who knew all the royalist party well at Bordeaux, and Fouché brought him up here to Paris, and established him in this house. Ah, *mon Dieu!*" said he, sighing, "he had a better and a pleasanter occupation than cutting out pantaloons."

Without heeding the reiterated professions of the little tailor of his desire for my patronage, I strolled out again, lost in reflection, and sick to the heart of a system based on such duplicity and deception.

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At last in Mayence. What a change of life was this to me! A large fortress garrisoned by twelve thousand men, principally artillery, awaited here the orders of the Consul; but whither the destination before them, or what the hour when the word to march was to summon them, none could tell. Meanwhile the activity of the troops was studiously kept up; battering trains of field artillery were exercised day after day; the men were practiced in all the movements of the field; while the foundries were unceasingly occupied in casting guns, and the furnaces rolled forth their myriads of shell and shot. Staff officers came and went; expresses arrived from Paris, and orderlies, travel-stained and tired, galloped in from the other fortified places near, but still no whisper came to say where the great game of war was to open—for what quarter of the globe the terrible carnage was destined. From daylight till dark no moment of our time was unoccupied; reports innumerable were to be furnished on every possible subject, and frequently it was far in the night ere I returned to rest. To others this unbroken monotony may have been wearisome and uninteresting; to me each incident bore upon the great cause I gloried in; the dull rumble of the caissons, the heavy clattering of the brass guns were music to my ear, and I never wearied of the din and clamor that spoke of preparation. Such was indeed the preoccupation of my thoughts, that I scarcely marked the course of events which were even then passing, or the mighty changes that already moved across the destinies of France. To my eyes the conqueror of Lodi needed no title—what scepter could equal his own sword? France might desire in her pride to unite her destinies with such a name as his, but he, the general of Italy and Egypt, could not be exalted by any dignity. Such were my boyish fancies, and, as I indulged them, again there grew up the hope within me that a brighter day was yet to beam on my own fortunes, when I should do that which even in his eyes might seem worthy. His very reproaches stirred my courage and nerved my heart. There was a combat—there was a battle-field before me, in which my whole fame and honor lay; and could I but succeed in making him confess that he had wronged me, what pride was in the thought. "Yes," said I, again and again, "a devotion to him such as I can offer must have success: one who, like me, has neither home, nor friends, nor country, to share his heart, must have room in it for one passion, and that shall be glory. She whom alone I could have loved—I dared not confess I did love her—never could be mine. Life must have its object, and what so noble as that before me." My very dreams caught up the infatuation of my waking thoughts—and images of battle, deadly contests, and terrific skirmishes were constantly passing before me; and I actually went my daily rounds of duty buried in these thoughts, and lost to everything save what ministered to my excited imagination.

We who lived far away on the distant frontier could but collect from the journals the state of excitement and enthusiasm into which every class of the capital were thrown by Napoleon's elevation to the monarchy. Never, perhaps, in any country, did the current of popular favor run in a stream so united. The army hailed him as their brother of the sword, and felt the proud distinction that the chief of the Empire was chosen from their ranks. The civilian

saw the restoration of monarchy as the pledge of that security which alone was wanting to consolidate national prosperity. The clergy, however they may have distrusted his sincerity, could not but acknowledge that to his influence was owing the return of the ancient faith; and, save the Vendeans, broken and discomfited, and the scattered remnants of the Jacobin party, discouraged by the fate of Moreau, none raised a voice against him. A few of the old Republicans, among whom was Carnot, did, it is true, proclaim their dissent; but so moderately, and with so little of partisan spirit, as to call forth a eulogium on their honorable conduct from Napoleon himself.

The mighty change which was to undo all the long and arduous struggles for liberty, which took years in their accomplishment, was effected in one burst of national enthusiasm. Surrounded by nations on whose friendship they dared not reckon, at war with their most powerful enemy, England, France saw herself dependent on the genius of one great man; and beheld, too, the formidable conspiracy for his assassination, coupled with the schemes against her own independence. He became thus indissolubly linked with her fortunes—self-interest and gratitude pointed both in the same direction to secure his services; and the imperial crown was, indeed, less the reward of the past, than the price of the future. Even they who loved him least, felt that in his guidance there was safety; and that, without him, the prospect was dark, and dreary, and threatening. Another element which greatly contributed to the same effect, was the social ruin caused by the Revolution; the destruction of all commerce, the forfeiture of property, had thrown every class into the service of the government. Men gladly advocated a change by which the ancient forms of a monarchy might be restored, and with them the long train of patronage and appointments, their inevitable attendants. Even the old families of the kingdom hailed the return of an order of things which might include them in the favors of the Crown; and the question now was, what rank or class should be foremost in tendering their allegiance to the new sovereign. We should hesitate ere we condemn the sudden impulse by which many were driven at this period. Confiscation and exile had done much to break the spirit of even the hardiest; and the very return to the institutions in which all their ancient prejudices were involved, seemed a pledge against the tyranny of the mass.

As for Napoleon himself, each step in his proud career seemed to evoke the spirit necessary to direct it—the resources of his mighty intellect appeared with every new drain on them, only the more inexhaustible. Animated through his whole life by the one great principle, the aggrandizement of France—his vast intelligence gathering strength with his own increase of power, enabled him to cultivate every element of national greatness, and mold their energies to his will, till at length the nation seemed but one vast body, of which he was the heart, the impulse, that sent the life-blood bounding through all its arteries, and with whose beating pulses every, even the most remote portion, throbbed in unison.

The same day that established the Empire, declared the rank and dignity accorded to each member of the royal family, with the titles to be borne by the ministers and other high officers of the Crown. The next step was the creation of a new order of nobility—one which, without ancient lineage or vast possessions, could still command the respect and admiration of all—the marshals of France. The names of Berthier, Murat, Augereau, Masséna, Bernadotte, Ney, Soult, Lannes, Mortier, Davoust, Bessières, were enough to throw a blaze of luster on the order; and had it not been for the omission of Macdonald's name in this glorious list, public enthusiasm had been complete; but then he was the friend of Moreau, and Bonaparte "did not forgive."

The restoration of the old titles, so long in abeyance, the return to the pomp and state of monarchy, seemed like a national *fête*, and Paris became the scene of a splendid festivity and a magnificence unknown for many years past. It was necessary for the new Court to make its impression on the world, and the endeavor was to eclipse, by luxury and splendor, the grandeur which, in the days of the Bourbons, was an heirloom of royalty. To this end functionaries and officers of the palace were appointed in myriads—brilliant and costly uniforms adopted—courtly titles and ceremonial observances increased without end—and etiquette, carried to a pitch of strictness which no former reign had ever exhibited, now regulated every department of the state.

While, however, nothing was too minute or too trivial, provided that it bore even in the remotest way on the re-establishment of that throne he had so long and so ardently desired, Napoleon's great mind was eagerly bent upon the necessity of giving to

the Empire one of those astounding evidences of his genius, which marked him as above all other men. He wished to show to France that the crown had devolved upon the rightful successor to Charlemagne, and to prove to the army that the purple mantle of royalty could not conceal the spur of the warrior; and thus, while all believed him occupied with the ordinary routine of the period, his ambitious thoughts were carrying him away across the Pyrenees, or beyond the Danube, to battle-fields of even greater glory than ever, and to conquests prouder than all his former ones.

The same power of concentrativeness that he so eminently possessed himself, he imparted, as if by magic, to his government. Paris was France. To the capital flocked all whose talent or zeal prompted them to seek for advancement. The Emperor was not only the fountain of all honor, but of all emolument and place. No patronage was exercised without his permission, and none was conferred without the conviction that some stanch adherent was secured, whose friendship was ratified, or whose former enmity was conciliated.

Thus passed the year that followed his accession to the throne—that brilliant pageant of a nation's enthusiasm rendering tribute to the majesty of intellect. At length the period of inaction seemed drawing to a close; and a greater activity in the war department, and a new levy of troops, betokened the approach of some more energetic measures. Men whispered that the English expedition was about to sail, and reinforcements of ammunition and artillery were dispatched to the coast; when suddenly came the news of Trafalgar: Villeneuve was beaten—his fleet annihilated—the whole combination of events destroyed—and England, again triumphant on the element she had made her own, hurled defiance at the threats of her enemy. The same dispatch that brought the intelligence to Mayence told us to be in readiness for a movement, but when, or where to, none of us could surmise. Still detachments from various corps stationed about were marched into the garrison, skeleton regiments commanded to make up their deficiencies, and a renewed energy was everywhere perceptible. At last, toward the middle of August, I was sent for by the general in command of the fortress, and informed that General d'Auvergne had been promoted to the command of a cavalry brigade stationed at Coblentz.

"You are to join him there immediately," continued he; "but here is a note from himself, which probably will explain everything."

And with that he handed me a small sealed letter. It was the first, save on purely regimental matters, I had ever received from him, and somehow I felt unusually anxious about its contents. It ran in these words:

"My Dear B.,—His Majesty has just sent for me, and, most graciously esteeming me not yet too old to serve him, has given me the command of a brigade—late the 12th, now to be called 'D'Auvergne's Cavalry.' I would willingly have mentioned your name for promotion, to which your zeal and activity would well entitle you, but deemed it better to let your claim come before the Emperor's personal notice—which an opportunity will, I trust, soon permit of its doing. His Majesty, with a kindness which the devotion of a life could not repay, has also interested himself personally for me in a quarter where only his influence could have proved successful—but the explanation of this I reserve for your arrival. And now I request that you will lose no time in repairing to Paris—where I shall expect to see you by Tuesday.—Yours.

"D'Auvergne, Lieut.-General."

This strange paragraph puzzled me not a little; nor could I, by any exercise of ingenuity, find out even a plausible meaning for it. I read it over and over, weighing and canvassing every word, and torturing each syllable—but all to no purpose. Had the general been some youthful but unhappy lover, to forward whose suit the Emperor had lent his influence, then had I understood the allusion; but with the old weather-beaten officer, whose hairs were blanched with years and service, the very thought of such a thing was too absurd. Yet what could be the royal favor so lavishly praised: he needed no intercession with the Empress—at least I remembered well how marked the kindness of Josephine was toward him in former times. But to what use guessing? Thoughts, by long revolving, often become only the more entangled, and we lose sight of the real difficulty in canvassing our own impressions concerning it. And so from this text did I spin away a hundred fancies that occupied me the whole road to Paris, nor left me till the din and movement of the great capital banished all other reflections.

Arrangements had been made for my reception at the Rue de Rohan, but I learned that the general was at Versailles with the Court, and only came up to Paris once or

twice each week. His direction to me was, to wait for his arrival, and not to leave the city on any account.

With what a strange feeling did I survey the Palace of the Tuileries—the scene of my first moment of delighted admiration of her I now loved—and, alas! of my first step in the long catalogue of my misfortunes. I lingered about the gardens with a fascination I could not account for; my destiny seemed somehow linked with the spot, and I could not reason myself out of the notion but that there, in that great pile, the fate of my whole life was to be decided.

My entire day was passed in this way, and evening found me seated on one of the benches near the windows of the pavilion, where I watched the lusters in the long gallery as one by one they burst into light, and saw the gilt candelabras twinkling as each taper was illuminated. It was an evening reception of the Emperor, and I could mark the vast assemblage, in every variety of uniform, that filled the *salons*. At length the drums beat for strangers to leave the gardens, the patrols passed on, and gradually the crowded walks became thinner and thinner, the sounds of the drum grew fainter, and finally the whole space became still and noiseless; not a voice was to be heard, not a step moved on the gravel. I knew that the gates were now locked, and yet I stayed on, glad to be alone, and at leisure to dream away among the fancies that kept ever rising to my mind, and to follow out the trains of thought that ever and anon opened before me.

As the hour grew later, and the *salons* filled more and more, the windows were opened along the terrace to give air, and I could hear the continued murmur of hundreds of voices conversing, while at times the sound of laughter rose above the rest. What a rush of thoughts came on me as I sat; how did I picture to myself the dark intrigues, the subtle plots of wily diplomatists, the bold and daring aspirations of the brave soldiers, the high hopes, and the ambitious yearnings, that were all commingled there, grouped around him whose dreams were of universal empire. While I mused, the night glided on, and the solemn sound of the bell of Notre-Dame proclaimed midnight. I now could mark that the *salons* were thinning, and the unceasing din of carriages in the "place" announced the departure of the guests. In little more than half an hour the great gallery was empty, and but a few groups remained in the apartments adjoining; even they soon departed, and then I could see the servants passing from room to room extinguishing the lights, and soon the great façade of the palace was wrapped in darkness: a twinkling light appeared here and there for some time, but it too went out. The night was calm, and still, and sultry; not a leaf stirred, and the heavy tread of the sentinels, as they paced the marble vestibule, was heard plainly where I stood.

How full of thought to me was that vast pile, now shrouded in the gloom of night. What bold, ambitious deeds—what dreams of empire—had not been conceived there! The great of other days, indeed, entered little into my mind, as I remembered it was the home of him, the greatest of them all. How terrible, too, it was to think, that within that silent palace, which seemed sleeping with the tranquil quiet of an humble cottage, the dreadful plans which were to convulse the world, to shake thrones and dynasties, to make of Europe a vast battle-field, were now devising. The masses of dark cloud that hung heavily in the air, obscuring the sky, and shutting out every star, seemed to my fevered imagination an augury of evil; and the oppressive, loaded atmosphere, though perfumed with the odor of flowers, sunk heavily on the spirits. Again the hour rang out, and I remembered that the gates of the garden were now closed for the night, and that I should remain where I was till daylight liberated me. My mind was, however, too full of its own thoughts to make me care for sleep, and I strolled along the gloomy walks lost in reverie.

CHAPTER XL.

A NIGHT IN THE TUILERIES GARDENS.

As the night wore on, I remembered that once when a boy at the Polytechnique, I longed to penetrate one of the little inclosures which fenced the small flower-gardens beside the palace, and which were railed up from the public promenades by a low iron railing. The bouquets of rich flowers that grew there, sparkling with the light dew of a little *jet d'eau* that fell in rain-drops over them, had often tempted my young heart; but still, in the daytime, such a transgression would have been immediately punished. Now, with the strange caprice which so often prompts us in after years to do that which in youth we wished, but could not accomplish, I wandered toward the gardens, and crossing over the low fence, entered the parterre: each step awoke the

sleeping perfume of the flowers, and I strolled along the velvet turf until I reached a low bench, half covered with honeysuckle and woodbine. Here I threw myself down, and, wrapping my cloak around me, resolved to rest till daybreak. The stillness of all around, the balmy air, and my own musings, gradually conspired to make me drowsy, and I slept.

My sleep could not have been long, when I was awakened by a noise close beside me. I started up, and looked about, and for some seconds I could scarcely credit that I was not still dreaming. Not more than a dozen paces from where I lay, and where before the dark walls of the palace rose in unbroken blackness, was now a chamber, brilliantly lighted by several wax-lights that stood on a table. At the window, which opened to the ground, and led into the garden, stood the figure of a man, but from his position before the light I could not remark more than that he wore epaulettes. It was the noise of the opening jalousies which awoke me; and I could see his hand stretched out, as if to ascertain whether or not it was raining. At the table I could perceive another person, on whose uniform the light fell strongly, displaying many a cross and star, which twinkled with every stir he made. He was busily engaged writing, and never lifted his head from the paper. The walls of the room were covered with shelves, filled with books; and on the chairs about, and even on the floor, lay maps and drawings in every disorder; a sword and belt, as if just taken off, lay on the table among the writing materials, and a cocked hat beside them. While I noticed these details my very heart was chill within me. The dark figure at the window, which stirred not, seemed as if turned toward me, and more than once I almost thought I could see his eyes bent upon me. This was, however, but the mere suggestion of my own fears, for in the shade of the seat no light whatever fell, and I was perfectly concealed.

In the deep stillness I could hear the scraping sound of the pen on the paper, and scarcely dared to breathe, lest I should cause discovery, when the figure retired from the window, and moved toward the table; for some minutes he appeared to stoop over a large map, which lay outstretched before him, and across which I could see his finger moving rapidly. Suddenly he stood erect, and in a voice which even now rings within my heart, said: "It must be so, Duroc; by any other route Bernadotte will be too late!" What was the reply I know not, such terror now fell over me. It was the Emperor himself who spoke. It was he who the instant before was standing close beside me at the window; and thus, a second time in my life, did I become the unwilling eavesdropper of the man I most feared and respected of all the world. Before I could summon resolution to withdraw, Napoleon spoke again. "Hardenberg," said he, in a tone of contemptuous passion,—"Hardenberg is but a Prussian; the event will satisfy *his* scruples; besides, if they do talk about invasion of territory, you can reply; the Margraves were always open to belligerent parties; remind them of what took place in '96, and again in 1800, though, *parbleu*, the *souvenir* may not be so pleasant a one; protract the discussion, at all events, Duroc; time!—time! Then," added he, after a brief pause, "let them advance, and they'll never repass the Danube; and if they wait for me, I'll fall upon them here—here between Ulm and Augsburg. You must, however, start for Berlin at once." At this instant a heavy hand fell upon my shoulder, and, passing down my arm, seized me by the wrist. I started back, and beheld a dragoon, for so his helmet and cloak bespoke, of enormous stature, who, motioning me to silence, led me softly and with noiseless step along the flower-beds, as if fearful of attracting the Emperor's notice. My limbs tottered beneath me as I went, for the dreadful imputation an accident might fix on me, stared on me with all its awful consequences. Without a word on either side we reached the little railing, crossed it, and regained the open park, when the soldier, placing himself in front of me, said, in a deep, low voice,

"Your name—who are you?"

"An officer of the huitième regiment of hussars," said I, boldly.

"We shall see that presently," replied he, in a tone of disbelief. "How came you here?"

In a few words I explained how, having remained too late in the garden, I preferred to pass my night on a bench, to the unpleasantness of being brought up before the officer on duty, adding, that it was only on the very moment of his coming that I awoke.

"I know that," interrupted he, in a less surly voice. "I found you sleeping, and feared to awake you suddenly, lest in the surprise a word or a cry should escape you—one syllable had cost your head."

In the tone of these last few words there was something I thought I could recognize, and resolving at a bold venture in such an

E INSTANT A HEAVY HAND FELL UPON MY SHOULDER, AND, PASSING DOWN MY ARM, SEIZED ME BY THE WRIST. (P. 402.)

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emergency as I found myself placed, I said at a hazard,

"The better fortune mine, that I fell into the hands of a kind as well as of a brave soldier—the Corporal Pioche."

"*Sacristi!* You know me then!" cried he, thunderstruck.

"To be sure I do. Could I be an aide-de-camp to the General d'Auvergne, and not have heard of Pioche?"

"An aide-de-camp of the general," said he, starting back, as he carried his hand to the salute. "Pardon, *mon officier;* but you know that duty—"

"Quite true; it was all my own indiscretion. And now, Pioche, if you'll keep me company here till daybreak—it cannot be far off now—the light will soon satisfy you that my account of myself is a true one."

"Willingly, sir," said the gruff cuirassier: "my patrol is to watch the parterres from the pavilion to the allée yonder, and, if you please, we'll take up our quarters on this bench."

They who know not the strange mixture of deference and familiarity of which the relation between officer and soldier is made up in the French service, will perhaps wonder at the tone of almost equality in which we now conversed. But such is the case; the revolutionary armies acknowledged no other gradations of rank than such as the service conferred, nor any degree of superiority save that derivable from greater ability, or more daring heroism; and although no troops more implicitly obeyed the commands of their officers, the occasion of discipline over, a perfect feeling of equality reigned amongst all, whether they wore the epaulettes of Colonel or carried a musket in the ranks. With time, and the changes the consulate had introduced, much of this excessive familiarity was suppressed; still it was no uncommon thing to hear the humble rank and file address the general of division as "thou"—the expression of closest friendship, probably dating from the hours of schoolboy attachment: nor was the officer of rank thought less of because, in the hours of off-duty, he mixed freely with those who had been his companions through life, and talked with them as brothers. It is probable that in no other nation such a course could have been practiced without a total subversion of all respect, and the ruin of all habits of order. The Frenchman is, however, essentially military; not merely warlike, like the inhabitants of Great Britain, his mind ever inclines to the details of war as an art. It is in generalship he glories, not the mere conflict of force; and the humblest soldier in the army takes an interest in the great game of tactics, which in any other people would be quite incredible. Hence, he submits to the control which otherwise he could not endure; for this, he yields to command at the hands of one, who, although his equal in all other respects, he here acknowledges as his superior. He knows, too, that the grade of officer is open to merit alone, and he feels that the epaulette may be his own one day. Such causes as these, constantly in operation, could not fail to raise the *morale* of an army; nor can we wonder that from such a source were derived many, if not most, of the great names that formed the marshals of France.

Again, to this military spirit the French owe the perfection of their tirailleur force—the consummate skill of independent parties, of which every campaign gave evidence. Napoleon found this spirit in the nation, and spared nothing to give it its fullest development. He quickly saw to what height of enthusiasm a people could be brought, to whom a cross or a decoration, an epaulette or a sabre of honor, were deemed the ample rewards of every daring and of every privation; and never in any age, or in any country, was chivalry so universally spread over the wide surface of a people. With them, rank claimed no exception from fatigue or suffering. The officer fared little better than the soldier, on a march; in a battle, he was only more exposed to danger; by daring only could he win his way upward: and an emulative ardor was continually maintained, which was ever giving to the world instances of individual heroism, far more brilliant than all the famed achievements of the crusaders.

This brief digression, unnecessary, perhaps, to many of my readers, may serve to explain to others how naturally our conversation took the easy tone of familiar equality; nor will they be surprised at the abrupt question of the cuirassier, as he said,

"*Mille tonnerres!* lieutenant, was it from your liking the post of danger you selected that bench yonder?"

"The choice was a mere accident."

"An accident, *morbleu!*" said he with a low laugh. "That was what Lasalle called it at the Adige, when the wheel came off the eight-pounder in the charge, and the enemy carried off the gun. 'An accident!' said the Petit Caporal to him—I was close by when he said it—'will your friends in Paris call it an accident if the "*ordre du*

jour" to-morrow condemn you to be shot?' I know him well," continued Pioche, "that I do; I was second bombardier with him at Toulon—ay, and at Cairo too. I mind well the evening he came to our quarters—poor enough we were at the time—no clothes, no rations. I was cook to our division, but somehow there was little duty in my department, till one day the vivandière's ass—a brave beast he was too, before provisions fell short—a spent shot took him in the flank, and killed him on the spot. *Sacristi!* what damage it did; all the canteens were smashed to atoms; horn goblets and platters knocked to pieces; but worst of all, a keg of true Nantz was broached, and every drop lost. Poor Madame Gougon, she loved that ass as if he had been one of the regiment; and though we all offered her assignats on our pay, for a month each, to give us the carcase, she wouldn't do it! No, faith! she would have him buried, and with funeral honors! *Parbleu!* it was a whim; but the poor thing was in grief, and we could not refuse her. I commanded the party," continued Pioche, "and a long distance we had to march, lest the shots might be heard in the quartier général. Well, we had some trouble in getting the poor soul away from the grave. *Sacristi!* she took it so much to heart, I thought she'd have masses said for him; but we did succeed at last, and before dawn we were all within the camp as if nothing had happened. The whole of that day, however, the ass was never out of our minds. It was not grief—no, no! don't think that; we were all thinking of what a sin it was to have him buried there—such a fine beast as he was—and not a pound of meat to be had, if you were to offer a nine-pounder gun for it. 'He is never the worse for his funeral,' said I; 'remember, boys, how well preserved he was in brandy before he was buried. Let's have him up again!' No sooner was night come, than we set off for the place where we laid him, and in less than two hours I was busily employed in making a delicious *salmi* of his haunch. *Mille bombes!* I think I have the smell of it before me; it was *gibier*, and the gravy was like a *purée*. We were all pleasantly seated round the fire, watching every turn of the roast, when, *crack!* I heard the noise of the patrol bringing his gun to the present, and before we had time to jump up, the Petit Caporal was upon us—he was mounted on a little dark Arab, and dressed in his gray surtout.

"'What's all this here?' cried he, pulling up short, while the barb sniffed the air, just as if he guessed what the meat was. 'Who has stolen this sheep?'

"'It is not a sheep, general,' said I, stepping forward, and trying to hide the long ladle I was basting with.

"'Not a sheep—then it is an ox, may-hap, or a calf,' said he again, with an angry look.

"'Neither, general,' said I; 'it was a—a—a beast of our division.'

"'A beast of your division! What does that mean? No trifling, mind! Out with it at once. What's this? Where did it come from?'

"'An ass, may it please you, sir,' said I, trembling all over, for I saw he was in a rare passion; and as he repeated the word after me, I told him the whole story, and how we could not suffer such capital pre to be eaten by any other than good citizens of the Republic.

"While I was telling him so much, the rest stood round terrified; they could not even turn the joint, though it was burning; and to say truth, I thought myself we were all in a bad way, when suddenly he burst into a fit of laughing, and said,

"'What part of France do these fellows come from?'

"'Alsace, mon général,' was the answer from every one.

"'I thought so, I thought so,' said he, 'Sybarites—all.'

"'No, mon général—grenadiers of the Fourth—Milhaud's brigade,' said I; and with that he turned away, and we could hear him laughing long after he galloped off. I saw he mistook us," said Pioche, "and that he could not be angry with the old Fourth."

"You must have seen a great deal of hardship, Pioche?" said I, as he came to a pause; and wishing to draw him on, to speak more of his campaigns.

"*Ma foi*, there were few who saw service from '92 to '97, had not their share of it; but they were brave times, too; every battle had its day of promotion afterwards. Le Petit Caporal would ride down the ranks with his staff, looking for this one, and asking for that. 'Where's the adjutant of the Sixth?' 'Dead, mon général.' 'Where's the colonel of the Voltigeurs?' 'Badly wounded.' 'Carry him this sabre of honor.' 'Who fell over the Austrian standard, and carried away the fragment of the drapeau?' 'One of my brave fellows, general; here he is.' 'And what is your name, my brave fellow?'"

The corporal paused here, and drew a deep breath; and after a few seconds' pause, added in altered tone, "*Sacristi!* they were fine times!"

"But what did he say to the soldier that

took the colors?" asked I, impatiently. "Who was he?"

"It was I," replied Pioche himself, in a deep voice, where pride and devotion struggled powerfully together.

"You, Pioche—indeed! Well, what said the general when he saw you?"

"'Ah, Pioche,' said he, gayly, 'my old friend of Toulouse.'

"'Yes, general,' said I, 'we've had some warm work together.'

"'True, Pioche, and may again, perhaps; but you have been made a corporal since that; and what am I to do for you now?'

"This was a puzzling question, and I did not know how to answer it, and he repeated it before I could make up my mind.

"'Is there nothing, then, in which I can be of use to Corporal Pioche?'

"'Yes, mon général,' said I, 'there is.'

"'Speak it out, man, then; what is it?'

"'I wish, then, you'd rate the commissary-general of our division for one blunder he's ever making. The powder they serve us out is always wet, and our bread is as hard as *mitraille*. Neither bayonets nor teeth will last forever, you know, general.' And he burst out a-laughing before I finished.

"'Rest assured, Pioche, I'll look to this,' said he; and he kept his word."

"But why didn't you ask for promotion?" said I; "what folly, was it not, to throw away such a chance? You might have been an officer ere this."

"No," replied he, with a sorrowful shake of the head; "that was impossible."

"But why so? Bonaparte knew you well; he often noticed you."

"True—all true," said he, more sadly than before; "but then—"

"What, then?" asked I, with more of interest than delicacy at the moment.

"I never learned to read," said Pioche, in a low voice, which trembled with agitation, while he drew his swarthy hand across his eyes, and was silent.

The few words so spoken thrilled most powerfully within me. I saw that I had awakened the saddest thoughts of the poor fellow's heart, and would have given worlds to be able to recall my question. Here then was the corroding sorrow of his life—the grief that left its impress on his stern features, and tinged with care the open brow of the brave soldier. Each moment our silence was prolonged made it still more poignant, but I made an effort to break it, and happily with success.

"After all, Pioche," said I, laying my hand on his arm, "I would willingly exchange my epaulettes for these stripes on your sleeve, to have had Bonaparte speak to me as he has spoken to you; that was a prouder distinction than any other, and will be a fonder recollection, too, hereafter."

"Do you think so, mon lieutenant?" said the poor fellow, turning round quickly, as a faint smile played about his features. "Do you think so? *Sacristi!* I have said as much to myself sometimes, when I've been alone; and then I've almost thought I could hear his kind, soft voice ringing in my ears—for it is kind and soft as a woman's, when he pleases, though, *parbleu!* it can call like a trumpet at other times, ay, and tingle within your heart, till it sets your blood boiling, and makes your hands twitch. I mind well the campaign in the Valais—the words keep dinning in my ears to this hour."

"What was that, Pioche?" said I, pleased to see him turn from the remembrance of his own regrets

"It is a good while past now—I forget the year exactly—but we were marching on Italy, and it was in spring; still the ground was covered with snow; every night came on with a hailstorm that lasted till nigh daybreak: and when we arose from the bivouac, we were so stiff and frozen we could not move. They said, at the time, something went wrong with the commissariat—but when did it ever go right, I wonder? Ammunition and provisions were always late; and though the general used to drive away a commissary every week or ten days for misconduct, the new ones that came turned out just as bad. The Petit Caporal kept sending them word to Paris not to send down any more '*savants*,' but a good honest man, with common sense and active habits; but, *parbleu!* birds of that feather must have been rare just then, for we never could catch one of them. Whatever was the cause, we never were so ill off: our shakos were like wet paper, and took any shape; and out of ridicule we used to come upon parade with them fashioned into three-cocked hats, and pointed caps, and slouched beavers. The officers couldn't say a word, you know, all this time. It was not our fault if we were in such misery. Then, as to shoes—a few could boast of the upper-leathers, but a sole or a heel was not to be found in a company. Our coats were actually in rags, and a pivot sentry looked for all the world like a flagstaff, as he stood fluttering in the wind.

"We bore up, however, as well as we could for some time, grumbling occasion-

ally over our condition, and sometimes laughing at it, when we had the heart; till at last, when we saw the new convoy arrive, and all the biscuits distributed among the young regiments and the new conscripts, we could endure it no longer, and a terrible outcry arose among the troops. We were all drawn up on parade—it was an inspection; for, *parbleu!* though we were as ragged as scarecrows, they would have us out twice a week to review us, and put us through the maneuvers. Scarcely had the general—it was Bonaparte himself—got half way down the line, when a shout ran from rank to rank—'Bread! shoes! caps! biscuits!'

"'What do I hear?' said Bonaparte, standing up in his stirrups, and frowning at the line. 'Who are the malcontents, that dare to cry out on parade? Let them stand out. Let me see them.'

"And at once more than half the regiment of grenadiers sprang forward, and shouted louder than before, 'Bread! bread! Let us have food and clothing! If we are to fight, let us not die of hunger!'

"'Grenadiers of the Fourth,' cried he, in a terrible voice, 'to your ranks! Second division and third!' shouted he, with his hand up, 'form in square!—carry arms!—present arms!—front rank, kneel!—kneel!' said he again, louder; for you know we never did *that* in those days. However, every word was obeyed, and down dropped the leading files on their knees, and there we were rooted to the ground. Not a man spoke—all silent as death.

"He then advanced to the front of the staff, and pointing his hand to a convoy of wagons that could just be seen turning the angle of the road, with white flags flying, to show what they were, called out 'Commissary-general, distribute full rations and half ammunition to the young regiments—half rations and full ammunition to the veterans of Egypt!' A shout of applause burst out, but he cried louder than before—'Silence in the ranks!' Then taking off his chapeau, he stood bare-headed before us; and, in a voice like a bugle that blows the charge, he read from a large paper in his hand—'In the name of the French Republic—one and indivisible. The Directory of the nation decrees—that the thanks of the government be given to the Grenadiers of the Fourth, who have deserved well of their country. Vive la République!'

"'Vive la République!' shouted the whole square in a roar, like the sea itself. Who thought more of hardships or hunger then? Our only desire was, when we were to meet the enemy; and many a jest and many a laugh went round, as we loaded our pouches with the new ammunition.

"'Who's that fellow yonder?' said Bonaparte, as he rode slowly down the line, 'I should know him, I think. Isn't that Pioche?'

"'Yes, mon général,' said I, saluting him. 'It is what remains of poor Pioche; *parbleu!* very little more than half, though.'

"'Ah! glutton,' said he, laughing, 'I ought to have guessed you were here; one such gourmand is enough to corrupt a whole brigade.'

"'Pioche is a good soldier, citizen-general,' said my captain, who was an old schoolfellow of mine.

"'I know it, captain,' said the general.

"'You were in Excelmans's dragoons, Pioche, if I mistake not.'

"'Two years and ten months, citizen-general.'

"'Why did you leave them, and when?'

"'At Monte Bello, with the colonel's permission.'

"'And the reason?'

"'*Morbleu!* it was a fancy I had. They killed two horses under me that day, and I saw I was not destined for the cavalry.'

"'Ha, ha!' said he, with a sly laugh, 'had they been asses, the thing might have been different—eh?'

"'Yes, mon général,' said I, growing red; for I knew what he meant.

"'Come, Pioche, you must go back again to your old corps; they want one or two like you—though, *parbleu!* you'll ruin the Republic in remounts.'

"'As you please it, general.'

"'Well, what shall I do for you besides? Any more commissaries to row—eh? Methinks no bad time to gratify you in that way.'

"'Ah, mon général! if you would only hang up one now and then.'

"'So I intend, the next time I hear of any of my soldiers being obliged to eat the asses of the vivandières.' And with that he rode on, laughing, though none, save myself, knew what he alluded to, and, *ma foi*, I was not disposed to turn the laugh against myself by telling. But there goes the *réveil*, and I must leave you, mon lieutenant; the gates will be open in a few minutes."

"Good-by, Pioche," said I, "and many thanks for your pleasant company. I hope we shall meet again, and soon."

"I hope so, mon lieutenant; and if it be at a bivouac fire, all the better."

The gallant corporal made his military salute, wheeled about, stiff as if on parade

and departed; while I, throwing my cloak over my arm, turned into the broad alley and left the garden.

CHAPTER XLI.

A STORY OF THE YEAR '92.

I FOUND everything in the Rue de Rohan as I had left it the day before. General d'Auvergne had not been there during my absence, but a messenger from Versailles brought intelligence that the Court would arrive that evening in Paris, and in all likelihood the general would accompany them.

My day was then at my disposal, and having dressed, I strolled out to enjoy all the strange and novel sights of the great capital. They who can carry their memories back to Paris at that period, may remember the prodigious amount of luxury and wealth so prodigally exhibited—the equipages, the liveries, the taste in dress, were all of the most costly character—the very shops, too, vied with each other in the splendor and richness of their display, and court uniforms and ornaments of jewelry glittered in every window. Hussar jackets in all their bravery—chapeaux covered with feather trimming and looped with diamonds—sabres with ivory scabbards incrusted with topaz and turquoise, replaced the simple costumes of the revolutionary era, as rapidly as did the high-sounding titles of "Excellence" and "Monseigneur" the unpretending designation of "citoyen." Still, the military feature of the land was in the ascendant; in the phrase of the day, it was the "moustache" that governed. Not a street but had its group of officers, on horseback or on foot—regiments passed on duty, or arrived from the march at every turn of the way. The very rabble kept time and step as they followed, and the warlike spirit animated every class of the population. All these things ministered to my enthusiasm, and set my heart beating stronger for the time when the career of arms was to open before me. This, if I were to judge from all I saw, could not now be far distant. The country for miles around Paris was covered with marching men, their faces all turned eastward—orderlies, booted and splashed, trotted rapidly from street to street, and general officers, with their aides-de-camp, rode up and down with a haste that boded preparation.

My mind was too full of its own absorbing interests to make me care to visit the theater, and having dined in a café on the Boulevard, I turned toward the general's quarters, in the hope of finding him arrived. As I entered the Rue de Rohan, I was surprised at a crowd collected about the door, watching the details of packing a traveling carriage which stood before it. A heavy fourgon, loaded with military chests and boxes, seemed also to attract their attention, and call forth many a surmise as to its destination.

"Le Petit Caporal has something in his head, depend upon it," said a thin, dark-whiskered fellow with a wooden leg, whose air and gesture bespoke the old soldier; "the staff never move off, extra post, without a good reason for it."

"It is the English are about to catch it this time," said a miserable-looking, decrepit creature, who was occupied in roasting chestnuts over an open stove. "Hot, all hot! messieurs et mesdames! real 'marrons de Nancy'—the true and only veritable chestnuts with a truffle flavor. *Sacristi!* now the sea-wolves will meet their match. It is such brave fellows as you, monsieur le grenadier, can make them tremble."

The old pensioner smoothed down his moustache, and made no reply.

"The English, indeed!" said a fat, ruddy-faced woman, with a slight line of dark beard on her upper lip; "my husband's a pioneer in the Twenty-second, and says they're nothing better than poltroons. How we made them run at Arcole! Wasn't it Arcole?" said she, as a buzz of laughter ran through the crowd.

"*Tonnerre de guerre,*" cried the little man, "if I was at them!" A loud burst of merriment met this warlike speech, while the maimed soldier, apparently pleased with the creature's courage, smiled blandly on him as he said, "Let me have two sous' worth of your chestnuts."

Leaving the party to their discussion, I now entered the house, and edging my way up-stairs, between trunks and packing-cases, arrived at the drawing-room. The general had just come in; he had been the whole morning at Court, and was eating a hurried dinner in order to return to the Tuileries for the evening reception. Although his manner toward me was kind and cordial in the extreme, I thought he looked agitated and even depressed, and seemed much older and more broken than before.

"You see, Burke, you'll have little time to enjoy Paris gayeties—we leave to-morrow."

"Indeed, sir!—so soon?"

"Yes, Lasalle is off already; Dorsenne starts in two hours; and we three rendezvous at Coblentz. I wished much to see you," continued he, after a minute's pause; "but I could not get away from Versailles even for a day. Tell me, have you got a letter I wrote to you when at Mayence? I mean, is it still in existence?"

"Yes, sir," said I, somewhat astonished at the question.

"I wrote it hurriedly," added he, with something of confusion in his manner; "do let me see it."

I unlocked my writing-desk at once, and handed him his own letter. He opened it hastily, and having thrown his eyes speedily across it, said, and in a voice far more at ease than before,

"That will do. I feared lest perhaps—But no matter—this is better than I thought."

With this he gave the letter back into my hands, and appeared for some moments engaged in deep thought; then, with a voice and manner which showed a different channel was given to his thoughts, he said:

"The game has opened—the Austrians have invaded Bavaria. The whole disposable force of France is on the march—a hurried movement—but so it is. Napoleon always strikes like his own emblem, the eagle."

"True, sir; but even that serves to heighten the chivalrous feeling of the soldier, when the word springs from the scabbard at the call of honor, and is not drawn slowly forth at the whispered counsel of some wily diplomate."

He smiled half-mournfully at the remark, or at my impetuosity in making it, as he said:

"My dear boy, never flatter yourself that the cause of any war can enter into the calculation of the soldier. The liberty he fights for is often the rankest tyranny; the patriotism he defends, the veriest oppression. Play the game as though the stake were but your own ambition, if you would play it manfully. As for me, I buckle on the harness for the last time—come what will of it. The Emperor feels, and justly feels, indignant that many of the older officers have declined the service by which alone they were elevated to rank, and wealth, and honor. It was not then at the moment when he distinguished me by an unsought promotion, still more, conferred a personal favor on me, that I could ask leave to retire from the army."

By the tone in which he said these last few words, I saw that the general was now approaching the topic I felt so curious about, and did not venture by a word to interrupt or divert his thoughts from it. My calculation proved correct; for, after meditating some eight or ten minutes, he drew his chair closer to mine, and in a voice of ill-repressed agitation, spoke thus:

"You, doubtless, know the history of our great revolution, the causes that led to, the consequences that immediately sprang from it—the terrible anarchy, the utter confiscation of wealth, and, worse still, the social disorganization that invaded every family, however humble, or however exalted, setting wives against their husbands, children against their parents, and making brothers sworn enemies to each other. It was in vain for any man once engaged in the struggle, to draw back; the least hesitation to perform any order of the Convention—the delay of a moment, to think—was death; some one was ever on the watch to denounce the man thus deliberating, and he was led forth to the guillotine like the blackest criminal. The immediate result of all this was a distrust that pervaded the entire nation. No one knew who to speak to, nor dared any confide in him who once had been his dearest friend. The old Royalists trembled at every stir; the few demonstrations they forced themselves to make of concurrence in the new state of things, were received with suspicion and jealousy. The "Blues," for so the revolutionary party was called, thirsted for their blood; the aristocracy had been, as they deemed, long their oppressors; and where vengeance ceased, cupidity began. They longed to seize upon the confiscated estates, and revel as masters in the halls where so oft they had waited as lackeys. But the evil ended not here: wherever private hate or secret malice lurked, an opportunity for revenge now offered, and for one head that fell under the supposed guilt of treason to France, a hundred dropped beneath the axe from causes of personal animosity and long-nurtured vengeance; and thus many an idle word uttered in haste or carelessness, some passing slight, some chance neglect, met now its retribution, and that retribution was ever death.

"It chanced that in the south, in one of those remote districts where intelligence is always slow in arriving, and where political movements rarely disturb the quiet current of daily life, there lived one of those old seigneurs who, at that period, were deemed sovereign princes in the little locale they inhabited. The soil had been their own for centuries, long custom had

made them respected and looked up to, while the acts of kindness and benevolence in which, from father to son, their education consisted, formed even a stronger tie to the affections of the peasantry. The Church, too, contributed not a little to the maintenance of this feudalism, and the "château" entered into the subject of the village prayers as naturally as though a very principle of their faith. There was something beautifully touching in the intercourse between the lord of the soil and its tillers—in the kindly interest of the one, repaid in reverence and devotion by the others; *his* foresight for their benefit, *their* attachment and fidelity, the paternal care, the filial love, made a picture of rural happiness such as no land ever equaled, such as perhaps none will ever see again. The seigneur of whom I speak was a true type of this class; he had been, in his boyhood, a page at the gorgeous Court of Louis XV., mixed in the voluptuous fascinations of the period, but early disgusted by the sensuality of the day, retired to his distant château, bringing with him a wife, one of the most beautiful and accomplished persons of the Court, but one who, like himself, preferred the peace and tranquillity of a country life to the whirlwind pleasures of a vicious capital. For years they lived childless; but at last, after a long lapse of time, two children were born to this union, a boy and girl, both lovely, and likely in every respect to bless them with happiness. Shortly after the birth of the girl, the mother became delicate, and after some months of suffering, died. The father, who never rallied from the hour of her death, and took little interest in the world, soon followed her, and the children were left orphans when the eldest was but four years of age, and his sister but three. Before the count died he sent for his steward; —you know that the steward, or intendant, in France, was formerly the person of greatest trust in any family, the faithful adviser in times of difficulty, the depository of secrets, the friend, in a word, who in humble guise offered his counsel in every domestic arrangement, and without whom no project was entertained or determined on; and usually the office was hereditary, descending from father to son for centuries.

"In this family such was the case, his father and grandfather before him had filled the office, and Leon Guichard well knew every tradition of the house, and from his infancy his mind had been stored with tales of its ancient wealth and former greatness. His father had died but a short time previous, and when the Count's last illness seized him, Leon was only in the second year of his stewardship. Brief as the period was, however, it had sufficed to give abundant proof of his zeal and ability. New sources of wealth grew up under his judicious management—improvements were everywhere conspicuous; and while the seigneur himself found his income increased by nearly one-half, the tenants had gained in equal proportion; such was the result of his activity and intelligence. These changes, marvelous as they may seem, were then of frequent occurrence—the lands of the south had been tilled for centuries without any effort at improvement—sons were content to go on as their fathers had done before them—increased civilization, with its new train of wants and luxuries, never invaded this remote, untraveled district, and primitive tastes and simple habits succeeded each other generation after generation unaltered and unchanged. Suddenly, however, a new light broke on the world, which penetrated even the darkness of the far-off valleys of La Provence. Intelligence began to be more widely diffused—men read and reflected—the rudiments of every art and every science were put within the reach of humble comprehensions; and they who before were limited to memory or hearsay for such knowledge as they possessed, could now apply at the fountain for themselves. Leon Guichard was not slow in cultivating these new resources, and applying them to the circumstances about him; and although many an obstacle arose, dictated by stupid adherence to old customs, or fast-rooted prejudice against new-fashioned methods, by perseverance he overcame them all, and actually enriched the people in spite of themselves.

"The seigneur, himself a man of no mean intellect, saw much of this with sorrow—he felt that a mighty change was accomplishing, and that as one by one the ancient landmarks by which men had been guided for ages were removed, none could foresee what results might follow, nor where the passion for alteration might cease. The superstitions of the Church, harmless in themselves, were now openly attacked; its observances, before so deeply venerated, were even assailed as idle ceremonies, and it seemed as if the strong cable that bound men to faith and loyalty had parted, and that their minds were drifting over a broad and pathless sea. Such was the ominous opening of the revolution, such the terrible ground-swell before the storm.

"On his death-bed, then, he entreated

Leon to be aware that evil days were approaching—that the time was not distant when men should rely upon the affection and love of those around them, on the ties that attached to each other for years long, on the mutual interest that had grown up from their cradles—he besought him to turn the people's minds, as far as might be, from the specious theories that were afloat, and fix them on their once loved traditions—and, above all, he charged him, as the guardian of his orphan children, to keep *them* aloof from the contamination of dangerous doctrines, and to train them up in the ancient virtues of their house, in charity and benevolence.

"Scarce had the old count's grave closed over him, when men began to perceive a marked change in Leon Guichard; no longer humble, even to subserviency, as before, he now assumed an air of pride and haughtiness that soon estranged his companions from him. As guardian to the orphan children, he resided in the château, and took on him the pretensions of the master. Its stately equipage, with great emblazoned panels, the village wonder at every fête-day, was now replaced by a more modern vehicle, newly arrived from Paris, in which Monsieur Guichard daily took his airings. The old servants, many of them born in the château, were sent adrift, and a new and very different class succeeded them; all was changed; even the little path that led up from the presbytère to the château, and along which the old curé was seen wending his way on each Sunday to his dinner with the seigneur, was now closed—the gate walled up—while the Sabbath itself was only dedicated to greater festivities and excess, to the scandal of the villagers.

"Meanwhile, the children grew up in strength and beauty; like wild flowers, they had no nurture, but they flourished in all this neglect, ignorant and unconscious of the scenes around them. They roved about the livelong day through the meadows, or that wilderness of a garden, on which no longer any care was bestowed, and where rank luxuriance gave a beauty of its own to the rich vegetation. With the unsuspecting freshness of their youth, they enjoyed the present without a thought of the future—they loved each other, and were happy. To them the vague reports and swelling waves of the revolution, which each day gained ground, brought neither fear nor apprehension; they little dreamed that the violence of political strife could ever reach their quiet valleys: nor did they think the hour was near when the tramp of soldiery, and the ruffianly shout of predatory war, were to replace the song of the vigneron and the dance of the villager. The revolution came at last, sweeping like a torrent over the land; it blasted as it went—beneath its baneful breath everything withered and wasted—loyalty, religion, affection, and brotherly love, all died out in the devoted country—anarchy and bloodshed were masters of the scene. The first dreadful act of this fearful drama passed like a dream to those who, at a distance from Paris, only read of the atrocities of that wretched capital; but when the wave rolled nearer, when crowds of armed men, wild and savage in look, with ragged uniforms and blood-stained hands, prowled about the villages, where in happier times a soldier had never been seen—when the mob around the guillotine supplied the place of the gathering at the market—when the pavement was wet and slippery with human blood, men's natures suddenly became changed, as though some terrible curse from on high had fallen on them; their minds caught up the fearful contagion of revolt, and a mad impulse to deny all they had once held sacred and venerable seized on all. Their blasphemies against religion went hand in hand with their desecration of everything holy in social life, and a pre-eminence in guilt became the highest object of ambition. Sated with slaughter, bloated with crime, the nation reeled like a drunken savage over the ruin it created, and with the insane lust of blood poured forth its armed thousands throughout the whole of Europe. Then began the much-boasted triumphs of the revolutionary armies—the lauded victories of those great asserters of liberty—say, rather, the carnage of famished wolves, the devastating rage of bloodthirsty maniacs. The conscription seized on the whole youth of France, as if fearful that, in the untarnished minds of the young, the seeds of better things might bear fruit in season. They carried them away to scenes of violence and rapine, where, amid the shouts of battle and the cries of the dying, no voice of human sympathy might touch their hearts, no trembling of remorse should stir within them.

"'You are named in the conscription, Monsieur,' said Leon, in a short, abrupt tone, as one morning he entered the dressing-room of his young master.

"'I! I named in the conscription!' replied the other, with a look of incredulity and anger. 'This is but a sorry jest, Master Leon, and not in too good taste, either.'

"'Good or bad,' answered the steward, 'the fact is as I say; here is the order from the *municipalité*. You were fifteen yesterday, you know.'

"True; and what then? Am I not Marquis de Neufchâtel, Count de Rochefort, in right of my mother?'

"'There are no more marquises, no more counts,' said the other, roughly; 'France has had enough of such cattle; the less you allude to them the safer for your head.'

"He spoke truly, the reign of the aristocracy was ended; and while they were yet speaking, an emissary of the Convention, accompanied by a party of troops, arrived at the château to fetch away the newly-drawn conscript.

"I must not dwell on the scene which followed—the heartrending sorrow of those who had lived but for each other, now torn asunder for the first time, not knowing when, if ever, they were to meet again. His sister wished to follow him, but even had he permitted it, such would have been impossible. The dreadful career of a revolutionary soldier was an obstacle insurmountable. The same evening the battalion of infantry to which he was attached began their march toward Savoy, and the lovely orphan of the château fell dangerously ill.

"Youth, however, triumphed over her malady, which, indeed, was brought on by grief; and after some weeks she was restored to health. During the interval, nothing could be more kind and attentive than Leon Guichard; his manner, of late years, rough and uncivil, became softened and tender; the hundred little attentions which illness seeks for, he paid with zeal and watchfulness; everything which could alleviate her sorrow or calm her afflicted mind, was resorted to with a kind of instinctive delicacy, and she began to feel that in her long-cherished dislike of the intendant she had done him grievous wrong.

"This change of manner attracted the attention of many besides the inhabitants of the château. They remarked his altered looks and bearing, the more studied attention to his dress and appearance, and the singular difference in all his habits of life; no longer did he pass his time in the wild orgies of debauchery and excess, but in careful management of the estate, and rarely or never left the château after nightfall.

"A hundred different interpretations were given to this line of acting: some said that the more settled condition of political affairs had made him cautious and careful, for it was now the reign of the Directory, and the old excesses of '92 were no longer endured; others, that he was naturally of a kind and benevolent nature, and that his savage manner and reckless conduct were assumed merely in compliance with the horrible features of the time. None, however, suspected the real cause. Leon Guichard was in love! Yes, the humble steward, the coarse follower of the vices of that detestable period, was captivated by the beauty of the young girl, now springing into womanhood. The freshness of her artless nature, her guileless innocence, her soft voice, her character so balanced between gayety and thoughtfulness, her loveliness, so unlike all he had ever seen before, had seized upon his whole heart; and, as the sun darting from behind the blackest clouds will light up the surface of a bleak landscape, touching every barren rock and tipping every bell of purple heath with color and richness, so over his rugged nature the beauty of this fair girl shed a very halo of light, and a spirit awoke within him to seek for better things, to endeavor better things, to fly the coarse, depraved habits of his former self, to conform to the tastes of her he worshiped. Day by day his stern nature became more softened. No longer those terrible bursts of passion, to which he once gave way, escaped him; his voice, his very look, too, were changed in their expression, and a gentleness of manner almost amounting to timidity now characterized him who had once been the type of the most savage Jacobin.

"She to whom this wondrous change was owing knew nothing of the miracle she had worked; she would not, indeed, have believed, had one told her. She scarcely remarked him when they met, and did not perceive that he was no longer like his former self; her whole soul wrapped up in her dear brother's fate, she lived from week to week in the thought of his letters home. It is true her life had many enjoyments which owed their source to the intendant's care; but she knew not of this, and felt more grateful to him when he came letter in hand from the little post of the village, than when the fair moss-roses of spring filled the vases of the *salon*, or the earliest fruits of summer decked her table. At times, something in his demeanor would strike her—a tinge of sorrow it seemed rather than aught else; but as she attributed this, as every other grief, to her brother's absence, she paid no further attention to it, and merely thought good Leon

had more feeling than they used to give him credit for.

"At last, the campaign of Arcole over, the young soldier obtained a short leave to see his sister. How altered were they both: she, from the child, had become the beautiful girl; her eyes flashing with the brilliant sparkle of youth, her step elastic, her color changing with every passing expression. He was already a man, bronzed and sunburnt; his dark eyes darker, and his voice deeper, but still his former self in all the warmth of his affection to his sister.

"The lieutenant, for so was he always called by the old soldier who accompanied him as his servant, and oftentimes by the rest of his household, had seen much of the world in the few years of his absence.

"The chances and changes of a camp had taught him many things which lie far beyond its own limits, and he had learned to scan men's minds and motives, with a quick eye and ready wit. He was not long, therefore, in observing the alteration in Leon Guichard's manner, nor was he slow in tracing it to its real cause. At first, the sudden impulse of his passion would have driven him to any length; the presumption of such a thought was too great to endure—but then the times he lived in taught him some strong lessons; he remembered the scenes of social disorder and anarchy of his childhood; how every rank became subverted, and how men's minds were left to their own unbridled influences to choose their own position, and he bethought him, that in such trials as these, Leon had conducted himself with moderation; that to his skillful management it was owing, if the property had not suffered confiscation like so many others, and that it was, perhaps, hard to condemn a man for being struck by charms which, however above him in the scale of rank, were still continually before his eyes. Reasoning thus, he determined, as the wisest course, to remove his sister to the house of a relative, where she could remain during his absence. This would at once put a stop to the steward's folly—for so he could not help deeming it—and, what was of equal consequence in the young soldier's eyes, prevent his sister being offended by ever suspecting the existence of such a feeling toward her. The plan, once resolved on, met no difficulty from his sister; his promise to return soon to see her was enough to compensate for any arrangement, and it was determined that they should set out toward the south by the first week in September.

"When the intimation of this change first reached Leon, which it did from the other servants, he could not believe it, and resolved to hasten to the lieutenant himself, and ask if it were true. On that day, however, the young soldier was absent shooting, and was not to return before night. Tortured with doubt and fear, trembling at the very thought of her departure—whose presence had been the loadstar of his life—he rushed from the house and hurried into the wood. Every spot reminded him of her, and he shuddered to think that in a few hours his existence would have lost its spring—that ere the week was past he would be alone without the sight of her, whom, even to have seen, constituted the happiness of the whole day. Revolving such sad thoughts, he strolled on, not knowing whither, and, at last, on turning the angle of a path, found himself before the object of his musings; she was returning from a farewell visit to one of the cottagers, and was hastening to the château to dress for dinner.

"'Ah! Monsieur Leon,' said she, suddenly, 'I am glad to meet you here—these poor people at the wooden bridge will miss me, I fear; you must look to them in my absence. And there is old Jeannette—she fancies she can spin still—I pray you let her have her little pension regularly. The children at Calotte, too—they are too far from the school—mind that they have their books.'

"'And are you indeed going from hence, mademoiselle?' said he, in a tone and accent so unlike his ordinary one, as to make her start with surprise.

"'Yes, to be sure. We leave the day after to-morrow.'

"'And have you no regret, mademoiselle, to leave the home of your childhood and those you have—known there?'

"'Sir!' replied she, haughtily, as the tone of his voice assumed a meaning which could not be mistaken; 'you seem to have forgotten yourself somewhat, or you had not dared—'

"'Dared!' interrupted he in a louder key—'dared! I have dared more than that! Yes,' cried he, in a voice where passion could be no longer held under, 'Leon Guichard, the steward, has dared to love his master's daughter! Start not so proudly back, madame! Time was when such an avowal had been a presumption death could not repay; but these days are past. The haughty have been well humbled; they who deemed their blood a stream too pure to mingle with the current in plebeian veins, have poured it lavishly beneath the guillotine. Leon Guichard has no master now!'

"The fire flashed from his eyes as he spoke, and his color, pale at first, grew darker and darker, till his face became almost purple, while his nostrils, swelled to twice their natural size, dilated and contracted like those of a fiery charger. Terrified at the frightful paroxysm of passion before her, the timid girl endeavored to allay his anger, and replied,

"'You know well, Leon, that my brother has ever treated you as a friend—'

"'He a friend!' cried he, stamping on the ground, while a look of demoniac malice lit up his features. 'He, who talks to me as though I were a vassal—a slave; he, who deems his merest word of approval a recompense for all my labor—all my toil; he, whose very glance shoots into my heart like a dagger. Think you I forgive him the contemptuous treatment of nineteen years, or that I can pardon insults because they have grown into habits? Hear me!'—he grasped her wrist rigidly as he spoke, and continued—'I have sworn an oath to be revenged on him from the hour when, a boy, scarce eight years old, he struck me in the face and called me *canaille*. I vowed his ruin. I toiled for it, I strove for it, and I succeeded—ay, succeeded. I obtained from the Convention the confiscation of your lands—all—everything you possessed. I held the titles in my possession, for I was the owner of this broad château—ay—Leon Guichard—even so. You were but my guest here. I kept it by me many a day, and when your brother was drawn in the conscription, I resolved to assert my right before the world.' He paused for a moment, while a tremendous convulsion shook his frame, and made him tremble like one in an ague; then, suddenly rallying, he passed his hand across his brow, and, in a lower voice, resumed, 'I would have done so, but for you.'

"'For me! What mean you?' said she, almost sinking with terror.

"'I loved you—loved you as only he can love who can surrender all his cherished hopes—his dream of ambition—his vengeance even, to his love. I thought, too, that you were not cold to my advances; and fearing lest any hazard should apprise you of my success, and thus run counter to my wishes, I lived on here as your servant, still hoping for the hour when I might call you mine, and avow myself the lord of this château. How long I might have continued thus I know not. To see you, to look on you, to live beneath the same roof with you, seemed happiness enough, but when I heard that you were to leave this, to go away, never to return, perhaps, or if so, not as her I loved and worshiped, then—But why look you thus? Is it because you doubt these things? Look here, see this. Is that in form? Are these signatures authentic? Is this the seal of the National Convention? What say you now? It is not the steward Leon that sues, but the Citizen Guichard, *propriétaire de Rochefort*. Now, methinks, that makes some difference in the proposition.'

"'None, sir,' replied she, with a voice whose steady utterance made each word sink into his heart; 'save that it adds to my contempt for him who has dared to seek my affection in the ruin of my family. I did but despise you before—'

"'Beware,' said he, in a voice of menace, but in which no violence of passion entered, 'you are in my power. I ask you again, will you consent to be my wife? Will you save your brother from the scaffold, and yourself from beggary and ruin?—I can accomplish both.'

A look of ineffable scorn was all her reply; when he sprang forward and threw his arm round her waist.

"'Or would you drive me to the worst—'

"A terrific shriek broke from her as she felt his hand around her, when the brushwood crashed behind her, and her brother's dogs sprang from the thicket. With a loud cry she called upon his name; he answered from the wood, and dashed toward her just as she sank fainting to the ground. Leon was gone.

"As soon as returning strength permitted, she told her brother the fearful story of the steward; but bound him by every entreaty not to bring himself in contact with a monster so depraved. When they reached the château, they learned that Guichard had been there and left it again; and from that hour they saw him no more.

"I must now conclude in a few words, and to do so, may mention, that in the year '99 I became the purchaser of Haut Rochefort, at a sale of forfeited estates, it having been bought by government on some previous occasion, but from whom and how, I never heard. The story I have told I learned from the notaire of Hubane, the village in the neighborhood, who was conversant with all its details, and knew well the several actors in it, as well as their future fortunes.

"The brother became a distinguished officer, and rose to some rank in the service, but embarking in the expedition to Ireland, was reported to Bonaparte as having betrayed the French cause. The result was, he was struck off the list of the army, and pronounced degraded; he died in some unknown place.

"The sister became attached to her cousin, but the brother opposing the union, she was taken away to Paris; the lover returned to Bretagne, where, having heard a false report of her marriage at Court, he assumed holy orders, and being subsequently charged, but it is now believed falsely, of corresponding with the Bourbons, was shot in his own garden by a platoon of infantry. But how is this? are you ill? has my story so affected you?"

"That brother was my friend—my dearest, my only friend, Charles de Meudon."

"What! and did you know poor Charles?"

But I could not speak; the tears ran fast down my cheeks as I thought of all his sorrows—sorrows far greater than ever he had told me.

"Poor Marie," said the General, as he wiped a tear from his eye; "few have met such an enemy as she did; every misfortune of her life has sprung from one hand; her brother's, her lover's death, were both his acts."

"Leon Guichard! And who is he? or how could he have done these things?"

"Methinks you might yourself reply to your own question."

"I! how could that be? I know him not."

"Yes, but you do: Leon Guichard is Mehée de la Touche!"

Had a thunderbolt fallen between us I could not have felt more terror. That name spoken but twice or thrice in my hearing, had each time brought its omen of evil. It was the same with whose acquaintance Marie de Meudon charged me in the garden at Versailles, the same who brought the Chouans to the guillotine, and had so nearly involved myself in their ruin; and now I heard of him as one whose dreadful life had been a course of perfidy and crime, one who blasted all around him, and scattered ruin as he went.

"I have little more to add," resumed the General, after a long pause, and in a voice whose weakened accents evinced how fearfully the remembrance he called up affected him. "What remains, too, more immediately concerns myself than others. I am the last of my house; an ancient family, and one not undistinguished in the annals of France, hangs but on the feeble thread of a withered and broken old man's life, with whom it dies; my only brother fell in the Austrian campaign. I never had a sister; uncles and cousins I have had in numbers, but death and exile have been rife these last twenty years, and, save myself, none bears the name of D'Auvergne. Yet once I nourished the hope of a family—of a race who should hand down the ancient virtues of our house to after years. I thought of those gallant ancestors whose portraits graced the walls of the old château I was born in, and fancied myself leading my infant boy from picture to picture, as I pointed out the brave and the good, who had been his forefathers. But this is a dream long since dispelled. I was then a youth, scarce older than yourself, rich, and with every prospect of happiness before me; I fell in love, and the object of my passion seemed one created to have made the very paradise I sought for. She was beautiful, beyond even the loveliest of a handsome Court; highborn and gifted; but her heart was bestowed on another—one who, unlike myself, encouraged no daring thoughts, no ambitious longings, but who, wholly devoted to her he loved, sought in tranquil quiet the happiness such spirits can give each other. She told me herself, frankly as I speak now to you, that she could not be mine, and then placed my hand in her husband's. This was Marie de Rochefort, the mother of Mademoiselle de Meudon.

"The world's changes seem ever to bring about these strange vicissitudes by which our early deeds of good and evil are brought more forcibly to our memories, and we are made to think over the past by some accident of the present. After twenty years I came to live in that château where she whom I once loved had lived and died. I became the lord of that estate which her husband once possessed, and where in happiness they had dwelt together. I will not dwell upon the thoughts such associations ever give rise to; I dare not, old as I am, evoke them." He paused for some minutes, and then went on: "Two years ago I learned that Mademoiselle de Meudon was the daughter of my once loved Marie. From that hour I felt no longer childless; I watched over her, without, however, attracting notice on her part, and followed her everywhere; the very day I saw you first at the Polytechnique, I was beside her. From all I could learn and hear, her life had been one of devoted attachment to her brother, and then to Madame Bonaparte; her heart, it was said, was buried with him she once loved; at least none since had ever won even the slightest acknowledgment from her bordering on encouragement.

"Satisfied that she was everything I could have wished my own daughter, and feeling that with youth the springs of af-

fection rarely dry up, I conceived the idea of settling all my property on her, and entreating the Emperor to make me her guardian, with her own consent of course. He agreed; he went further; he repealed, so far as it concerned her, the law by which the daughters of royalists cannot inherit, and made her eligible to succeed to property, and placed her hand at my disposal.

"Such was the state of matters when I wrote to you; since that I have seen her, and spoken to her in confidence; she has consented to every portion of the arrangement, save that which involves her marrying; but some strange superstition being over her mind that her fate is to ruin all with whom it is linked, that her name carries an evil destiny with it, she refuses every offer of marriage, and will not yield to my solicitation.

"I thought," said the General, as he leaned on his hand, and muttered half aloud, "that I had conceived a plan which must bring happiness with it; but, however, one part of my design is accomplished—she is my heir, the daughter of my own loved Marie is the child of my adoption, and for this I have reason to feel grateful. The cheerless feeling of a death-bed, where not one mourns for the dying, haunts me no longer, and I feel not as one deserted and alone. To-morrow I go to wish her adieu; and we are to be at the Tuileries by noon. The Emperor holds a levee, and our final orders will then be given."

The old general rallied at the last few words he spoke, and pressing my hand affectionately, wished me good-night, and withdrew; while I, with a mind confused and stunned, sat thinking over the melancholy story he had related, and sorrowing over the misfortunes of one whose lot in life had been far sadder than my own.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE HALL OF THE MARSHALS.

Some minutes before noon we entered the Place du Carrousel, now thronged with equipages and led horses. Officers, in the rich uniforms of every arm of the service, were pressing their way to the palace, amid the crash of carriages, the buzz of recognitions, and the thundering sounds of the brass band, whose echo was redoubled beneath the vaulted vestibule of the palace.

Borne along with the torrent, we mounted the wide stair and passed from room to room, until we arrived at the great antechamber where the officers of the household were assembled in their splendid dresses. Here the crowd was so dense we were unable to move on for some time, and it was after nearly an hour's waiting that we at last found ourselves within that gorgeous gallery, named by the Emperor "La Salle des Maréchaux." At any other moment my attention had been riveted upon the magnificence and beauty of this great *salon*, its pictures, its gildings, the richness of the hangings, the tasteful elegance of the ceiling, with its tracery of dull gold, the great works of art in bronze and marble that adorned it on every side; but now my mind took another and very different range. Here around me were met the greatest generals and warriors of Europe. The names, second alone to his, who had no equal. There stood Ney, with his broad, retiring forehead, and his eyes black and flashing, like an eagle's. With what energy he spoke! how full of passionate vigor that thick and rapid utterance, that left a tremulous quivering on his lip even when he ceased to speak! What a contrast to the bronzed, unmoved features of the large man he addressed, and who listened to him with such deference of manner; his yellow moustache bespeaks not the Frenchman, he is a German, by blood at least, for it is Kellerman, the colonel of the cuirassiers of the Guard. And yonder was Soult, with his strong features seamed by many a day of hardship, the center of a group of colonels of the staff, to whom he was rapidly communicating their orders. Close beside him stood Lannes, his arm in a sling; a gun-shot wound that defied the art of the surgeons still deprived him of his left hand. And there leaned Savary against the window, his dark eyes riveted on the corps of gendarmerie in the court beneath. Full taller by a head than the largest about him, he seemed almost gigantic in the massive accoutrements of his service. The fierce Davoust; the gay and splendid Murat, with his waving plumes and jeweled dolman; Lefebvre, the very type of his class, moving with difficulty from a wound in his hip—all were there; while passing rapidly from place to place, I remarked a young and handsome man, whose uniform of colonel bore the decoration of the Legion; he appeared to know and be known to all: this was Eugène Beauharnais, the stepson of the Emperor. "Ah, General d'Auvergne," cried he, approaching with a smile, "his Majesty desires to see you after the levee. You leave to-night, I believe?"

"Yes, colonel, all is in readiness," said the General, while I thought a look of

anxiety at the Emperor's summons seemed to agitate his features.

"One of your staff?" said Beauharnais, bowing, as he looked toward me.

"My aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Burke," replied the General, presenting me.

"Ah! I remember," said the Colonel, as he drew himself proudly up, and seemed as though the recollection were anything but favorable to me. But just then the wide-folding doors were thrown open, and a loud voice proclaimed, "Sa Majesté l'Empereur!" In an instant every voice was hushed, the groups broke up, and fell back into two long lines, between which lay a passage; along this the officers of the palace retired slowly, facing the Emperor, who came step by step after them. I could but see the pale face, massive and regular, like the head of an antique cameo; the hair combed straight upon his fine forehead, and his large, full eyes, as they turned hither and thither among that crowd, once his equals, now how immeasurably his inferiors! He stopped every now and then to say a word or two to some one as he passed, but in so low a tone that, even in the dead silence around, nothing was audible save a murmur. It was a relief to my own excited feelings as, with high, beating heart, I gazed on the greatest monarch of the world, that I beheld the others around, the oldest generals, the time-worn companions of his battles, not less moved than myself.

While the Emperor passed slowly along, I could mark that Eugène Beauharnais moved rapidly through the gallery, whispering now to this one, now to that, among the officers of superior grade, who, immediately after, left the *salon* by a door at the end. At length he approached General d'Auvergne, saying,

"The audience of the marshals will not occupy more than half an hour; pray be in readiness to wait on his Majesty when he calls. You can remain in the blue drawing-room next the gallery."

The general bowed, and, taking my arm, moved slowly from the spot in the direction mentioned, and in a few minutes we found ourselves in the small room where the Empress used to receive her morning visitors during the Consulate.

"You remember this *salon*, Burke," said the General, carelessly.

"Yes, sir, but too well; it was here that his Majesty gave me that rebuke—"

"True, true, my dear boy; I forgot that completely. But come, there has been time enough to forget it since. I wonder what can mean this summons to attend here!—I have received my orders—there has been, so far as I understand, no change of plan. Well, well, we shall soon know—see, the levee has begun to break up already—there goes the staff of the artillery—that roll of the drum is for some general of division."

And now the crash of carriages, and the sounds of cavalry escorts, jingling beside them, mingled with the deep beating of the drums, made a mass of noises that filled the air, and continued without interruption for above an hour.

"*Sacristi!*" cried the General, "the crowd seems to pour in as fast as it goes out. This may last for the entire day. I have scarce two hours left me now."

He walked the room impatiently, now muttering some broken words to himself, now stopping to listen to the sounds without. Still the din continued, and the distant roll of equipages, growing louder as they came, told that the tide was yet pressing onward toward the palace. "Three o'clock," cried the General, as the bell of the pavilion sounded. "At four I was to leave; such were my written orders, signed by the minister."

His impatience now became extreme. He knew how difficult it was, in a matter of military discipline, to satisfy Napoleon that any breach, even when caused by his direct orders, was not a fault. Besides, his old habits had taught him to respect a command from the Minister of War as something above all others.

"Beauharnais must have mistaken," said he, angrily. "His Majesty gave me my final directions. I'll wait no longer."

Yet did he hesitate to leave, and seemed actually to rely on me for some hint for his guidance. I did not dare to offer a suggestion, and while thus we both stood uncertain, the door opened, and a huissier called out,

"Lieutenant-General d'Auvergne—this way, sir," said the official, as he threw open a folding-door into a long gallery that looked into the garden. They passed out together, and I was alone.

The agitation of the general, at this unexpected summons, had communicated itself to me, but in a far different way; for I imagined that his Majesty desired only to confer some mark of favor on the gallant old general before parting with him. Yet did I not venture to suggest this to him, for fear I should be mistaken.

While I revolved these doubts in my mind, the door was flung open with a crash, and a page in the uniform of the Court, rushed in.

"May I ask, sir," cried he, breathlessly,

"can you inform me where is the aide-de-camp of the General d'Auvergne—I forget the name, unfortunately?"

"I am the person—Lieutenant Burke?"

"The same; that is the name. Come after me with all haste—this way." And, so saying, he rushed down a flight of stone stairs, clearing six or seven at a spring.

"A hurried business this, lieutenant," said the page, laughingly. "Took them all by surprise, I fancy."

"What is it?—what do you mean?" asked I, eagerly.

"Hush!" said he, placing his finger on his lips; "here they come."

We had just time to stand to one side of the gallery, as the officers of the household came up, two and two, followed by the Chancellor of France, and the Dean of St. Roch, in his full canonicals. They approached the table, on which several papers and documents were lying, and proceeded to sign their names to different writings before them. While I looked on, puzzled and amazed, totally unable to make the most vague conjecture of the nature of the proceedings, I perceived that General d'Auvergne had entered the room, and was standing among the rest at the table.

"Whose signature did you propose here, General?" said the Chancellor, as he took up a paper before him.

"My aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Burke."

"He is here, sir," said the page, stepping forward.

"You are to sign your name here, sir, and again on this side," said the Chancellor, "with your birthplace annexed, age, and rank in the service."

"I am a foreigner," said I; "does that make any difference here?"

"None," said he, smiling; "the witness is but a very subordinate personage here."

I took the pen, and proceeded to write as I was desired; and, while thus engaged, the door opened, and a short, heavy step crossed the room. I did not dare to look up; some secret feeling of terror ran through me, and told me it was the Emperor himself.

"Well, D'Auvergne," said he, in a frank, bold way, quite different from his ordinary voice, "you seem but half content with this plan of mine. *Pardieu!* there's many a brave fellow would not deem the case so hard a one."

"As your wish, sire—"

"As mine, *diantre!* my friend; do not say mine only; you forget that the lady expressed herself equally satisfied. Come! is the *acte* completed?"

"It wants but your Majesty's signature," said the Chancellor.

The Emperor took the pen, and dashed some indescribable scroll across the paper; then turning suddenly toward the general, he conversed with him eagerly for several minutes, but in so low a voice as not to be audible where I stood. I could but catch the words, "Darmstadt—Augsburg—the fourth corps," from which it seemed the movements of the army were the subject; when he added, in a louder voice,

"Every hour now is worth a day, ay, a week, hereafter. Remember that, D'Auvergne."

"Everything is finished, sire," said the Chancellor, handing the folded papers to the Emperor.

"These are for your keeping, general," said he, delivering them into D'Auvergne's hand.

"Pardon, sire," said the Chancellor, hastily, "I have made a great error here. Madame la Comtesse has not appended her signature to the consent."

"Indeed!" said the Emperor, smiling. "We have been too hasty, it would seem; so thinks our reverend father of Saint Roch, I perceive, who is evidently not accustomed to officiate *au coup de tambour*."

"Her Majesty the Empress!" said the huissier, as he opened the doors to permit her to enter. She was dressed in full Court dress, covered with jewels. She held within her arm the hand of another, over whose figure a deep vail was thrown, that entirely concealed her from head to foot.

"Madame la Comtesse will have the kindness to sign this," said the Chancellor, as he handed over a pen to the lady. She threw back her vail as he spoke. As she turned toward the table, I saw the pale, almost deathlike features of Marie de Meudon. Such was the shock, I scarce restrained a cry from bursting forth, and a film fell before my eyes as I looked, and the figures before me floated like masses of vapor before my sight.

The Empress now spoke to the general, but no longer could I take notice of what was said. Voices there were, but they conveyed nothing to my mind. A terrible rush of thoughts, too quick for perception, chased each other through my brain, and I felt as though my temples were bursting open from some pressure within. Suddenly the general moved forward, and knelt to kiss the Empress's hand; he then took that of Mademoiselle de Meudon, and held it to his lips. I heard the word "Adieu!" faintly uttered by her low voice; the vail fell once more over her features; that mo-

ment a stir followed, and in a few minutes more we were descending the stairs alone, the general leaning on my arm, his right hand pressed across his eyes. When we reached the court, several officers of rank pressed forward, and I could hear the buzz of phrases implying congratulations and joy, to which the old general replied briefly, and with evident depression of manner. The dreadful oppression of a sad dream was over me still, and I felt as though to awake were impossible, when, to some remark near him, the general replied:

"True! quite true, monseigneur; I have made her my wife. There only remains one reparation for it, which is to make her my widow."

"His wife!" said I, aloud, re-echoing the word without knowing.

"Even so, *mon ami*," said he, pressing my hand softly. "My name and my fortune are both hers. As for myself—we shall never meet again." He turned away his head as he spoke, nor uttered another word during the remainder of the way.

When we arrived at the Rue de Rohan the horses were harnessed to the carriage, and all in readiness for our departure. The rumor of expected war had brought a crowd of idlers about the door, through which we passed with some difficulty into the house. Hastily throwing an eye over the now dismantled room, the old general approached the window that looked out on the Tuileries. "Adieu!" muttered he to himself; "*je ne vous reverrai jamais!*" And with that he pressed his traveling-cap over his brows, and descended the stairs.

A cheer burst from the mob—the postilion's whip cracked loudly—the horses dashed over the pavement—and, ere the first flurry of mad excitement had subsided from my mind, Paris was some miles behind us, and we were hastening on toward the frontier.

Almost every man has experienced at least one period in his life when the curtain seems to drop, and the drama in which he has hitherto acted to end; when a total change appears to pass over the interests he has lived among, and a new and very different kind of existence to open before him. Such is the case when the death of friends has left us alone and companionless; when they, into whose ears we poured our whole thoughts of sorrow or of joy, are gone, and we look around upon the bleak world, without a tie to existence, without one hope to cheer us. How naturally then do we turn from every path and place once lingered over; how do we fly the thoughts wherein once consisted our greatest happiness, and seek, from other sources, impressions less painful, because unconnected with the past. Still the bereavement of death is never devoid of a sense of holy calm, a sort of solemn peace connected with the memory of the lost one. In the sleep that knows no waking, we see the end of earthly troubles—in the silence of the grave come no sounds of this world's contention—the winds that stir the rank grass of the churchyard breathe, at least, repose. Not so when fate has severed us from those we loved best during lifetime; when the fortunes we hoped to link with our own are torn asunder from us; when the hour comes when we must turn from the path we had followed with pleasure and happiness, and seek another road in life, bearing with us not only all the memory of the past, but all the speculation on the future. There is no sorrow, no affliction, like this.

It was thus I viewed my joyless fortune—with such depressing reflections I thought over the past. What mattered it now how my career might turn; there lived not one to care whether rank or honor, disgrace or death, were to be my portion. The glorious path I often longed to tread opened for me now, without exciting one spark of enthusiasm; so is it even in our most selfish desires, we live less for ourselves than others.

If my road in life seemed to present few features to hang hopes on, he who sat beside me appeared still more depressed. Seldom speaking, and then but in monosyllables, he remained sunk in reverie. And thus passed the days of our journey, when, on the third evening, we came in sight of Coblentz. Then indeed there burst upon my astonished gaze one of those scenes which, once seen, are never forgotten. From the gentle declivity which we were now descending, the view extended several miles in every direction. Beneath us lay the city of Coblentz, its spires and domes shining like gilded bronze as the rays of the setting sun fell upon them; the Moselle swept along one side of the town till it mingled its eddies with the broad Rhine, now one sheet of liquid gold; the long pontoon bridge, against whose dark cutwaters the bright stream broke in sparkling circles, trembled beneath the dull roll of artillery and baggage-wagons, which might be seen issuing from the town, and serpentining their course along the river's edge for miles, till they were lost in the narrow glen by which the Lahn flows into the Rhine; beyond rose the great precipice of rock, with its crowning fortress of Ehren-

breitstein, along whose battlemented walls, almost lost in the heavy clouds of evening, might be seen dark specks moving from place to place—the soldiers of the garrison looking down from their eyrie on the war-tide that flowed beneath. Lower down the river many boats were crossing, in which, as the sunlight shone, one could mark the glancing of arms and the glitter of uniforms; while farther again, and in deep shadow, rose the solitary towers of the ruined castle of Lahneck, its shattered walls and grass-grown battlements standing clearly out against the evening sky.

Far as we were off, every breeze that stirred bore toward us the softened swell of military music, which, even when too faint to trace, made the air tremulous with its martial sounds. Along the ramparts of the city were crowds of townspeople, gazing with anxious wonderment at the spectacle; for none knew, save the generals in command of divisions, the destination of that mighty force, the greatest Europe had ever seen up to that period. Such indeed were the measures taken to insure secrecy; that none were permitted to cross the frontier without a special authority from the Minister for Foreign Affairs; the letters in the various post-offices were detained, and even travelers were denied post-horses on the great roads to the eastward, lest intelligence might be conveyed to Germany of the movement in progress. Meanwhile at Manheim, at Spire, at Strasburg, and at Coblentz, the long columns streamed forth whose eagles were soon destined to meet in the great plains of Southern Germany. Such was the gorgeous spectacle that each moment grew more palpable to our astonished senses—more brilliant far than anything painting could realize—more spirit-stirring than the grandest words that poet ever sang.

"The cuirassiers and the dragoons of the Guard are yonder," said the General, as he directed his glass to a large square of the town, where a vast mass of dismounted cavalry were standing; "you see how punctual they are; we are but two hours behind our time, and they are awaiting our arrival."

"And do we move forward to-night, general?" asked I, in some surprise.

"Yes, and every night. The marches are to be made fourteen hours each day. There go the Lancers of Berg—you see their scarlet dolmans, don't you? and yonder, in the three large boats, beyond the point, there are the sappers of the Guard. What are the shouts I hear?—whence comes that cheering?"

"Oh, I see—it's a vivandière; her horse has backed into the river. See—see!—she is going to swim him over! Look how the current takes him down. Bravely done, faith! She heads him to the stream—it won't do, though; she must be carried down." Just at this critical moment, a boat shoots out from under the cliff—a few strokes of the oars, and they are alongside. There's a splash and a shout, and the skiff moves on. "And now I see they have given her a rope, and are towing her and her horse across."

"See how the old spirit comes back with the first blast of the trumpet," said the old General, as his eyes flashed with enthusiasm. "That damsel there—I'll warrant ye—she'd have thought twice about stepping over a rivulet in the streets of Paris yesterday, and look at her now. Well done!—gallantly done! See how she spurs him up the bank! *Ma foi*, mademoiselle, you'll have no lack of lovers for that achievement."

A few minutes more and we entered the town, whose streets were thronged with soldiers hurrying on to their different corps, and eager townsfolk asking a hundred questions, to which, of course, few waited to reply.

"This way, general," said an officer in undress, who recognized General d'Auvergne. "The cavalry of the third division is stationed in the square."

Driving through a narrow street, through which the calèche had barely room to pass, we now found ourselves in the Place, a handsome space surrounded with a double row of trees, under which the dragoons were lying, holding the bridles of their horses.

The general had scarcely put foot to ground when the trumpets sounded the call. The superior officers came running forward to greet him. Taking the arm of a short man in the uniform of the cuirassiers, the general entered a *café* near, while I became the center of some dozen officers, all eagerly asking the news from Paris, and whether the Emperor had yet left the capital. It was not without considerable astonishment I then perceived how totally ignorant they all were of the destination of the army—many alleging it was designed for Russia, and others equally positive that the Prussians were the object of attack; the arguments in support of each opinion being wonderfully ingenious, and only deficient in one respect, having not a particle of fact for their foundation. In the midst of these conjecturings came a new subject for discussion, for one of the group

who had just received a letter from his brother, a page at the Tuileries, was reading the contents aloud for the benefit of the rest:

"Jules says that they are all astray as to the Emperor's movements; Duroc has left Paris suddenly, but no one knows for where; the only thing certain is, a hot campaign is to open somewhere. One hundred and eighty thousand men—"

"Bah!" said an old, white-moustached major, with a look of evident unbelief; "we never had forty with the army of the Sambre."

"And what then?" said another fiercely; "do you compare your army of the Sambre, your *sans culottes* republicans, with the Imperial troops?"

The old major's face became deeply crimsoned, and with a muttered "*A demain*," he walked away.

"Go after him, Amédée," said another; "you had no right to say that."

"Not I, faith," said the other, carelessly; "there is a grudge between us these three weeks past, and we may as well have it out. Go on with the letter, Henri."

"Oh, it is filled with Court gossip," said the reader, negligently. "Ha! what's this, though—the postscript:"

"'I have just time to tell you the strangest bit of news we have chanced upon for some time past. The Emperor has this moment married old General d'Auvergne to the very handsomest girl in the Empress's suite, Mademoiselle de Meudon. There is a rumor afloat about the old man having made her his heir, and desiring to confer her hand on some young fellow of his own choosing; but this passion to make Court matches, which has seized his Majesty lately, stops at nothing; and it is whispered that old Madame d'Orvalle is actually terrified at every levee, lest she should be disposed of to one of the new marshals. I must say that the general looks considerably put out by the arrangement; not unnaturally, perhaps, as he is likely to pass the honeymoon in the field; while his aide-de-camp, a certain Monsieur Burke, whose name you may remember figuring in the affair of Pichegu and George—'"

"Perhaps it were as well, sir," said I, quietly, "that I should tell you the person alluded to is myself. I have no desire to learn how your correspondent speaks of me; nor, I take it for granted, do these gentlemen desire to canvass me in my own hearing; with your leave, then, I shall withdraw."

"A word, monsieur, one word, first," said the officer, whose insolent talent had already offended the veteran major; "we are most of us here staff officers, and I need not say accustomed to live pretty much together. Will you favor us, then, with a little explanation as to the manner in which you escaped a trial in that business: your name, if I mistake not, did not figure before the tribunal after the first day?"

"Well, sir; and then?"

"And then? why there is one only explanation in such a circumstance."

"And that is? if I may be so bold—"

"That the '*mouchard*' fares better than his victim."

"I believe, sir," said I, "I comprehend your meaning; I hope there will be no fear of your mistaking mine." With that I drew off the long gauntlet glove I wore, and struck him across the face.

Every man sprang backward as I did so, as though a shell had fallen in the midst of us; while a deep voice called out from behind:

"Le Capitaine Amédée Pichot is under arrest."

I turned, and beheld the provost marshal with his guard approach, and take my adversary's sword from him.

"What charge is this, marshal?" said he, as a livid color spread over his cheek.

"Your duel of yesterday, capitaine; you seem to forget all about it already."

"Whenever and wherever you please, sir," said I, passing close beside him, and speaking in a whisper.

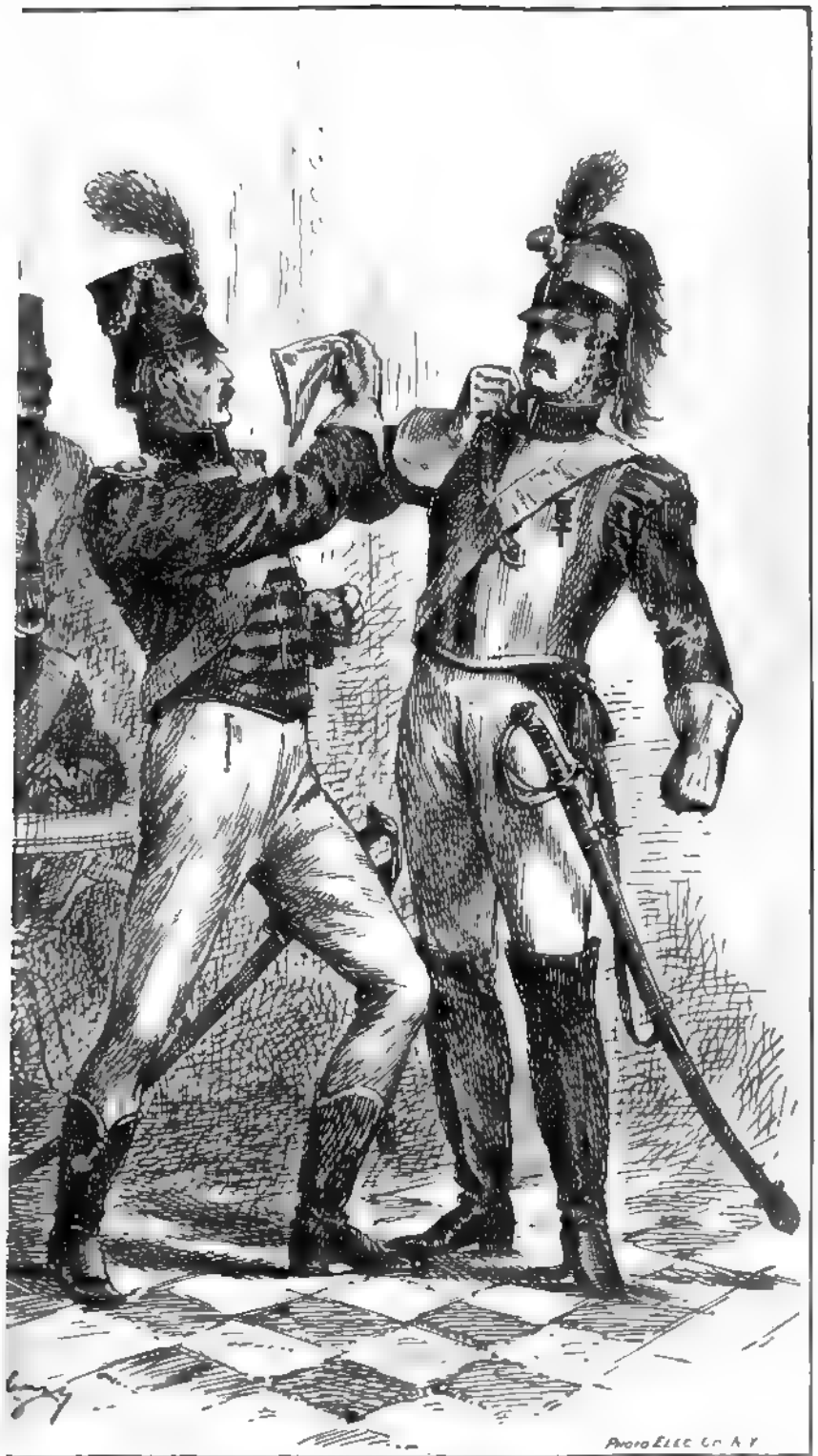
He nodded without uttering a word in reply, and moved after the guard, while the others dispersed silently, and left me standing alone in the Place.

What would I not have given at that moment for but one friend to counsel and advise me: and yet, save the general, to whom I dared not speak on such a subject, I had not one in the whole world. It was, indeed, but too true, that life had little value for me; yet never did I contemplate a duel with more abhorrence. The insult I had inflicted, however, could have no other result. While I reasoned thus, the door of the *café* opened, and the general appeared.

"Burke," cried he, "come in here, and make a hasty supper; you must be in the saddle in half an hour."

"Quite ready, sir."

"I know it, my lad. Your orders are there: ride forward to Ettingen, and prepare the billets for the fourth demi-brigade, which will reach that village by to-morrow evening; you'll have time for something to eat, and a glass of wine, before the orderly arrives. This piece of duty is put on you,



I, SIR," SAID I, "I COMPREHEND YOUR MEANING, I HOPE THERE WILL BE NO FEAR OF MISTAKING MINE." WITH THAT I DLEW OFF THE LONG GAUNTLET GLOVE I WORE, BUCK HIM ACROSS THE FACE. (P. 420.)

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because a certain Captain Pichot, the only one of the commissaries' department who can speak German, has just been put under arrest for a duel he fought yesterday. I wish the court-martial would shoot the fellow, with all my heart and soul, he's a perfect curse to the whole division. In any case, if he escape this time, I'll keep my eye on him, and he'll scarce get clear through my hands, I warrant him."

It may be supposed that I heard these words with no common emotion, bearing as they did so closely on my own circumstances at the moment, but I hung down my head and affected to eat, while the old general walked hastily up and down the *salon*, muttering, half aloud, heavy denunciations on the practice of dueling, which, at any cost of life, he resolved to put down in his command.

"Done already! why, man, you've eaten nothing. Well, then, I see the orderly without: you've got a capital moonlight for your ride; and so, *au revoir*."

"Good-by, sir," said I, as I sprang into the saddle; "and now for Ettingen."

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE MARCH ON THE DANUBE.

THERE is a strange, unnatural kind of pleasure felt sometimes in the continued attacks of evil fortune: the dogged courage with which we bear up against the ills of fate, swimming more strongly as the waves grow rougher, has its own meed of consolation. It is only at such a time, perhaps, that the really independent spirit of our natures is in the ascendant, and that we can stand amid the storm, conscious of our firmness, and bid the winds "blow and crack their cheeks." Yet through how many sorrows must one have waded ere he reach this point—through what trials must he have passed—how must hope have paled, and flickered, and died out—how must all self-love, all ambition, all desire itself have withered within us—till we become like the mere rock amid the breakers, against which the waves beat in vain! When that hour comes, the heart has grown cold and callous—the affections have dried up—and man looks no more upon his fellow-men as brothers. Toward this sad condition I found myself rapidly verging—the isolation of my homeless, friendless state—the death of my hopes—the uncheered path in which I walked—all conspired to make me feel depressed—and I perceived that a half-recklessness was already stealing over me—and that, in my indifference as to fortune, now lay my greatest consolation. There was a time when such a rencontre as lately befell me had made me miserable till the hour came when I should meet my adversary; now, my blood boiled with no indignant passion—no current of angry vengeance stirred through my veins—a stupid sullenness was over me, and I cared nothing what might happen. And if this state became not permanent, I owe it to youth alone—the mainspring of many of our best endeavors.

We had traveled some seven or eight miles, when we stopped for a few seconds at the door of a cabaret, and then I discovered for the first time that my old friend Pioche was the corporal of our little party. To my slight reproach for his not having sooner made himself known to me, the honest fellow replied that he saw I was low in spirits about something, and did not wish to obtrude upon me. "Not but, after all, mon lieutenant, the best way is always to 'face front' against bad luck, and charge through—*sapermint*, that's the way we did at Marengo, when Desaix's corps was cut off from the left—But pardon, *mon officier*, I forgot you were not there." There was something so pleasant in the gruff courtesy of the hardy cuirassier, that I willingly led him on to speak of his former life—a subject which, once entered on, he followed as fancy or memory suggested.

"I used to feel low-spirited myself, once," said Pioche, as he smoothed down his great moustache with a complacent motion of his fingers—"I used to be very low in heart when I entered the service first, and saw all my old schoolfellows and companions winning their epaulettes, and becoming captains and colonels—ay, *parbleu*, and maréchals, too—while, because I could not read, I was to remain all my life in the ranks—as if one could not force a palisade, nor break through a square, till he had stuffed his head with learning. All this made me very sad, and I would sit brooding over it for hours long; but at last I began to think my own lot was not the worst after all—my duty was easily done, and, when over, I could sleep sound till the *réveil* blew. I ran no danger of being scolded by the Petit Caporal, because my division was not somewhere yesterday, nor in some other place to-day. He never came with a frown to ask me why I had not captured another howitzer, and taken more prisoners. No, faith! It was always, 'Well done, Pioche—bravely done, *mon enfant!*—here's a piece of twenty francs to drink my health.' Or, perhaps, he'd mutter between his teeth,—

'That honest fellow there would make a better general than one-half of them,'—not that he was in earnest, you know—but still it was pleasant just to hear it."

"And yet, Pioche," said I, "it does surprise me why, seeing that this want of learning was the bar to your promotion, you did not—"

"And so I did, mon lieutenant; at least I tried to learn to read. *Morbleu!* it was a weary time for me. I'd rather be under arrest three days a week, than be at it again. Mademoiselle Minette—she was the *vivandière* of ours—undertook to teach me; and I used to go over to the canteen every evening after drill. Many a sad heart had I over these same lessons. *Saprelotte*, I could learn the look of every man in a brigade before I could know the letters in the alphabet, they looked so confoundedly alike when they stood up all in a line. The only fellows I could distinguish were the big ones, that were probably the sergeants and *sous-officiers;* and when my eye was fixed on one column, it would stray away to another, and then mademoiselle would laugh—and that would lead to something else. *Et ma foi*, the spelling-book was soon thrown aside, and lessons given up for that evening."

"I suppose Mademoiselle Minette was pretty, Pioche?"

"Was! ay, and is, too. What! mon lieutenant, did you never see her on parade? She's the handsomest girl in the army, and rides so well—*mille canons!* She might have been a great lady before this, if she'd have left the regiment—but no, she'd die first! Her father was tambour-major with us, and killed at Groningen, when she was only an infant—and we used to carry her about in our arms on the march, and hand her from one to another. I have seen her pass from the leading files to the baggage-guard, on a long summer's day—that I have. Le Petit Caporal knows her well—she gave him a gourd full of *eau-de-vie* at Cairo, when he was so faint he could scarcely speak. It was after that he saw her in the breach at Acre—one of our fellows was lying wounded in the ruins, and mademoiselle waited till the storming party fell back, and then ran up to him with her flask in her hand. 'Whose pretty ankles are these? I think I ought to know them,' said an officer, as she passed along. 'No flattery will do with me, monsieur,' cried Minette; 'it's hard enough to get one's living here, without giving Nantz brandy for nothing.' *Sacristi!* when the laugh made her turn about, she saw it was the Petit Caporal himself who spoke to her. Poor Minette! she blushed scarlet, and nearly dropped with shame, but that did not prevent her dashing up the breach toward the wounded man; not that it was of any use, though—he was dead when she got up."

"I should like much to see Mademoiselle. Is she still with the Fourth?"

"Yes, mon lieutenant; I parted with her a few hours ago." A half suppressed sigh that followed these words showed that the worthy corporal was touched on the most tender key of his nature, and for some time he lapsed into a silence I could not venture to break. At length, desiring to give the conversation a turn, I asked if he knew the Capitaine Pichot.

"Know him!" cried Pioche, almost bounding in his saddle as he spoke. "That I do. *Peste!* I have good reason to know him. See there." With that he lifted the curled moustache from his upper lip, and disclosed to my view a blue scar that marked one side of his mouth. "That was his doing."

"Indeed! How so, pray?"

"I'll tell you; we were in garrison at Metz, where, as you know, the great commissariat station is held—thousands of cannon and mortars, shells and shot, and tons of powder without end. Well, the orders were very strict against smoking—any man found with a pipe in his mouth was sentenced to a week in the 'salle de police,' and I can't say what else besides. When we marched into the town this order stared us everywhere in the face—a great placard, with big letters, which they who could read said was against smoking. Now, most of us came from Alsace, and it was pretty much like setting a fish to live on dry land, bidding us go without tobacco. As for me, I smoke just as I breathe, without knowing or thinking of it. My pipe lies in my mouth as naturally as my foot rests in the stirrup; and so, although I intended to obey the order, I knew well the time might come when, just from not thinking, I should be caught smoking away—for if I were on guard over a magazine it would be all the same—I could not help it. So I resolved, as the only way not to be caught tripping, to leave all my pipes in a secret place, till the time came for us to leave Metz—an hour, I need not say, we all anxiously longed for. This I did," continued Pioche, "that same evening, and all went on favorably for some time, when one night, as I was returning to quarters, the devil, who meddles with everything in this world, made me stick my hands into the pocket of my undress jacket, and I there discovered a little bit of a pipe about the length of one joint of your thumb—a poor

crubby thing of clay, sure enough—but there it was, and, worse still, ready filled with tobacco. Had it been a good-sized meerschaum, with a tassel and an amber mouthpiece, I had resisted like a man; but the temptation came in so humble a shape, I thought I was only guilty of a small sin in transgressing, and so I lit my little friend, and went gayly along toward the barracks. Just as I passed the corner of the market-place I heard a great noise of voices and laughing in a café, and recognized the tones of our major and some of the officers, as they sat sipping their wine in the verandah. Before I could raise my hand to my mouth, Capitaine Pichot cried out—'Halte là!—right about face—attention!—left wheel—eyes front!' This I did, as if on parade, and stood stock still—when suddenly crack went a noise, and a pistol bullet smashed the pipe in two, and grazed my lip, when a roar of laughing followed, as he called out louder than before—'Quick march!'—and I stepped out to my quarters, never turning my head right or left, not knowing what other ball practice might be in store for me. *Tonnerre de Dieu!* a little windage of the shot might have cost me every tooth I have in the world."

"It was a cruel jest, Pioche, and you're a good-humored fellow to take it so easily."

"Not so, lieutenant. I had no punishment afterward, and was well content to be quit for the fright."

With such stray memories of his campaigning days did Pioche beguile the way—now moralizing over the chances and changes of a soldier's fortune—now comforting himself with some pleasant reflection that, even in his own humble walk, he had assisted at some of the greatest triumphs of the French armies. Of the future he spoke with the easy confidence of one who felt that in the Emperor's guidance there could be full trust—both of the cause being a just one, and the result victorious. A perfect type of his class, his bravery was only to be equaled by the implicit confidence he felt in his leader. That the troops of any country, no matter how numerous and well equipped, could resist a French army, was a problem he could not even entertain. The thing was too absurd; and if Napoleon did not at that moment wield undisputed sway over the whole of Europe, it was simply owing to his excess of moderation, and the willing sacrifice of his ambition to his greater love of liberty.

I confess, if I were sometimes tempted to smile at the simplicity of the honest soldier, I was more often carried away by his warm enthusiasm; so frequently, too, did he interweave in his narrative the mention of those great victories, whose fame was unquestionable, that, in my assent to the facts, I went a great way in my concurrence with the inferences he deduced from them. And thus we traveled on for several days, in advance of the division, regulating the halting-places and the billets, according to the nature and facilities of the country. The towns and villages in our "route" presented an aspect of the most profound peace; and however strange it seemed, yet each day attested how completely ignorant the people were of the advance of that mighty army that now, in four vast columns of march, was pouring its thousands into the heart of Germany. The Princes of Baden and Darmstadt, through whose territories we passed, had not as yet given in their adherence to the Emperor; and the inhabitants of those countries seemed perplexed and confused at the intentions of their powerful neighbor, whose immense trains of ammunition, and enormous parks of artillery, filled every road, and blocked up every village.

At length we reached Manheim, where a portion of the corps of Maréchal Davoust were in waiting to join us; and there we first learned, by the imperial bulletin, the object of the war, and the destination of the troops. The document was written by Napoleon himself, and bore abundant evidence of his style. After the usual programme, attesting his sincere love for peace, and his desire for the cultivation of those happy and industrious habits which make nations more prosperous than glorious, it went on to speak of the great coalition between Russia and Austria, which, in union with the "*perfide* Albion," had no other thought nor wish than the abasement and dismemberment of France. "But, soldiers!" continued he, "your Emperor is in the midst of you. France itself, in all its majesty, is at your back, and you are but the advanced guard of a mighty people! There are fatigues and privations, battles and forced marches, before you; but let them oppose to us every resistance they are able—we swear never to cry Halt! till we have planted our eagles on the territory of our enemies!"

We halted two days at Manheim to permit some regiments to come up, and then marched forward to Nordlingen, which place the Emperor himself had only quitted the night before. Here the report reached us that a smart affair had taken place the previous morning, between an Austrian division and a portion of Ney's advanced guard, in which we had rather the worst of

it, and had lost some prisoners. The news excited considerable discontent among the troops, and increased their impatience to move forward to a very great degree. Meanwhile, the different divisions of the French army were converging toward Ulm, from the north, south, and west; and every hour brought them nearer to that devoted spot, which as yet, in the security of an enormous garrison, never dreamed of sudden attack.

The corps of Soult was now pushed forward to Augsburg, and extended by a line of communication to Meiningen, the only channel of communication which remained opened to the enemy. The quartier-général of the Emperor was established at Zummerhausen. Ney was at Guntzburg, Marmont threatened in the west, and Bernadotte, arriving by forced marches from Prussia, hovered in the north, so that Ulm was invested in every direction at one blow, and that in a space of time almost inconceivable.

While these immense combinations were being effected, requiring as they did an enormous extent of circumference to march over, before the fortress could be thus inclosed, as it were, within our grasp, our astonishment increased daily that the Austrians delayed to give battle; but, as if terrorstricken, they waited on, day after day, while the measures for their ruin were accomplishing. At length a desperate sortie was made from the garrison, and a large body of troops escaping by the left bank of the Danube, directed their course toward Bohemia; while another corps, in the opposite direction, forced back Ney's advanced guard, and took the road toward Nordlingen. Having directed a strong detachment in pursuit of this latter corps, which was commanded by the Archduke Frederick himself, the Emperor closed in around Ulm, and, forcing the passage of the river at Elchingen, prepared for the final attack.

While these dispositions were being effected, the cavalry brigade, under General D'Auvergne, consisting of three regiments of heavy dragoons, the 4th Cuirassiers, and 8th Hussars, continued to descend the left bank of the Danube, in pursuit of a part of the Austrian garrison which had taken that line in retreat toward Vienna. We followed as far as Guntzburg without coming up with them, and there the news of the capitulation of Meiningen, with its garrison of six thousand men, to Maréchal Soult, reached us, along with an order to return to Ulm.

Up to this time all I had seen of war was forced marches, bivouacs hastily broken up, hurried movements in advance and retreat, the fatigue of night parties, and a continual alert. At first the hourly expectation of coming in sight of the enemy kept up our spirits; but when day after day passed, and the same pursuit followed, where the pursued never appeared, the younger soldiers grumbled loudly at fatigues undertaken without object, and, as it seemed to them, by mistake.

On the night of the 17th of October we bivouacked within a league of Ulm. Scarcely were the pickets formed for the night, when orders came for the whole brigade to assemble under arms at daybreak. A thousand rumors were abroad as to the meaning of the order, but none came near the true solution; indeed, the difficulty was increased by the added command, that the regiments should appear "*en grande tenue*," or in full dress. I saw that my old commander made a point of keeping me in suspense as to the morrow, and affected, as much as possible, an air of indifference on the subject. He had himself arrived late from Ulm, where he had seen the Emperor, and amused me by mentioning the surprise of an Austrian aide-de-camp, who, sent to deliver a letter, found his Majesty sitting with his boots off, and stretched before a bivouac fire.

"Yes," said Napoleon, divining at once his astonishment, "it is even so. Your master wished to remind me of my old trade, and I hope that the imperial purple has not made me forget its lessons."

By daybreak the next morning our brigade was in the saddle, and in motion toward the quartier-général—a gently rising ground, surmounted by a farm-house, where the Emperor had fixed his quarters. As we mounted the hill we came in sight of the whole army drawn up in battle array. They stood in columns of divisions, with artillery and cavalry between them, the bands of the various regiments in front.

The day was a brilliant one, and heightened the effect of the scene. Beyond us lay Ulm—silent as if untenanted. Not a sentinel appeared on the walls; the very flag had disappeared from the battlements. Our surprise was great at this; but how was it increased as the rumor fled from mouth to mouth—"Ulm has capitulated: thirty-five thousand men have become prisoners of war!" Ere the first moments of wonder had ceased, the staff of the Emperor was seen passing along the line, and

finally taking up its station on the hill, while the regimental bands burst forth into one crash the most spirit-stirring and exciting. The proud notes swelled and filled the air as the sun, bursting forth with increased brilliancy, tipped every helmet and banner, and displayed the mighty hosts in all the splendor of their pageantry. Beneath the hill stretched a vast plain in the direction of Neuburg, and here we at first supposed it was the Emperor's intention to review the troops; but a very different scene was destined to pass on that spot.

Suddenly a single gun boomed out, and as the lazy smoke moved heavily along the earth, the gates of Ulm opened, and the head of an Austrian column appeared. Not with beat of drum, or colors flying, did they advance—but slow in step, with arms reversed, and their heads downcast, they marched on toward the mound; defiling beneath this, they moved into the plain, and, corps by corps, piled their arms, and resumed their "route," the white line serpentining along the vast plain, and stretching away into the dim distance. Never was a sight so sad as this! All that war can present of suffering and bloodshed, all that the battle-field can show of dead and dying, were nothing to the miserable abasement of those thousands, who from daybreak till noon poured on their unceasing tide.

On the hill beside the Emperor stood several officers in white uniform, whose sad faces and suffering looks attested the misery of their hearts. "Better a thousand deaths than such humiliation!" was the muttered cry of every man about me; while in very sorrow at such a scene, the tears coursed down the hardy cheeks of many a bronzed soldier, and some turned away their heads, unable to behold the spectacle.

Seventy pieces of cannon, with a long train of ammunition wagons, and four thousand cavalry horses, brought up the rear of this melancholy procession—the spoils of the capitulation of Ulm. Truly, if that day were, as the imperial bulletin announced it, "one of the most glorious for France," it was also the darkest in the history of Austria—when thirty-two regiments of infantry and fifteen of cavalry, with artillery and siege defenses of every kind, laid down their arms and surrendered themselves prisoners. Thus in fifteen days from the passing of the Rhine was the campaign begun and ended, and the Austrian Empire prostrate at the feet of Napoleon.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE CANTEEN.

THE Emperor returned that night to Elchingen accompanied by a numerous staff, among whom was the General d'Auvergne. I remember well the toilsome ascent of the steep town, which, built on a cliff above the Danube, was now little better than a heap of ruins, from the assault of Ney's division two days before. Scrambling our way over fallen houses and massive fragments of masonry, we reached the square that forms the highest point of the city; from thence we looked down upon the great plain, with the majestic Danube winding along for miles; in the valley lay Ulm—now sad and silent; no watch-fires blazed along its deserted ramparts, and through its open gates there streamed the idle tide of soldiers and camp followers, curious to see the place which once they had deemed almost impregnable. The quartier-général was established here, and the different staffs disposed of themselves, as well as they were able, throughout the houses near. Most of these, indeed, had been deserted by their inhabitants, whose dread of the French was a feeling ministered to by every artifice in the power of the Austrian government. As for me, I was but a young campaigner, and might from sheer ignorance have passed my night in the open air, when by good fortune I caught sight of my old companion, Pioche, hurrying along a narrow street, carrying a basket well stored with bottles on his arm.

"Ah, mon lieutenant, you here, and not supped yet, I'd wager a crown?"

"You'd win it, too, Pioche; nor do I see very great chance of my doing so."

"Come along with me, sir; Mademoiselle Minette has just opened her canteen in the flower-market—such it was once, they tell me—but there is little odor left there now, save such as contract powder gives. But no matter, you'll have a roast capon and sausages, and some of the Austrian wine; I have just secured half a dozen bottles here."

I need scarcely say that this was an invitation there was no declining, and I joined the corporal at once, and hurried on to mademoiselle's quarters. We had not proceeded far, when the noise of voices speaking and singing in a loud tone announced that we were approaching the canteen.

"You hear them, mon lieutenant," said Pioche, with a look of delight, "you hear the rogues. *Par St. Jacques*, they know

where to make themselves merry. Good wine for drinking, lodging for nothing, fire for the trouble of lighting it, are brave inducements to enjoy life."

"But it's a canteen; surely mademoiselle is paid?"

"Not the first night of a campaign, I suppose," said he, with a voice of rebuke. "*Parbleu!* that would be a pretty affair! No, no; each man brings what he can find, drinks what he is able, and leaves the rest—which, after all, is a very fair stock in trade to begin with; and so now, mon lieutenant, to commence operations regularly, just sling this ham on your sabre over your shoulder, and take this turkey carelessly in your hand—that's it—here we are—follow me."

Passing through an arched gateway, we entered a little court-yard, where several horses were picketed, the ground about them being strewn with straw knee-deep; cavalry saddles, holsters, and sheep-skins lay confusedly on every side, along with sabres and carbines; a great lamp, detached from its position over the street entrance, was suspended from a lance out of a window, and threw its light over the scene. Stepping cautiously through this chaotic heap, we reached a glass door, from within which the riotous sounds were most audibly issuing. Pioche pushed it open, and we entered a large room, full fifty feet in length, at one end of which, under a species of canopy, formed by two old regimental colors, sat Mademoiselle Minette—for so I guessed to be a very pretty brunette, with a most decidedly Parisian look about her air and toilet; a table, covered with a snow-white napkin, was in front of her, on which lay a large bouquet and an open book, in which she appeared to be writing as we came in. The room on either side was filled by small tables, around which sat parties drinking, card-playing, singing, or quarreling, as it might be, with a degree of energy and vociferation only campaigning can give an idea of.

The first thing which surprised me was, that all ranks in the service seemed confusedly mixed up together, there being no distinction of class whatever; captains and corporals, sergeants, lieutenants, colonels, and tambour-majors, were inextricably commingled, hob-nobbing, hand-shaking, and even kissing in turn; that most fraternal and familiar "Tu" of dearest friendship being heard on every side.

Resisting a hundred invitations to join some party or other as he passed up the room, Pioche led me forward toward Mademoiselle Minette, to present me in due form ere I took my place.

The honest corporal, who would have charged a square without blinking, seemed actually to tremble as he came near the pretty *vivandière*, and when, with a roguish twinkle of her dark eye, and a half smile on her saucy lip, she said, "*Ah! c'est toi, gros Pioche?*" the poor fellow could only mutter a "*Oui, mademoiselle,*" in a voice scarce loud enough to be heard.

"And, monsieur," said she, "whom I have the honor to see?"

"Is my lieutenant, mademoiselle; or he is aide-de-camp of my general, which comes to the same thing."

With a few words of gracious civility, well and neatly expressed, mademoiselle welcomed me to the canteen, which, she said, had often been graced by the presence of General d'Auvergne himself.

"Yes, by St. Denis!" cried Pioche, with energy, "Prince Murat, and Maréchal Davoust, too, have been here." Dropping his voice to a whisper, he added something that called a faint blush to mademoiselle's cheek as she replied,

"You think so, do you?" Then, turning to me, asked if I were not disposed to sup.

"Yes, that he is," interrupted Pioche, "and here is the *matériel;*" with which he displayed his pannier of bottles, and pointed to the spoils which, following his directions, I carried in my hands. The corporal having dispatched the fowls to the kitchen, proceeded to arrange a little table at a short distance from where mademoiselle sat—an arrangement, I could perceive, which called forth some rather angry looks from those around the room, and I could overhear more than one muttered *Sacre!* as to the ambitious pretension of the "gros Pioche."

He himself paid little, if any, attention to these signs of discontent, but seemed wholly occupied in perfecting the table arrangements, which he did with the skill and dispatch of a tavern waiter.

"Here, mon lieutenant, this is your place," said he, with a bow, as he placed a chair for me at the head of the board; and then, with a polite obeisance to the lady, he added, "*Avec permission, mademoiselle,*" and took his own seat at the side.

A very appetizing dish made its appearance at this moment, and notwithstanding my curiosity to watch the proceedings of the party, and my admiration for mademoiselle herself, hunger carried the day, and I was soon too deeply engaged in the discussion of my supper to pay much atten-

tion to aught else. It was just then, that, forgetting where I was, and unmindful that I was not enjoying the regular fare of an inn, I called out, as if to the waiter, for "bread." A roar of laughter ran through the room at my mistake, when a dark-whiskered little fellow, in an undress frock, stuck his small sword into a loaf, and handed it to me from the table where he sat.

There was something in the act which rather puzzled me, and might have continued longer to do so, had not Pioche whispered me in a low voice—"Take it, take it."

I reached out my hand for the purpose, when, just as I had caught the loaf, with a slight motion of his wrist he disengaged the point of the weapon, and gave me a scratch on the back of my hand. The gesture I made called forth a renewed peal of laughing, and I now perceived, from the little man's triumphant look at his companions, that the whole thing was intended as an insult. Resolving, however, to go quietly in the matter, I held out my hand when it was still bleeding, and said—"You perceive, sir."

"Ah, an accident, *morbleu*," said he, with a careless shrug of his shoulders, and a half leer of impertinent indifference.

"So is this, also," replied I, as, springing up, I seized the sword he was returning to its scabbard, and smashed the blade across my knee.

"Well done, well done!" cried twenty voices in a breath, while the whole room rose in a confused manner to take one side or other in the contest, several crowding around the little man, whose voice had suddenly lost its tone of easy impertinence, and was now heard swearing away, with the most guttural intonation.

"What kind of a swordsman are you?" whispered Pioche in my ear.

"Sufficiently expert to care little for an enemy of his caliber."

"Ah, you don't know that," replied he, "it's François, the *maître d'armes* of the Fourth."

"You must not fight him, monsieur," said Mademoiselle, as she laid her hand on mine, and looked up into my face with a most expressive glance.

"They are waiting for you without, mon lieutenant," said an old sergeant-major, touching his cap as he spoke.

"Come along," said Pioche, with a deeply muttered oath; "and, by the blood of St. Louis, it shall be the last time Maître François shows his skill in fence, if I cost them the fire of a platoon to-morrow."

I was hurried along by the crowd to the court, a hundred different advisers whispering their various counsels in my ears as I went.

"Take care of his lunge in tierce—mind that," cried one.

"Push him outside the arm—outside, remember—take my advice, young man," said an old *sous-officier*; "close on him at once, take his point where he gives it, and make sure of your own weapon."

"No bad plan either," cried two or three. "Monsieur Auguste is right; François can't bear the cold steel—and if he sees it close, he loses his head altogether."

The court-yard was already cleared for action—the horses picketed in one corner, the straw removed, and a blaze of light from all the lamps and candles of the supper-room showed the ground as clearly as at noonday. While my antagonist was taking off his coat and vest, an operation I did not choose to imitate, I took a rapid survey of the scene, and, notwithstanding the rush of advisers around me, was sufficiently collected to decide on my mode of acting.

"Come, mon lieutenant, off with your frock," said an officer at my side; "even if you don't care for the advantage of a free sword-arm, those fellows yonder won't believe it all fair, if you do not strip."

"Yes, yes, take it off," said a fellow in the crowd, "your fine epaulettes may as well escape tarnishing; and that new coat, too, will be all the better without a hole in it."

I hastily threw off my coat and waistcoat, when the crowd fell back, and the *maître d'armes*, advancing into the open space with a light and nimble step, cried out, "*En garde, monsieur.*" I stood my ground, and crossed my sword with his.

For a few seconds I contented myself with merely observing my adversary, who handled his weapon not only with all the skill of an accomplished swordsman, but with a dexterity that showed me he was playing off his art before his companions.

As if to measure his distance, he made two or three slight passes over the guard of my sword, and then grating his blade against mine with that peculiar motion which bodes attack, he fixed his eyes on mine, to draw off my attention from his intended thrust. The quickness and facility with which his weapon changed from side to side of mine, the easy motion of his wrist, and the rigid firmness of his arm, all showed me I was no match for him—although one of the best of my day at the military school—and I did not venture to

proceed beyond mere defense. He saw this, and by many a trick endeavored to induce an attack—now dropping his point carelessly, to address a monosyllable to a friend near—now throwing open his guard, as if from negligence. At length, as if tired with waiting, he called out:

"*Que cela finisse,*" and rushed in on me.

The rapidity of the assault, for a second or so, completely overcame me, and though I defended myself mechanically, I could neither follow his weapon with my eye, nor anticipate his intended thrust. Twice, his point touched my sword arm above the wrist, and by a slight wound there, saved my lungs from being pierced. At last, after a desperate rally, in which he broke in on my guard, he made a fearful lunge at my chest; I bent forward and received his blade in the muscles of my back—when, with a wheel round, I smashed the sword in me, and buried my own, up to the hilt, in his body. He fell, bathed in blood; and I, staggering backward, was caught in Pioche's arms, at the moment when all consciousness was fast leaving me.

A few minutes after I came to myself, and found that I was lying on a heap of straw in the yard, while two regimental surgeons were most industriously engaged in trying to stop the hemorrhage of my wounds.

With little interest in my own fate, I could not help feeling anxious about my antagonist. They shook their heads mournfully in reply to my question, and desired me to be as calm as possible, for my life hung on a very thread. The dressing completed, I was carried into the house, and laid on a bed in a small, neat-looking chamber, which I heard, as they carried me along, mademoiselle had kindly placed at my disposal. She herself assisted to place the pillow beneath my head, and then with noiseless gesture closed the curtains of the window, and took her seat at the bedside.

The moment the others had left the room, I turned to ask for the *maître d'armes.* But she could only say that his companions of the Fourth had carried him away to the ambulance, refusing all offers of aid, except from the surgeons of their own corps.

"They say," added she, with a *naïve* simplicity, "that François is not made like other folk, and that the only doctors who understand him are in the Fourth Regiment. However that may be, it will puzzle them sadly this time—you have given him his *coup de congé.*"

"I hope not, sincerely," said I, with a shudder.

"And why not," cried Mademoiselle, in astonishment. "Is it not a good service you render to the whole brigade? Would not the division be all the happier if such as he, and Pichot, and the rest of them—"

"Pichot—Amedée Pichot?"

"Yes, Amedée Pichot, to be sure. But what's that knocking outside? Ah, there's Pioche at the window!"

Mademoiselle arose and walked toward the door, but before she reached it, it was opened, and General d'Auvergne entered the room.

"Is he here?" asked he, in a low voice.

"Yes, general," said Mademoiselle, with a curtsey, as she placed the chair for him to sit down. "He is much better—I'll wait outside till you want me," added she, as she left the room and closed the door.

"Come, come, my boy," said the kind old man, as he took my hand in his, "don't give way thus. I have made many inquiries about this affair, and they all tend to exculpate you. This fellow, François, is the *mauvaise tête* of the regiment, and I only wish his chastisement had come from some other hand than yours."

"Will he live, general?" asked I, with a smothering fullness in my throat as I uttered the words.

"Not if he be mortal, I believe. The sword pierced his chest from side to side."

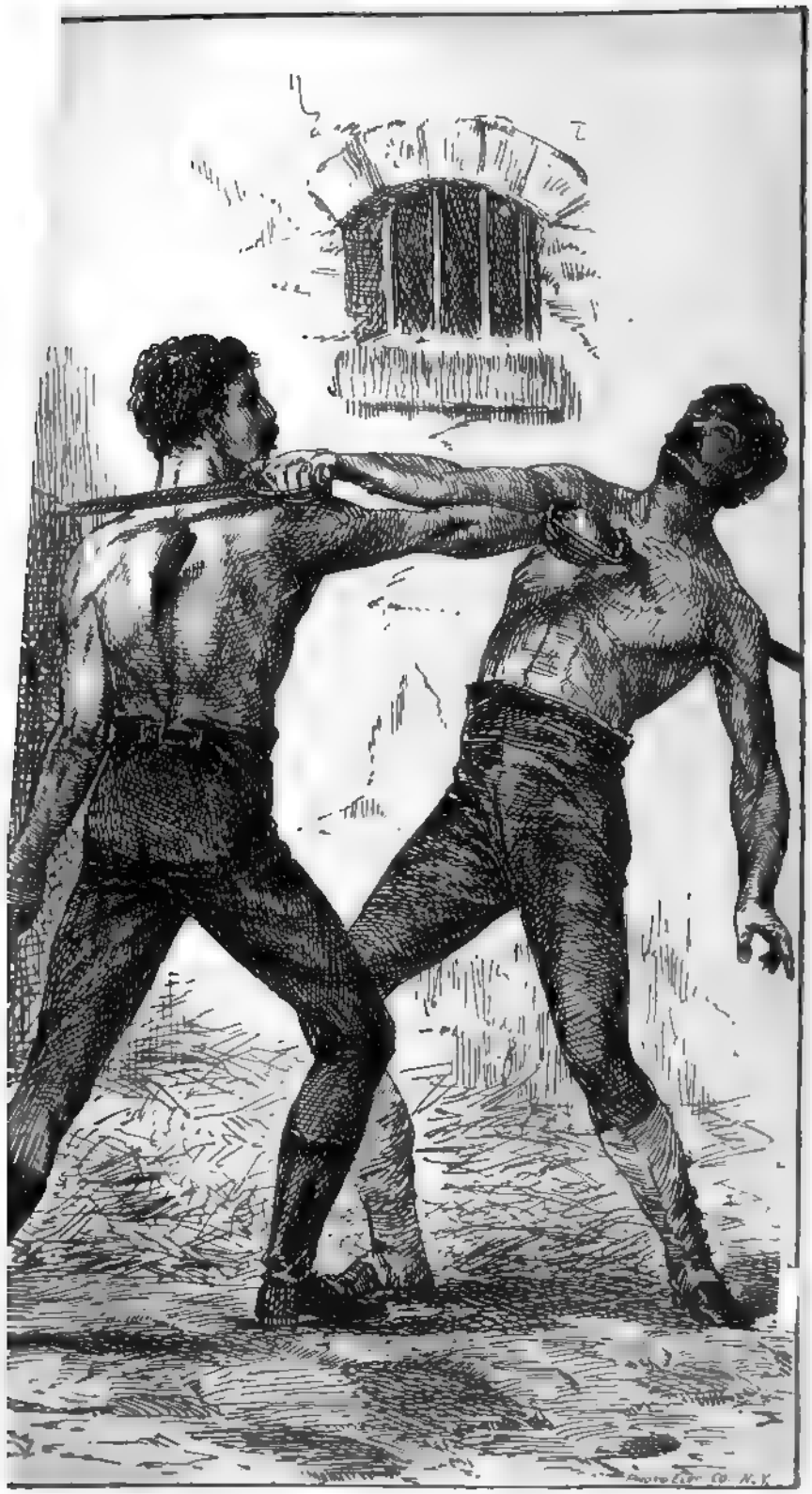
I groaned heavily as I heard these words; and burying my head beneath the clothes, became absorbed in my grief. What would I not have endured then of insult and contumely, rather than suffer the terrible load upon my conscience of a fellow-creature's blood—shed in passion and revenge. How willingly would I have accepted the most despised position among men to be void of this crime.

"It matters not," cried I, in my despair—"it matters not how I guide my path, misfortunes beset me at every turn of the way—"

"Speak not thus," said the General, sternly. "The career you have embarked in is a stormy and a rough one. Other men have fared worse than you have in it—and without repining too. You knew of one such yourself, who, in all the saddest bereavements of his hopes, cherished a soldier's heart and a soldier's courage."

The allusion to my poor friend, Charles de Meudon, brought the tears to my eyes, and I felt that all my sufferings were little compared with his.

"Let your first care be to get well as soon as you can. happily your name may escape



FWARD AND RECEIVED HIS BLADE IN THE MUSCLES OF MY BACK—WHEN, WITH [illegible], ROUND, I SMASHED THE SWORD IN HE, AND BURIED MY OWN, UP TO THE , IN HIS BODY. (P. 498.)

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the Emperor's notice in this affair, by appearing in the list of wounded—our friend the *maitre d'armes* is not likely to discover on you. The campaign is begun, however, and you must try to take your share of it. The Emperor's staff starts for Munich tomorrow. I must accompany them—but I leave you in good hands here; and this detachment will occupy Elchingen at least ten days longer."

Scarcely had the general left me when mademoiselle re-entered the room.

"So, monsieur," said she, smiling archly, "you have been left in my care, it seems. *Morbleu!* it's well the vivandière of the regiment is not a prude, or I should scarcely know how to act. Well, well, one can only do one's best. And now, shall I read for you, or shall I leave you quiet for an hour or two?"

"Just so, leave him alone for a little while," said a gruff voice from the end of the bed, at the same time that the huge beard and red moustache of Pioche appeared peeping above the curtain.

"Is he not stupid, that great animal of a cuirassier?" said mademoiselle, starting at the voice so unexpectedly heard. "I say, *mon caporal*, right face—march. Do you hear, sir? You've got the *feuille de route*. What do you stay for?"

"Ah, mademoiselle," said the poor fellow, as he smoothed down his hair on his forehead, and looked the very impersonation of sheepish admiration.

"Well?" replied she, as if not understanding his appeal to her feelings—"well?"

A look of total embarrassment, an expression of complete bewilderment, was his only reply; while his eyes wandered round the room till they met mine, and then, as if suddenly conscious that a third party was present, he blushed deeply and said:

"Too true, mon lieutenant, she does with me what she will."

"Don't believe him, monsieur," interposed she, quickly. "I told him to get knocked on the head a dozen times, and he's never done so."

"I would though, and right soon too, if you were only in earnest," said he, with a vehemence that bespoke the truth of the assertion.

"There, there," said she, with a smile, as she held out her hand to him, "we are friends."

The poor fellow pressed it to his lips with the respectful devotion of a Bayard; and with a muttered "This evening," left the room.

"It is no small triumph, mademoiselle," said I, "that you have inspired such a passion in the hardy breast of the cuirassier."

A saucy shake of the head, as though she did not like the compliment, was the only reply. She bent her head down over her work, and seemed absorbed in its details; while I, reverting to my own cares, became silent also.

"And so, monsieur," said she, after a long pause—"and so you deem this conquest of mine a very wonderful thing?"

"You mistake me," said I, eagerly—"you mistake me much. My surprise was rather that one like Pioche, good-hearted, simple fellow he is, should possess the refinement of feeling—"

"A clever flank movement of yours, lieutenant," interposed she, with a pleasant laugh; "and I'll not attack you again. And, after all, I *am* a little proud of my conquest."

"The confession is a flattering one, from one who doubtless has had a great many to boast of."

"A great many, indeed!" replied she, *naïvely*. "So many, that I can't reckon them—not to boast of, however, as you term it. *Parbleu!* some of them had little of *that*—But here comes the doctor, and I must not let him see us talking. *Ma foi*, they little think, when their backs are turned, how seldom we mind their directions."

The surgeon's visit was a matter of a few seconds; he contented himself with feeling my pulse and reiterating his advice as to quiet.

"You have got the best nurse in the army, monsieur," said he, as he took his leave; "I have only one caution to give you—take care, if an affection of the heart be not a worse affair than a thrust of a small sword. I have known such a termination of an illness before now."

Mademoiselle made no reply save an arch look of half anger, and left the room; and I, wearied and exhausted, sank into a heavy slumber.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE "VIVANDIERE OF THE FOURTH."

For three entire weeks my wound confined me to the limits of my chamber; and yet, were it not for my impatience to be up and stirring, my life was not devoid of happiness.

Every movement of the army, in its most minute detail, was daily reported to me by Mademoiselle Minette. The bulletins of

the Emperor, the promotions, the *on dits* of the bivouac and the march, brought by the various battalions as they moved on toward the east, were all related by her, with such knowledge of military phrase and soldiers' style, as to amuse me, equally by her manner as by what she told.

The cuirassiers marched soon after I received my wound, and, though attached to the corps, she remained behind at Elchingen, having pledged herself, as she said, to the general to restore me safe and sound before she left me. The little window beside my bed offered a widely-extended view over the great plain beneath, and there I have sat the entire day, watching the columns of cavalry and infantry as they poured along, seemingly without ceasing, toward the lower Danube Sometimes the faint sounds of the soldiers' songs would reach me—the rude chorus of a regiment timing their step to some warrior's chant—and set my heart a beating to be with them once more. Sometimes my eye would rest upon the slow train of wagons, surmounted with a white flag, that wound their way heavily in the rear, and my spirit sank as I thought over the poor wounded fellows that were thus borne onward with the tide of war, as the crushed serpent trails his wounded folds behind him.

Mademoiselle seldom left me. Seated at her work, often for hours without speaking, she would follow the train of her own thoughts, and when by chance she gave a passing glance through the window at the scene beneath, some single word would escape her, as to the regiments or their officers, few of which were unknown to her, at least by reputation.

I could not but mark that, within the last twelve or fourteen days, she seemed more sad and depressed than before—the lively gayety of her character had given place to a meek and suffering melancholy, which I could not help attributing to the circumstances in which she was placed, away from all her ordinary pursuits, and the companions of her daily life. I hinted as much one day, and was about to insist on her leaving me, when she suddenly interrupted me, saying

"It is all true. I am sad, and know not why—for I never felt happier; yet, if you wished me to be gay, as I used to be, I could not for the world. It is not because I am far from those I have learned to look on as my brothers. Not so—my changeful fortune has often placed me thus. Perhaps it's your fault, mon lieutenant," said she, suddenly turning her eyes full upon me.

"Mine, Minette—mine!" said I, in amazement.

She blushed deeply, and held down her head, while her bosom heaved several times convulsively; and then, while a deathly paleness spread over her cheek, she said, in a low, broken voice,

"Perhaps it is because I am an orphan, and never knew what it was to have them whose dispositions I should imitate, and whose tastes I should study; but, somehow, I feel even as though I could not help becoming like those I am near to, following them—ay, and outstripping them—in all their likings and dislikings."

"And so, as you seem sad and sorrowful, it is more than probable that you took the color of *my* thoughts. I should feel sorry, Minette, to think it were thus—I should ill repay all your kindness to me—I must try and wear a happier countenance."

"Do so—and mine will soon reflect it," said she, laughing; "but, perhaps, you have cause for sorrow," added she, as she stole a glance at me beneath her eyelashes.

"You know, Minette, that I am an orphan like yourself," said I, half evading the question.

"Ah!" cried she, passionately, "if I had been a man, I should like to be such a one as Murat there. See how his black eyes sparkle, and his proud lip curls, when the roll of artillery, or the clattering of a platoon is heard— how his whole soul is in the fight! I remember once—it was at the Iser—his brigade was stationed beneath the hill, and had no orders to move forward for several hours—he used to get off his horse, and walk about, and endeavor, by pushing the smoke away thus with his hand, and almost kneeling to the ground, to catch a view of the battle, and then he would spring into the saddle, and, for sheer passion, dash the spurs into his horse's flanks, till he reared and plunged again. I watched him thus for hours. I loved to look on him, chafing and fretting, like his own mettled charger, he was so handsome!"

"'A drink, Minette! Something to cool my lips, for Heaven's sake,' said he at last, as he saw me standing near him. I filled the little cup you see here with wine, and handed it to him. Scarcely had he raised it to his lips, when an aide-de-camp galloped up, and whispered some words in haste.

"'Ha, ha!' cried he, with a shout of joy, 'they want us, then—the squadrons will advance by sections—and charge!—charge!'—and with that he flung the goblet from him to the ground, and when I

took it up, I found that with the grasp of his strong fingers he had crushed it nearly together. See here. I never would let it be changed. It is just as at the time he clasped it, and I kept it as a *souvenir* of the prince." She took from a little shelf the cup, as she spoke, and held it up before me, with the devoted admiration with which some worshipper would regard a holy relic. "And that," said Minette, as she pressed to her lips a faded cockade, whose timeworn tints still showed the tricolored emblems of the Republic—"that do I value above the cross of the Legion itself."

"Whose was it, Minette? Some brave soldier's, I'm sure."

"And you may be sure. That was the cockade of Le Premier Grenadier de la France—La Tour d'Auvergne—the cousin of your own general." Seeing that I had not heard before of him, she paused for a few seconds in amazement, and then muttered—"A brave school to train the youth of France it must be, where the name of La Tour d'Auvergne was never mentioned."

Having thus vented her indignation, she proceeded to tell me of her hero, who, though descended from one of the most distinguished families of France, yet persisted in carrying his musket in the ranks of the republican army—never attaining to a higher grade, nor known by any other title than the "Premier Grenadier de la France." Foremost in every post of danger—the volunteer at every emergency of more than ordinary peril—he refused every proffer of advancement, and lived among his comrades the simple life of a soldier.

"He fell at Neuburg," said Mademoiselle, "scarce a day's march from here; they buried him on the field, and placed him dead, as he had been ever while living, with his face toward the enemy. And you never heard of him—*juste Ciel!* it is almost incredible. You never brigaded with the Forty-fifth of the line—that's certain."

"And why so?"

"Because they call his name at every parade muster as though he were still alive and well. The first man called is La Tour d'Auvergne, and the first soldier answers, '*Mort sur le champ de bataille.*' That's a prouder monument than your statues and tombstones. Is it not?"

"Indeed it is," said I, to whom the anecdote was then new, though I afterward lived to hear it corroborated in every respect. With many such traits of the service did mademoiselle beguile the time—now telling of the pleasant life of the cantonment—now of the wild scenes of the battlefield. Young as she was, she had seen much of both, and learned around the bivouac fires the old traditions of the revolutionary armies, and the brave deeds of the first veterans of France. In such narratives, too, her own enthusiastic nature burst forth in all its vehemence—her eyes would sparkle, and her words come rapidly, as she described some fierce attack or headlong charge—and it was impossible to listen without catching up a portion of her ardor, so wrapt up did she herself become in the excitement of her story. Thus, one evening, while describing the passage of the Adige, after detailing most circumstantially the position and strength of the attacking columns, and describing how each successive advance was repulsed by the murderous fire of the artillery, she proceeded to relate the plan of a flank movement, effected by some light infantry regiments, thrown across the river a considerable distance up the stream. "We came along," said she, "under the shade of some willows, and at last reached the ford—the leading companies halted, two officers sounded the river, and found that it was passable. I was close by at the time—it was the Colonel Lajolais who commanded the brigade, and he asked me for a '*goutte.*' 'It may be the last you'll ever give me, Minette,' said he; 'I don't expect to see you again.'

"'Are you going to remain at this side, colonel?' said I.

"'No, *parbleu*,' said he, 'not when the Twenty-second cross to the other.'

"'Neither am I, then,' said I; 'my place is with the head of the battalion.' Well, well, they all pressed me to stay back—they said a thousand kind things too—but that only decided me the more to go on—and as the signal-rocket was fired, the word was given, and on we went. For the first eight or ten paces it was mere wading—but suddenly a grenadier in the front called out, '*Gare!* lift your muskets, it's deep here;' and so it was—with one plunge down I went, but they seized me by the arms and carried me along, and some way or other we reached the bank. *Morbleu!* I felt half drowned—but there was little time to think over these things, for scarcely had the column formed, when the cry of 'Cavalry!' was given, and down came the lancers with a swoop; but we were all ready. The flank companies fell back, and formed in square, and a tremendous volley sent them off faster than they came. 'Now, then, push forward double quick,' said the old colonel—'the *pas de charge.*' Alas! the poor little drummer was lying dead at

his feet. The thought suddenly seized me, I sprang forward, unstrung his drum, threw the strap over my shoulder, and beat the *'pas de charge'*—a cheer ran along the whole battalion, and on we went. *Mort de ciel!* I was never so near the fire before. There was the enemy, scarce two hundred yards off—two great columns, with artillery between, waiting for us. 'Keep her back—keep back Minette—*brave fille.*' I heard no more—a shot came whizzing past, and struck me here." She pulled down her dress as she spoke, and disclosed the scar of a bullet's track on her white shoulder; then, as if suddenly recollecting, she blushed deeply, drew her kerchief closely around her, and muttered in a low voice, "*Ma foi*, how these things make one forget to be a woman." And with that she hung down her head, and despite all I could say would not utter another word.

Such was the *vivandière* of the Fourth; blending in her character the woman's weakness and the soldier's ardor—the delicacy of feeling, which not even the life of camps and bivouacs could eradicate, with the wild enthusiasm for glory—the passion of her nation. It needed not her dark eyes, shaded with their long black fringe—her oval face, whose freckles but displayed the transparent skin beneath—her graceful figure, and her elastic step, to make her an object of attraction in the regiment; nor could I be surprised to learn as I did, how many a high offer of marriage had been made to her by those soldiers of fortune whose gallantry and daring had won them honors in the service.

To value at their real price such attractions, one should meet them far away, and remote from the ordinary habits of the world, in the wild, reckless career of the camp—on the long march—beside the weary watch-fire—ay, on the very field of battle—amid the din, the clamor, and the smoke—the cheers, the cries of carnage: then, indeed, such an apparition had something magical in it. To see that tender girl tripping along fearlessly from rank to rank, as though she had a charmed life—now saluting with her hand some brave soldier as he rode by to the charge—now stooping beside the wounded, and holding to his bloodless lips the longed-for cup: to watch her as she rode gracefully at the head of the regiment, or lay beside the fire of the bivouac, relating with a woman's grace some story of the campaign—while the gray-bearded veteran and the raw youth hung on each word, and wondered how the scenes in which they mingled and acted could bear such interest when told by rosy lips. Who would wonder if she had many lovers? who would not rather be surprised at those who remained coldly indifferent to such charms as hers?

Let my confession, then, excite neither astonishment nor suspicion, when I acknowledge that, in such companionship, the days slipped rapidly over. I never wearied of hearing her tell of the scenes she had witnessed, nor did she of recounting them; and, although a sense of reproach used now and then to cross me for the life of inactivity and indolence I was leading, Mademoiselle Minette promised me many a brave opportunity of distinction to come, and campaigns of as great glory as even those of Italy and Egypt.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE SICK LEAVE.

"WHAT is it, Minette?" said I, for the third time, as I saw her lean her head from out the narrow casement, and look down into the valley beside the river—"what do you see there?"

"I see a regiment of infantry coming along the road from Ulm," said she, after a pause, "and now I perceive the lancers are following them, and the artillery too. Ah! and farther again, I see a great cloud of dust. *Mère de Ciel!* how tired and weary they all look! It surely cannot be a march in retreat; and now that I think of it, they have no baggage, nor any wagons with them."

"That was a bugle call, Minette! Did you not hear it?"

"Yes, it's a halt for a few minutes. Poor fellows, they are sadly exhausted; they cannot even reach the side of the way, but are lying down on the very road. I can bear it no longer. I must find out what it all means." So saying, she threw a mantle which, Spanish fashion, she wore over her head, round her, and hurried from the room.

For some time I waited patiently for her return; but when half an hour elapsed, I arose and crept to the window. A succession of rocky precipices descended from the terrace on which the house stood, down to the very edge of the Danube, and from the point where I sat the view extended for miles in every direction. What then was my astonishment to see the wide plain, not marked by regular columns in marching array, but covered with straggling detachments, hurrying onward as if without or-

der or discipline. Here, was an infantry battalion mixed up with a cavalry corps—the foot soldiers endeavoring to keep up with the ambling trot of the dragoons; there, the ammunition wagons were covered with weary soldiers, too tired to march. Most of the men were without their firelocks, which were piled in a confused heap on the limbers of the guns. No merry chant—no burst of warlike music cheered them on. They seemed like the scattered fragments of a routed army hurrying onward in search of some place of refuge—sad and spiritless.

"Can he have been beaten?" was the fearful thought that flashed across me as I gazed. "Have the bold legions that were never vanquished succumbed at last! Oh, no! no!—I'll not believe it;" and while a glow of fever warmed my whole blood, I buckled on my sabre, and taking my shako, prepared to issue forth. Scarcely had I reached the door, with tottering limbs, when I saw Minette dashing up the steep street at the top speed of her pony, while she flourished above her head a great placard, and waved it to and fro.

"The news! the news!" cried I, bursting with anxiety. "Are they advancing; or is it a retreat?"

"Read that!" said she, throwing me a large sheet of paper, headed with the words, "PROCLAMATION À LA GRANDE ARMÉE," in huge letters. "Read that! for I've no breath left to tell you."

"SOLDIERS!—The campaign so gloriously begun will soon be completed. One victory, and the Austrian empire, so great but a week since, will be humbled in the dust. Hasten on, then: forced marches, by day and night, will attest your eagerness to meet the enemy; and let the endeavor of each regiment be to arrive soonest on the field of battle."

"Minette!—dearest Minette!" said I, as I threw my arms around her neck, "this is, indeed, good news."

"Gently, gently, monsieur!" said she, smiling, while she disengaged herself from my sudden embrace. "Very good news, without doubt; but I don't think that there is any mention in the bulletin about embracing the vivandières of the army."

"At a moment like this, Minette—"

"The best thing to do is, to make up one's baggage, and join the march," said she, very steadily, proceeding at the same time to put her plan into execution. While I gave her all assistance in my power, the doctor entered to inform us that all the wounded who were then not sufficiently restored to return to duty, were to be conveyed to Munich, where general military hospitals had been established, and that he himself had received orders to repair thither, with his sick detachment, in which my name was enrolled.

"You'll keep your old friend, François, company, Lieutenant Burke—he is able to move at last."

"François!" said I, in ecstasy, "and will he, indeed, recover?"

"I have little doubt of it; though certainly he's not likely to practice as *maître d'armes* again. You've spoiled his '*tierce*'—though not before it cost the army some of the prettiest fellows I ever saw; but as to yourself—"

"As for me, I'll march with the army. I feel perfectly recovered; my arm—"

"Oh! as for monsieur's arms," said mademoiselle, "I'll answer for it, they are quite at his Majesty's service."

"Indeed!" said the doctor, knowingly. "I thought it would come to that. Well, well! mademoiselle, don't look saucy. Let us part good friends for once in our lives."

"I hate being reconciled to a surgeon," said she, pettishly.

"Why so, I pray?"

"Oh, you know, when one quarrels with an officer, the poor fellow will be killed before one sees him again, and it's always a sad thought, that—but your doctor, nothing ever happens to him; you're sure to see him, with his white apron and his horrid weapons, a hundred times after, and one is always sorry for having forgiven such a cruel wretch."

"Come, come! mademoiselle! you bear us all an ill-will for the fault of one, and that's not fair. It was the hospital aide of the Sixth, monsieur, a handsome fellow, too, who did not fall in love with her after her wound—a slight scratch."

"A slight scratch! do you call it?" said I, indignantly, as I perceived the poor girl's eyes fill at the raillery of her tormentor.

"Ah! monsieur has seen it, then," said he, maliciously. "A thousand pardons. I have the honor to wish you both adieu." And with that, and a smile of the most impertinent meaning, he took his leave.

"How silly to be vexed for so little, Minette," said I, approaching and endeavoring to console her.

"Well! but to call my wound a scratch," said she. "Was it not too bad? and I the only vivandière of the army that ever felt a bullet." And with that she turned away her head, but I could see, as she wiped her

eyes, that she cared less for the sarcasm on her wounded shoulder than the insult to her wounded heart. Poor girl, she looked sick and pale the whole day after.

We learned in the course of the day that some cavalry detachments would pass early on the morrow, thus allowing us sufficient time to provide ourselves with horses, and make our other arrangements for the march. These we succeeded in doing to our satisfaction: I being fortunate enough to secure the charger of an Austrian prisoner; mademoiselle being already admirably mounted with her palfrey. Occupied with these details, the day passed rapidly over, and the hour for supper drew near without my feeling how the time slipped past. At last the welcome meal made its appearance, and with it mademoiselle herself. I could not help remarking that her toilet displayed a more than common attention; her neat Parisian cap—her collar, with its deep Valenciennes lace, and her *tablier*, so coquettishly embroidered, were all signs of an unusual degree of care, and though she was pale and in low spirits, I never saw her look so pretty.

All my efforts to make her converse were, however, in vain. Some secret weight lay heavily on her spirits, and not even the stirring topics of the coming campaign could awaken one spark of her enthusiasm. She evaded, too, every allusion to the following day's march, or answered my questions about it with evident constraint. Tired at last with endeavoring to overcome her silent mood, I affected an air of chagrin, thinking to pique her by it; but she merely remarked that I appeared weary, and that as I had a long journey before me, it were as well I should retire early.

The marked coolness of her manner at this moment struck me so forcibly, that I began really to feel some portion of the ill-temper I affected, and, with the crossness of an over-petted child, I arose to withdraw at once.

"Good-by, monsieur — good-night, I mean," said she, blushing slightly.

"Good-night, mademoiselle," said I, taking her hand coldly as I spoke. "I trust I may find you in better spirits tomorrow."

"Good-night—adieu," said she, hastily, and before I could add a word she was gone.

"She is a strange girl," thought I, as I found myself alone, and tortured my mind to think whether anything I could have dropped had offended her. But no; we had parted a few hours before the best friends in the world: nothing had then occurred to which I could attribute this sudden change. I had often remarked the variable character of her disposition; the flashes of gayety, mingled with outbursts of sorrow—the playful moods of fancy, alternating with moments of deep melancholy; and, after all, this might be one of them.

With these thoughts I threw myself on my bed, but could not sleep. At one minute my brain went oh puzzling about Minette and her sorrow; at the next I reproached myself for my own harsh, unfeeling manner to the poor girl, and was actually on the eve of arising to seek her and ask her pardon. At last sleep came, and dreams too; but, strange enough, they were of the distant land of my boyhood and the hours of my youth—of the old house in which I was born, and its well-remembered rooms. I thought I was standing before my father, while he scolded me for some youthful transgression; I heard his words as though they were really spoken, as he told me that I should be an outcast and a wanderer, without a friend, a house, or home; that while others reaped wealth and honors, I was destined to be a castaway: and in the torrent of my grief I awoke.

It was night—dark, silent night; a few stars were shining in the sky, but the earth was wrapped in shadow; and as I opened my window to let the fresh breeze calm my fevered forehead, the deep precipice beneath me seemed a vast gulf of yawning blackness. At a great distance off I could see the watch-fires of some soldiers bivouacking in the plain; and even that much comforted my saddened heart, as it aroused me to the thoughts of the campaign before me. But again my thoughts recurred to my dream, which I could not help feeling as a sort of prediction.

When our sleep leaves its strong track in our waking moments, we dread to sleep again, for fear the whole vision should come back; and thus I sat down beside the window, and fell into a long train of thought. The images of my dream were uppermost in my mind, and every little incident of childhood, long lost to memory, came now fresh before me—the sorrows of my schoolboy years, unrelieved by the sense of love awaiting me at home; the clinging to all who seemed to feel or care for me, and the heart-sickening sorrow when I found that what I mistook for affection was merely pity; all save one—my mother. Her mild, sad looks, so seldom cheered by a ray of pleasure, I remember well how they fell on me! with such a thrilling sensation at my heart, and such a gush of thankfulness as I have felt then. Oh! if they who live with

children knew how needful it is to open their hearts to all the little sorrows and woes of infant life; to teach confidence, and to feed hope; to train up the creeping tendrils of young desire, and not to suffer them to lie straggling and tangled on the earth—what a happier destiny would fall to the lot of many whose misfortunes in late life date from the crushed spirit of childhood.

My mother!—I thought of her, as she would bend over me at night, her last kiss pressed on my brow—the healing balm of some sorrow, for which my sobs were still breaking; her pale, worn cheek, her white dress, her hand so bloodless and transparent, the very emblem of her malady—the tears started to my eyes, and rolled heavily along my cheek, my chest heaved, and my heart beat, till I could hear it. At this moment a slight rustle stirred the leaves. I listened, for the night was calm and still; not a breeze moved. Again I heard it close beside the window, on the little terrace which ran along the building, and occupied the narrow space beside the edge of the rock. Before I could imagine what it meant, a figure in white glided from the shade of the trees, and approached the window. So excited was my mind, so wrought up my imagination by the circumstances of my dream, and the thoughts that followed, that I cried out, in a voice of ecstasy, "My mother!" Suddenly the apparition stood still, and then as rapidly retreated, and was lost to view in the dark foliage. Maddened with intense excitement, I sprang from the window, and leaped out on the terrace. I called aloud—I ran about wildly, unmindful of the fearful precipice that yawned beside me. I searched every bush, I crept beneath each tree, but nothing could I detect. The cold perspiration poured down my face, my limbs trembled with a strange dread of I knew not what; I felt as if madness was creeping over me, and I struggled with the thought, and tried to calm my troubled brain. Wearied and, faint, I gave up the pursuit at last, and, throwing myself on my bed, I sank exhausted into the heavy slumber which only tired nature knows.

"The Sous-Lieutenant Burke," said a gruff voice, awakening me suddenly from my sleep, while by the light of a lantern he held in his hand I recognized the figure of an orderly sergeant in full equipment.

"Yes—what then?" said I, in some amazement at the summons.

"This is the order of march, sir, for the invalid detachment, under your command."

"How so—I have no orders?"

"They are here, sir."

So saying, he presented me with a letter from the assistant adjutant of the corps, with instructions for the conduct of forty men, invalided from different regiments, and now on their way to Lintz. The paper was perfectly regular, setting forth the names of the soldiers and their several corps, together with the daily marches, the halts, and distances. My only surprise was how this service so suddenly devolved on me, whose recovery could only have been reported a few hours before.

"When shall I muster the detachment, sir," said the sergeant, interrupting me in the midst of my speculations.

"Now—at once. It is past five o'clock. I see Langenau is mentioned as the first halting-place; we can reach it by eight."

The moment the sergeant withdrew, I arose and dressed for the road, anxious to inform mademoiselle as early as possible of this sudden order of march. When I entered the salon, I found to my surprise that the breakfast-table was all laid and everything ready. "What can this mean?" said I; "has she heard it already?" At the same instant I caught sight of the door of her chamber lying wide open. I approached, and looked in; the room was empty; the various trunks and boxes, the little relics of military glory I remembered to have seen with her, were all gone. Minette had departed. When or whither, I knew not! I hurried through the building, from room to room, without meeting any one. The door was open, and I passed out into the dark street, where all was still and silent as the grave. I hastened to the stable; my horse, ready equipped and saddled, was feeding, but the stall beside him was empty—the pony of the vivandière was gone. While many a thought flashed on my brain as to her fate, I tortured my mind to remember each circumstance of our last meeting—every word and every look; and as I called to my memory the pettish anger of my manner toward her, I grew sick at heart, and hated myself for my own cold ingratitude. All her little acts of kindness, her tender care, her unwearying good-nature, were before me. I thought of her as I had seen her often in the silence of the night, when, waking from some sleep of pain, she sat beside my bed, her hand pressed on my heated forehead; her low, clear voice was in my ear; her soft, mild look, beaming with hope and tender pity. Poor Minette, had I then offended you—was such the return I made for all your kindness?

"The men are ready, sir," said the sergeant, entering at the moment.

"She is gone," said I, following out my own sad train of thought, and pointing to the vacant stall where her pony used to stand.

"Mademoiselle Minette—"

"Yes, what of her—where is she?"

"Marched with the cuirassier brigade that passed here last night at twelve o'clock. She seemed very ill, sir, and the officer made her sit on one of the wagons."

"Which road did they take?"

"They crossed the river, and moved away toward the forest. I think I heard the troop sergeant say something about Salzburg and the Tyrol."

I made no answer, but stood mute and stupefied; when I was again recalled to thought by his asking if my baggage was ready for the wagons.

With a sullen apathy I pointed out my trunks in silence, and throwing one last look on the room, the scene of my former suffering, and of much pleasure too, I mounted my horse, and gave the word to move forward.

As we passed from the gate, I stopped to question the *sous-officier* as to the route of the cuirassier division; but he could only repeat what the sergeant had already told me; adding, there were several men slightly wounded in the squadrons, for they had been engaged twice within the week. The gates closed, and we were on the high-road.

CHAPTER XLVII.

LINTZ.

As day was breaking, we came up with a strong detachment of the cavalry of the Guard, proceeding to join Bessières's division at Lintz; from them we learned that the main body of the army was already far in advance, several entire corps having marched from Lintz with the supposed intention of occupying Vienna. Ney's division, it was said, was also bearing down from the Tyrol; Davoust and Mortier were advancing by the left bank of the Danube, whilst Lannes and Murat, with an overwhelming force of light troops, had pushed forward two days' march in advance on their way to the capital. The fate of Ulm was already predicted for the Austrian city, and each day's intelligence seemed to make it only the more inevitable. Meanwhile, the Emperor Francis had abandoned the capital, and retreated on Brunn, a fortified town in Moravia, there to await the arrival of his ally, Alexander, hourly expected from Berlin.

As day after day we pressed forward, our numbers continued to increase; a motley force, indeed, did we present—cavalry of every sort, from the steel-clad cuirassier to the gay hussar, dragoons, chasseurs, guides, and light cavalry, all mixed up together, and all eagerly recounting the several experiences of the campaign, as it fell under their eyes in different quarters. From none, however, could I learn any tidings of Minette; for though known to many there, the detachment she had joined had taken a southerly direction, and was not crossed by any of the others on their march. The General d'Auvergne, I heard, was with the head-quarters of the Emperor, then established at the monastery of Mölk, on the Danube.

On the evening of the 13th of November we arrived at Lintz, the capital of Upper Austria, but at the time I speak of one vast barrack: thirty-eight thousand troops of all arms were within its walls—not subject to the rigid discipline and regular command of a garrison town, but bivouacking in the open streets and squares; tables were spread in the thoroughfares, at which the divisions, as they arrived, took their places, and, after refreshing themselves, moved on to make way for others. The great churches were strewed with forage, and filled with the horses of the cavalry; there, might be seen the lumbering steeds of the cuirassiers, eating their corn from the richly-carved box of a confessional: here, lay the travel-stained figure of a dragoon, stretched asleep across the steps of the altar; the little chapelries, where the foot of the penitent awoke no echo as it passed, now rung with the coarse jest and reckless ribaldry of the soldier; parties caroused in the little sacristies; and the rude chorus of a drinking song now vibrated through the groined roof, where only the sacred notes of the organ had been heard to peal. The Hôtel de Ville was the quartier-général, where the generals of divisions were assembled, and from which the orderlies rode forth at every moment with dispatches. The one cry, "Forward!" was heard everywhere. They who before had claimed leave for slight wounds or illness, were now seen among their comrades, with bandaged arms and patched faces, eager to press on. Many whose regiments were in advance, became incorporated for the time with other corps, and dismounted dragoons were often to be met with, marching with the infantry and mounting guard in turn. Everything be-

spoke haste. The regiments which arrived at night frequently moved off before day broke. The cavalry often were provided with fresh horses to press forward, leaving their own for the corps that were to follow. A great flotilla, provided with all the necessaries for an army on the march, moved along the Danube, and accompanied the troops each day; in a word, every expedient was practiced which could hasten the movement of the army, justifying the remark so often repeated among the soldiers at the time—"*Le Petit Caporal* makes more use of our legs than our bayonets in this campaign."

On the same evening we arrived came the news of the surprise of Vienna by Murat. Never was there such joy as this announcement spread through the army. The act itself was one of those daring feats which only such as he could venture on, and indeed, at first seemed so miraculous, that many refused to credit it. Prince Auersberg, to whom the great bridge of the Danube was intrusted, had prepared everything for its destruction in the event of attack. The whole line of wood-work was laid with combustibles; trains were set, the matches burning; a strong battery of twelve guns, posted to command the bridge, occupied the height on the right bank, and the Austrian gunners lay, match in hand, beside their pieces; but a word was needed, and the whole work was in a blaze. Such was the state of matters when Sebastiani pushed through the faubourg of the Leopoldstadt at the head of a strong cavalry detachment, supported by some grenadiers of the Guard, and, by Murat's orders, concealed his force among the narrow streets which lead to the bridge from the left bank of the Danube.

This done, Lannes and Murat advanced carelessly along the bridge, which, from the frequent passage of couriers between the two head-quarters, had become a species of promenade, where the officers of either side met to converse on the fortunes of the campaign. Dressed simply as officers of the staff, they strolled along till they came actually beneath the Austrian battery, and then entered into conversation with the Austrian officers, assuring them that the armistice was signed, and peace already proclaimed between the two countries. The Austrians, trusting to their story, and much interested by what they heard, descended from the mound, and, joining them, proceeded to walk backward and forward along the bridge, conversing on the probable consequences of the treaty, when suddenly turning round by chance, as they walked toward the right bank, they saw the head of a grenadier column approaching at the quick step.

The thought of treachery crossed their minds, and one of them, rushing to the side of the bridge, called out to the artillerymen to fire. A movement was seen in the battery, the matches were uplifted, when Murat, dashing forward, cried aloud, "Reserve your fire, there is nothing to fear!" The same instant the Austrian officers were surrounded; the sappers rushing on the bridge cleared away the combustibles, and cut off the trains; and the cavalry, till now in concealment, pushing forward at a gallop, crossed the bridge, followed by the grenadiers in a run, before the Austrians, who saw their own officers mingled with the French, could decide on what was to be done; while Murat, springing on his horse, dashed onward at the head of the dragoons, and before five minutes elapsed the battery was stormed, the gunners captured, and Vienna won.

Never was there a *coup de main* more hardy than this—whether we look to the danger of the deed itself, or the insignificant force by which it was accomplished. A few horsemen, and some companies of foot, led on by an heroic chief, thus turned the whole fortune of Europe; for, by securing this bridge, Napoleon enabled himself, as circumstances might warrant, to unite the different corps of his army on the right or left banks of the Danube, and either direct his operations against the Russians, or the Austrians under the Archduke Charles, as he pleased.

The treachery by which the bold deed was made successful was, alas! deemed no stain on the achievement. But one rule of judgment existed in the imperial army: was the advantage on the side of France, and to the honor of her arms? That covered every flaw, no matter whether inflicted by duplicity or breach of faith. The habit of healing all wounds of conscience by a bulletin had become so general, that men would not trust to the guidance of their own reason till confirmed by some imperial proclamation; and when the Emperor declared a battle gained, and glory achieved, who would gainsay him? If this blind, headlong confidence tended to lower the *moral* of the nation, in an equal degree did it make them conquerors in the field; and thus, by a strange decree of Providence, would it seem, were they preparing for themselves the terrible reverse of fortune which—when the destinies of their leader became clouded, and their confidence in him shaken—was to fall on a people who

lived only in the mad intoxication of victory, and knew not the sterner virtues that can combat with defeat.

But so was it—Napoleon commanded the legions, and described their achievements; he led them to the charge, and he apportioned their glory; the heroism of the soldier had no existence, until acknowledged by the proclamation after the batttle; the valor of the general wanted confirmation, till sealed by his approval. To fight beneath his eyes was the greatest glory a regiment could wish for—to win one word from him was fame itself forever.

If I dwell on these thoughts here, it is because I now felt for the first time the sad deception I had practiced on myself—and how little could I hope to realize in my soldier's life the treasured aspirations of my boyhood. Was this, then, indeed the career I had pictured to my mind—the chivalrous path of honor? Was this the bold assertion of freedom I so often dreamed of? How few of that armed host knew anything of the causes of the war—how much fewer still cared for them! No sentiment of patriotism, no devotion to the interests of liberty or humanity, prompted us on. Yet these were the thoughts first led me to the career of arms; such ambitious promptings first made my heart glow with the enthusiasm of a soldier.

This gloomy disappointment made me low-spirited and sad; nor can I say where such reflections might not have led me, when suddenly a change came over my thoughts by seeing a wounded soldier, who had just arrived from Mortier's division, with news of a fierce encounter they had sustained against Kutusof's Russians. The poor fellow was carried past in a litter—his arm had been amputated that same morning, and a frightful shot-wound had carried away part of his cheek; still, amid all his suffering, his eye was brilliant, and a smile of proud meaning was on his lips.

"Lift it up, Guillaume; let me see it again," said he, as they bore him along the crowded street.

"What is it he wishes?" said I. "The poor fellow is asking for something."

"Yes, mon lieutenant. It is the *sabre d'honneur* the Emperor gave him this morning; he likes to look at it every now and then; he says he doesn't mind the pain when he sees that before him—*and it's natural, too.*"

"Such is glory," said I to myself; "and he who feels this in his heart, has no room for other thoughts."

"Oh, give to me the trumpet's blast,
And the champ of the charger prancing;
Or the whiz of the grape-shot flying past,
That's music meet for dancing,
Tralararala,"

sang a wild-looking voltigeur, as he capered along the street, keeping time to his rude song with the tramp of his feet.

"Ha! there goes a fellow from the Faubourg," said an officer near me.

"The Faubourg?" repeated I, asking for explanation.

"Yes, to be sure. The Faubourg St. Antoine supplies all the reckless devils of the army—one of them would corrupt a regiment; and so, the best thing to do is, to keep them as much together as possible. The voltigeurs have little else—and proof is, they are the cleverest corps in the service; and if they could be kept from picking and stealing, lying, drinking, and gambling, there's not a man might not be a general of division in time. There goes another." As he spoke, a fellow passed by with a goose under his arm, followed by a woman most vociferously demanding restitution, while he only amused himself by replying with a mock courtesy—deploring in sad terms the unhappy necessities of war, and the cruel hardships of a campaign.

"It's no use punishing those fellows," said the officer; "they desert in whole companies if you send one to the *salle de police;* and so we have only one resource, which is, to throw them pretty much in advance, and leave their chastisement to the enemy; and, sooth to say, they ask for nothing better themselves."

Thus, even these fellows seemed to have their own sentiment of glory—a problem which the more I reasoned over, the more puzzled did I become.

While a hundred conjectures were hourly in circulation, none, save those immediately about the person of Napoleon, could possibly divine the quarter where the great blow was to be struck, although all were in expectation of the orders to prepare for battle. News would reach us of marchings and counter-marchings—of smart skirmishes here, and prisoners taken there—yet could we not form the slightest conception of where the chief force of the enemy lay, nor what the direction to which our own army was pointed. Indeed, our troops seemed to scatter on every side. Marmont, with a strong force, was dispatched toward Grätz, where it was said the Archduke Charles was at the head of a considerable army. Davoust moved on Hungary, and occupied Presburg. Bernadotte retraced

his steps toward the Upper Danube, to hold the Archduke Frederick in check, who had escaped from Ulm with ten thousand men. Mortier's corps, harassed and broken by the engagement with Kutusof, were barely sufficient to garrison Vienna, while Soult, Lannes, and Murat pushed forward toward Moravia, with a strong cavalry force, and some battalions of the Guard. In fact, the whole army was scattered like an exploded shell—nor could we see the means by which its wide-extended fragments were to be united at a moment, much less divine the spot to which their combined force was to be directed.

Had these Russians been fabulous creatures of a legend, instead of men of mortal mold, they could scarcely have been endowed with more attributes of ubiquity than we conferred on them: sometimes we believed them at one side of the Danube—sometimes at the other; now, we heard of them as retreating by forced marches into their native fastnesses—now, as encamped in the mountain regions of Moravia. Yesterday, came the news that they laid down their arms and surrendered as prisoners of war; to-day, we heard of them as having forced back our advanced posts, and carried off several squadrons prisoners. At length came the positive information, that the allied armies were in cantonments around Olmutz, while Napoleon had pushed forward to Brunn, a place of considerable strength, communicating by the high-road with the Russian head-quarters. It was no longer doubtful, then, where the great game was to be decided, and thither the various battalions were now directed, by marches day and night.

On the 29th of November our united detachments, now numbering several hundred men, arrived at Brunn. I lost no time in repairing to head-quarters, where I found General d'Auvergne deeply engaged with the details of the force under his command—his brigade had been placed under the orders of Murat; and it was well known the prince gave little rest or respite to those under his command. From him I learnt that three days of unsuccessful negotiation had just passed over, and that the Emperor had now resolved on a great battle. Indeed, every moment was critical. Russia had assumed a decidedly hostile aspect; the Swedes were moving to the south; the Archduke Charles, by a circuitous route, was on the march to join the Russian army, to whose aid fresh reinforcements were daily arriving; and Benningsen was hourly expected with more. Under these circumstances a battle was inevitable—and such a one as, by its result, must conclude the war.

This much did I learn from the old general as we rode over the field together, examining with caution the nature of the ground, and where it offered facilities, and where it presented obstacles, to the movement of cavalry. Such were the orders issued that morning by Napoleon to the generals of brigade, who might now be seen traversing the plain, with their staffs, in every direction. As we moved along we could discover in the distance the dark columns of the enemy marching, not toward us, but in a southerly direction toward our extreme right. This movement attracted the attention of several others, and more than one aide-de-camp was dispatched to Brunn, to carry the intelligence to the Emperor.

The same evening couriers departed in every direction to Bernadotte and Davoust, to hasten forward at once; even Mortier, with his mangled division, was ordered to abandon Vienna to a division of Marmont's army, and move on to Brunn; and now the great work of concentration began. Meanwhile the Russians advanced, and on the 30th drove in an advanced post, and compelled our cavalry to fall back behind our position.

The following morning the allies resumed their flank movement, and now no doubt could be entertained of their plan, which was, by turning our right, to cut us off from our supporting columns resting at Vienna, and throw our retreat back upon the mountainous districts of Bohemia. In this way five massive columns moved past us scarce half a league distant from our advanced posts, numbering eighty thousand men, of which fifteen were cavalry in the most perfect condition.

Our position was in advance of the fortress of Brunn; the head-quarters of the Emperor occupied a rising piece of ground, at the base of which flowed a small stream, a tributary to some of the numerous ponds by which the field was intersected. The entire ground in our front was indeed a succession of these small lakes, with villages interspersed, and occasionally some stunted woods; great morasses extended around these ponds, through which led the high-roads, or such bypaths as conducted from one village to another. Here and there were plains where cavalry might act with safety, but rarely in large bodies.

Our right rested on the lake of Mœritz, where Soult's division was stationed, behind which, thrown back in such a manner as to escape the observation of the enemy,

was Davoust's corps, the reserve occupying a cliff of ground beside the convent of Reygern. Our left, under Lannes, occupied the hill of Santon, a wooded eminence, the last of a long chain of mountains running east and west. Above, and on the crest of the height, a powerful park of artillery was posted, and defended by strong intrenchments. A powerful cavalry corps was placed at the bottom of the mountain; next came Bernadotte's division, separated by the high-road from Brunn to Olmutz from the division under Murat, which, besides his own cavalry, contained Oudinot's grenadiers, and Bessière's battalions of the Imperial Guard; the center and right being formed of Soult's division, the strongest of all; the reserve, consisting of several battalions of the Guard and a strong force of artillery, being under the immediate orders of Napoleon, to be employed wherever circumstances demanded. These were the dispositions for the coming battle, made with all the precision of troops moving on parade; and such was the discipline of the army at Boulogne, and so perfectly arranged the plans of the Emperor, that the ground of every regiment was marked out, and each corps moved into its allotted space with the regularity of some piece of mechanism.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

AUSTERLITZ.

THE dispositions for the battle of Austerlitz occupied the entire day. From sunrise Napoleon was on horseback, visiting every position; he examined each battery with the skill of an old officer of artillery; and, frequently dismounting from his horse, carefully noted the slightest peculiarities of the ground, remarking to his staff, with an accuracy which the event showed to be prophetic, the nature of the struggle, as the various circumstances of the field indicated them to his practiced mind.

It was already late when he turned his horse's head toward the bivouac hut—a rude shelter of straw—and rode slowly through the midst of that great army. The *ordre du jour*, written at his own dictation, had just been distributed among the soldiers; and now, around every watch-fire, the groups were kneeling to read the spirit-stirring lines by which he so well knew how to excite the enthusiasm of his followers. They were told "that the enemy were the same Russian battalions they had already beaten at Hollabrunn, and on whose flying traces they had been marching ever since." "They will endeavor," said the proclamation, "to turn our right, but, in doing so, they must open their flank to us; need I say what will be the result? Soldiers, so long as with your accustomed valor you deal death and destruction in their ranks, so long shall I remain beyond the reach of fire; but let the victory prove, even for a moment, doubtful, your Emperor shall be in the midst of you. This day must decide forever the honor of the infantry of France. Let no man leave his ranks to succor the wounded—they shall be cared for by one who never forgot his soldiers; and with this victory the campaign is ended!"

Never were lines better calculated to stimulate the energy and flatter the pride of those to whom they were addressed. It was a novel thing in a general to communicate to his army the plan of his intended battle, and, perhaps, to any other than a French army the disclosure would not have been rated as such a favor; but their warlike spirit and military intelligence had ever been most remarkably united, and the men were delighted with such a proof of confidence and esteem.

A dull roar, like the sound of the distant sea, swelled along the line from the far right, where the Convent of Reygern stood, and growing louder by degrees, proclaimed that the Emperor was coming.

It was already dark, but he was quickly recognized by the troops, and with one burst of enthusiasm they seized upon the straw of their bivouacs, and, setting fire to it, held the blazing masses above their heads, waving them wildly to and fro, amid the cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" For above a league along the plain the red light flashed and glowed, marking out beneath it the dense squares and squadrons of armed warriors. It was the anniversary of Napoleon's coronation, and such was the *fête* by which they celebrated the day.

The Emperor rode through the ranks uncovered. Never did a prouder smile light up his features, while, thronging around him, the veterans of the Guard struggled to catch even a passing glance at him. "Do but look at us to-morrow, and keep beyond the reach of shot," said a *grognard*, stepping forward, "we'll bring their cannon and their colors, and lay them at thy feet." The marshals themselves, the hardened veterans of so many fights, could not restrain their enthusiasm; and proffers of devotion unto death accompanied him as he went.

At last all was silent in the encamp-

ment; the soldiers slept beside their watch-fires, and, save the tramp of a patrol, or the "*qui vive?*" of the sentinels, all was still. The night was cold and sharp, a cutting wind blew across the plain, which gave way to a thick mist—so thick, the sentries could scarcely see a dozen paces off.

I sat in my little hovel of straw—my mind far too much excited for sleep—watching the stars as they peeped out one by one, piercing the gray mist, until at last the air became thin and clear, and a frosty atmosphere succeeded to the weighty fog; and now I could trace out the vast columns, as they lay thickly strewn along the plain. The old general, wrapped in his cloak, slept soundly on his straw couch; his deep-drawn breathing showed that his rest was unbroken. How slowly did the time seem to creep along—I thought it must be nigh morning, and it was only a litle more than midnight. Our position was a small rising ground about a mile in front of the left center, and communicating with the enemy's line by a narrow road between the marshes. This had been defended by a battery of four guns, with a stockade in front; and along it now, for a considerable distance, a chain of sentinels were placed, who should communicate any movement that they observed in the Russian lines, of which I was charged to convey the earliest intelligence to the quartier-général. This duty alone would have kept me in a state of anxiety, had not the frame of my mind already so disposed me; and I could not avoid creeping out, from time to time, to peer through the gloom, in the direction of the enemy's camp, and listen with an eager ear for any sounds from that quarter. At last, I heard the sound of a voice at some distance off—then, a few minutes after, the hurried step of feet, and a voltigeur came up, breathless with haste:

"The Russians were in motion toward the right. Our advanced posts could hear the roll of guns and tumbrils moving along the plain, and it was evident their columns were in march."

I knelt down and placed my ear to the ground, and almost started at the distinctness with which I could hear the dull sound of the large guns as they were dragged along; the earth seemed to tremble beneath them.

I awoke the general at once, who, resting on his arm, coolly heard my report, and having directed me to hasten to head-quarters with the news, lay back again, and was asleep before I was in my saddle. At the top speed of my horse I galloped to the rear, winding my way between the battalions, till I came to a gentle rising ground, where, by the light of several large fires, that blazed in a circle, I could see the dismounted troopers of the *chasseurs à cheval*, who always formed the Imperial body-guard. Having given the word, I was desired by the officer of the watch to dismount, and, following him, I passed forward to a space in the middle of the circle, where, under shelter of some sheaves of straw piled over each other, sat three officers, smoking beside a fire.

"Ha! here comes news of some sort," said a voice I knew at once to be Murat's. "Well, sir, what is't?"

"The Russian columns are in motion, Monsieur le Maréchal—the artillery moving rapidly toward our right."

"*Diantre!* it's not much more than midnight! Davoust, shall we awake the Emperor?"

"No, no," said a harsh voice, as a shriveled, hard-featured man turned round from the blaze, and showing a head covered by a coarse woolen cap, looked far more like a pirate than a marshal of France; "they'll not attack before day breaks. Go back," said he, addressing me, "observe the position well, and if there be any general movement toward the southward, you may report it."

By the time I regained my post all was in silence once more; either the Russians had arrested their march, or already their columns were out of hearing—not a gleam of light could I perceive along their entire position; and now, worn out with watching, I threw myself down among the straw, and slept soundly.

"There—there—that's the third!" said General d'Auvergne, shaking me by the shoulder; "there again—don't you hear the guns?"

I listened, and could just distinguish the faint booming sound of far-off artillery, coming up from the extreme right of our position. It was still but three o'clock, and, although the sky was thick with stars, perfectly dark in the valley. Meanwhile, we could hear the galloping of cavalry quite distinctly in the same direction.

"Mount, Burke, and back to the quartier-général! But you need not, here come some of the staff."

"So, D'Auvergne," cried a voice whose tones were strange to me, "they meditate a night-attack, it would seem—or is it only trying the range of their guns?".

"I think the latter, Monsieur le Maréchal, for I heard no small-arms, and, even now, all is quiet again."

"I believe you are right," said he, mov-

ing slowly forward, while a number of officers followed at a little distance. "You see, D'Auvergne, how correctly the Emperor judged their intentions. The brunt of the battle will be about Reygern. But there—don't you hear bugles in the valley?"

As he spoke, the music of our tirailleurs' bugles arose from the glen in front of our center, where, in a thick beech-wood, the light infantry regiments were posted.

"What is it, D'Esterre?" said he to an officer who galloped up at the moment.

"They say the Russian guard, sir, is moving to the front: our skirmishers have orders to fall back without firing."

As he heard this, the Marshal Bernadotte—for it was he—turned his horse suddenly round, and rode back, followed by his staff. And now the drums beat to quarters along the line, and the hoarse trumpets of the cavalry might be heard summoning the squadrons throughout the field; while between the squares, and in the intervals of the battalions, single horsemen galloped past with orders. Soult's division, which extended for nearly a league to our right, was the first to move, and it seemed like one vast shadow creeping along the earth, as column beside column marched steadily onward. Our brigade had not as yet received orders, but the men were in readiness beside the horses, and only waiting for the word to mount.

The suspense of the moment was fearful—all that I had ever dreamed or pictured to myself of a soldier's enthusiasm was faint and weak, compared to the rush of sensations I now experienced. There must be a magic power of ecstasy in the approach of danger—some secret sense of bounding delight, mingled with the chances of a battle—that renders one intoxicated with excitement. Each booming gun I heard sent a wild throb through me, and I panted for the word "Forward!"

Column after column moved past us, and disappeared in the dip of ground beneath; and, as we saw the close battalions filling the wide plain in front, we sighed to think that it was destined to be the day of glory peculiarly to the infantry. Wherever the nature of the field permitted shelter, or the woods afforded cover, our troops were sent immediately to occupy. The great maneuver of the day was to be the piercing of the enemy's center, whenever he should weaken that point by the endeavor to turn our right flank.

A faint streak of gray light was marking the horizon, when the single guns which we had heard at intervals ceased, and then, after a short pause, a long, loud roll of artillery issued from the distant right, followed by the crackling din of small-arms, which increased at every moment, and now swelled into an uninterrupted noise, through which the large guns pealed from time to time. A red glare, obscured now and then by means of black smoke, lit up the sky in that quarter, where already the battle was raging fiercely.

The narrow causeway between the two small lakes in our front conducted to an open space of ground, about a cannon-shot from the Russian line, and this we were now ordered to occupy, to be prepared to act in support to the infantry of Soult's left whenever the attack began. As we debouched into the plain, I beheld a group of horsemen who, wrapped up in their cloaks, sat motionless in their saddles, calmly regarding the squadrons as they issued from the wood: these were Murat and his staff, to whom was committed the attack on the Russian Guard. His division consisted of the hussars and chasseurs under Kellermann, the cuirassiers of D'Auvergne, and the heavy dragoons of Nansouty, making a force of eight thousand sabres, supported by twenty pieces of field artillery. Again were we ordered to dismount, for although the battle continued to rage on the right, the whole of the center and left were unengaged.

Thus stood we as the sun arose—that "Sun of Austerlitz" so often appealed to and apostrophized by Napoleon, as gilding the greatest of his glories. The mist from the lakes shut out the prospect of the enemy's lines at first, but gradually this moved away, and we could perceive the dark columns of the Russians, as they moved rapidly along the side of the Pratzen, and continued to pour their thousands toward Reygern.

At last the roar of musketry swelled louder and nearer, and an officer galloping past told us that Soult's right had been called up to support Davoust's division. This did not look well: it proved the Russians had pressed our lines closely, and we waited impatiently to hear further intelligence. It was evident, too, that our right was suffering severely, otherwise the attack on the center would not have been delayed. Just then, a wild cheer to the front drew our attention thither, and we saw the heads of three immense columns—Soult's division—advancing at a run toward the enemy.

"*Par St. Louis,*" cried General d'Auvergne, as he directed his telescope on the Russian line, "those fellows have lost their senses! See if they have not moved their

artillery away from the Pratzen, and weakened their center more and more! Soult sees it—mark how he presses his columns on. There they go, faster and faster, but look! there's a movement yonder—the Russians perceive their mistake."

"Mount!" was now heard from squadron to squadron; while dashing along the line like a thunderbolt Murat rode far in advance of his staff, the men cheering him as he went.

"There!" cried D'Auvergne, as he pointed with his finger, "that column with the yellow shoulder-knots—that's Vandamme's brigade of light infantry. See how they rush on, eager to be first up with the enemy; but St. Hilaire's grenadiers have got the start of them, and are already at the foot of the hill—it is a race between them!"

And so had it become; the two columns advanced, cheering wildly, while the officers, waving their caps, led them on, and others rode along the flanks urging the men forward. The order now came for our squadrons to form in charging sections, leaving spaces for the light artillery between; this done, we moved slowly forward at a walk, the guns keeping step by step beside us. A few minutes after, we lost sight of the attacking columns, but the crashing fire told us they were engaged, and that already the great struggle had begun. For above an hour we remained thus—every stir, every loud word spoken, seeming to our impatience like the order to move. At last, the squadrons to our right were seen to advance, and then a tremulous motion of the whole line showed that the horses themselves participated in the eagerness of the moment; and, at last, the word came for the cuirassiers to move up. In less than a hundred yards we were halted again, and I heard an aide-de-camp telling General d'Auvergne that Davoust had suffered immensely on the right—that his division, although reinforced, had fallen back behind Reygern—and all now depended on the attack of Soult's columns. I heard no more, for now the whole line advanced in trot, and, as our formation showed an unbroken front, the word came—"Faster!" and "Faster!" As we emerged from the low ground we saw Soult's column already half way up the ascent; they seemed like a great wedge driven into the enemy's center, which, opening as they advanced, presented two surfaces of fire to their attack.

"The battery yonder has opened its fire on our line," said D'Auvergne; "we cannot remain where we are."

"Forward!—Charge!" came the word from front to rear, and squadron after squadron dashed madly up the ascent. The one word only, "Charge!" kept ringing through my head—all else was drowned in the terrible din of the advance. An Austrian brigade of light cavalry issued forth as we came up, but soon fell back under the overwhelming pressure of our force; and now we came down upon the squares of the red-brown Russian infantry. Volley after volley sent back our leading squadrons, wounded and repulsed, when, unlimbering with the speed of lightning, the horse artillery poured in a discharge of grape-shot. The ranks wavered, and through their cleft spaces of dead and dying our cuirassiers dashed in, sabring all before them. In vain the infantry tried to form again: successive discharges of grape, followed by cavalry attacks, broke through their firmest ranks, and at last retreating, they fell back under cover of a tremendous battery of field-guns, which, opening their fire, compelled us to retire into the wood. Nor were we long inactive. Bernadotte's division was now engaged on our left, and a pressing demand came for cavalry to support them. Again we mounted the hill, and came in sight of the Russian Guard, led on by the Grand Duke Constantine himself—a splendid body of men, conspicuous for their size, and the splendor of their equipment. Such, however, was the impetuous torrent of our attack, that they were broken in an instant; and, notwithstanding their courage and devotion, fresh masses of our dragoons kept pouring down upon them, and they were sabred, almost to a man. While we were thus engaged, the battle became general from left to right, and the earth shook beneath the thundering sounds of two hundred great guns. Our position, for a moment victorious, soon changed, for, having followed the retreating squadrons too far, the waves closed behind us, and we now saw that a dense cloud of Austrian and Russian cavalry were forming in our rear. An instant of hesitation would have been fatal. It was then that a tall and splendidly dressed horseman broke from the line, and, with a cry to "Follow!" rode straight at the enemy. It was Murat himself, sabre in hand, who, clearing his way through the Russians, opened a path for us. A few minutes after, we had gained the wood—but one-third of our force had fallen.

"Cavalry!—cavalry!" cried a field officer, riding down at headlong speed, his face covered with blood from a sabre-cut, "to the front!"

The order was given to advance at a gal-

lop, and we found ourselves next instant hand to hand with the Russian dragoons, who, having swept along the flank of Bernadotte's division, were sabring them on all sides. On we went, reinforced by Nansouty and his carbineers, a body of nigh seven thousand men. It was a torrent no force could stem—the tide of victory was with us, and we swept along, wave after wave, the infantry advancing in line for miles at either side, while whole brigades of artillery kept up a murderous fire without ceasing. Entire columns of the enemy surrendered as prisoners—guns were captured at each instant, and only by a miracle did the Grand Duke escape our hussars, who followed him till he was lost to view, in the flying ranks of the allies. As we gained the crest of the hill, we were in time to see Soult's victorious columns driving the enemy before them, while the Imperial Guard, up to that moment unengaged, reinforced the grenadiers on the right, and broke through the Russians on every side.

The attempt to outflank us on the right we had perfectly retorted on the left, where Lannes's division, overlapping the line, pressed them on two sides, and drove them back, still fighting, into the plain, which, with a lake, separated the allied armies from the village of Austerlitz; and here took place the most dreadful occurrence of the day. The two roads which led through the lake were soon so incumbered and blocked up by ammunition wagons and carts, that they became impassable; and as the masses of the fugitives thickened, they spread over the lake, which happened to be frozen.

It was at this time that the Emperor came up, and seeing the cavalry halted, and no longer in pursuit of the flying columns, ordered up twelve pieces of the artillery of the Imperial Guard, which, from the crest of the hill, opened a murderous fire on them. The slaughter was fearful as the discharges of grape and round shot cut channels through the jammed-up mass, and tore the dense columns, as it were, into fragments. Dreadful as the scene was, what followed far exceeded it in horror; for soon the shells began to explode beneath the ice, which now, with a succession of reports louder than thunder, gave way. In an instant whole regiments were ingulfed, and, amid the wildest cries of despair, thousands sank, never to appear again, while the deafening artillery mercilessly played upon them, till over that broad surface no living thing was seen to move, while beneath was the sepulcher of five thousand men. About seven thousand reached Austerlitz by another road, to the northward; but even these had not escaped, save for a mistake of Bernadotte, who most unaccountably, as it was said, halted his division on the heights. Had it not been for this, not a soldier of the Russian right wing had been saved.

The reserve cavalry and the dragoons of the "Guard" were now called up from the pursuit, and I saw my own regiment pass close by me, as I stood amid the staff, round Murat. The men were fresh, and eager for the fray; yet how many fell in that pursuit, even after the victory. The Russian batteries continued their fire to the last. The cannoneers were cut down beside their guns, and the cavalry made repeated charges on our advancing squadrons; nor was it till late in the day they fell back, leaving two-thirds of their force dead or wounded on the field of battle.

On every side now were to be seen the flying columns of the allies, hotly followed by the victorious French. The guns still thundered at intervals; but the loud roar of battle was subdued to the crashing din of charging squadrons, and the distant cries of the vanquishers and the vanquished. Around and about lay the wounded, in all the fearful attitudes of suffering; and as we were fully a league in advance of our original position, no succor had yet arrived for the poor fellows whose courage had carried them into the very squares of the enemy.

Most of the staff—myself among the number—were dispatched to the rear for assistance. I remember, as I rode along at my fastest speed, between the columns of infantry and the fragments of artillery, which covered the grounds, that a *peloton* of dragoons came thundering past, while a voice shouted out "*Place! place!*" Supposing it was the Emperor himself, I drew up to one side, and uncovering my head, sat in patience till he had passed, when, with the speed of four horses urged to their utmost, a calèche flew by, two men dressed like couriers seated on the box. They made for the high-road toward Vienna, and soon disappeared in the distance.

"What can it mean?" said I to an officer beside me; "not his Majesty, surely?"

"No, no," replied he, smiling, "it is General Lebrun on his way to Paris with the news of the victory. The Emperor is down at Reygern yonder, where he has just written the bulletin. I warrant you he follows that calèche with his eye; he'd rather see a battery of guns carried off by the enemy, than an axle break there this moment."

Thus closed the great day of Austerlitz—a hundred cannons, forty-three thousand prisoners, and thirty-two colors, being the spoils of this the greatest of even Napoleon's victories.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE FIELD AT MIDNIGHT.

We passed the night on the field of battle—a night dark and starless. The heavens were, indeed, clothed with black, and a heavy atmosphere, lowering and gloomy, spread like a pall over the dead and the dying! Not a breath of air moved; and the groans of the wounded sighed through the stillness with a melancholy cadence no words can convey! Far away in the distance the moving lights marked where fatigue-parties went in search of their comrades. The Emperor himself did not leave the saddle till nigh morning; he went, followed by an ambulance, hither and thither over the plain, recalling the names of the several regiments, enumerating their deeds of prowess, and even asking for many of the soldiers by name. He ordered large fires to be lighted throughout the field, and where medical assistance could not be procured, the officers of the staff might be seen covering the wounded with great-coats and cloaks, and rendering them such aid as lay in their power. Dreadful as the picture was—fearful reverse to the gorgeous splendor of the vast army the morning sun had shone upon, in all the pride of strength and spirit—yet even here was there much to make one feel that war is not bereft of its humanizing influences. How many a soldier did I see that night, blackened with powder, his clothes torn and ragged with shot, sitting beside a wounded comrade, now wetting his lips with a cool draught, now cheering his heart with words of comfort. Many, though wounded, were tending others less able to assist themselves. Acts of kindness and self-devotion—not less in number than those of heroism and courage—were met with at every step; while among the sufferers there lived a spirit of enthusiasm that seemed to lighten the worst pangs of their agony. Many would cry out, as I passed, to know the fate of the day, and what became of this regiment or of that battalion. Others could but articulate a faint "*Vive l'Empereur!*" which in the intervals of pain they kept repeating, as though it were a charm against suffering; while one question met me every instant—"What says the Petit Caporal? is he content with us?" None were insensible to the glorious issue of that day; nor amid all the agony of death, dealt out in every shape of horror and misery, did I hear one word of anger or rebuke to him for whose ambition they had shed their heart's blood.

Having secured a fresh horse, I rode forward in the direction of Austerlitz, where our cavalry, met by the chevaliers of the Russian Imperial Guard, sustained the greatest check, and the most considerable loss of the day. The old dragoon who accompanied me warned me I should find few, if any, of our comrades living there. "*Ventrebleu!* lieutenant! you can't expect it. The first four squadrons went down like one man; for when our fellows fell wounded from their horses, they always sabred or shot them as they lay."

I found this information but too correct. Lines of dead men lay beside their horses, ranged as they stood in battle, while before them lay the bodies of the Russian Guard, their gorgeous uniform all slashed with gold, marking them out amid the dull russet costumes of their comrades. In many places were they intermingled, and showed where a hand-to-hand combat had been fought; and I saw two, clasped rigidly in each other's grasp, who had evidently been shot by others while struggling for the mastery.

"I told you, mon lieutenant, it was useless to come here; this was '*à la mort*' while it lasted; and, if it had continued much longer in the same fashion, it's hard to say which of us had been going over the field now with lanterns."

Too true, indeed! Not one wounded man did we meet with, nor did one human voice break the silence around us. "Perhaps," said I, "they may have already carried up the wounded to the village yonder. I see a great blaze of light there. Ride forward, and learn if it be so."

When I had dismissed the orderly, I dismounted from my horse, and walked carefully along the ridge of ground, anxious to ascertain if any poor fellow still remained alive amid that dreadful heap of dead. A low brushwood covered the ground in certain places, and here I perceived but few of the cavalry had penetrated, while the infantry were all tirailleurs of the Russian Guard, bayoneted by our advancing columns. As I approached the lake the ground became more rugged and uneven, and I was about to turn back, when my eye caught the faint glimmering of a light reflected in the water. Picketing my horse where he stood, I advanced alone toward

the light, which I saw now was at the foot of a little rocky crag beside the lake. As I drew near, I stopped to listen, and could distinctly hear the deep tones of a man's voice, as if broken at intervals by pain, while in his accents I thought I could trace a tone of indignant passion rather than of bodily suffering.

"Leave me, leave me where I am," cried he, peevishly. "I thought I might have had my last few moments tranquil, when I staggered thus far."

"Come, come, comrade," said another, in a voice of comforting—"come, thou wert never faint-hearted before. Thou hast had thy share of bruises, and cared little about them too. Art dry?"

"Yes; give me another drink. Ah!" cried he, in an excited tone, "they can't stand before the 'Cuirassiers of the Guard.' *Sacrebleu!* how proud the Petit Caporal will be of this day!" Then, dropping his voice, he muttered, "What care I who's proud? I have my billet and must be going?"

"Not so, *mon enfant;* thou'lt have the cross for thy day's work; he knows thee well; I saw him smile to-day when thou mad'st the salute in passing."

"Didst thou that?" said the wounded man, with eagerness. "Did he smile? Ah, villain! how you can allure men to shed their heart's blood by a smile. He knows me! That he ought, and if he but knew how I lay here now, he'd send the best surgeon of his staff to look after me."

"That he would, and that he will; courage and cheer up."

"No, no; I don't care for it now; I'll never go back to the regiment again—I couldn't do it!"

As he spoke the last words his voice became fainter and fainter, and at last was lost in a hiccup—partly, as it seemed, from emotion, and partly from bodily suffering.

"*Qui vive?*" cried his companion, as the clash of my sabre announced my approach.

"An officer of the 8th Hussars," said I, in a low voice, fearing to disturb the wounded man, as he lay with his head sunk on his knees.

"Too late, comrade, too late," said he, in a stifled tone; "the order of route has come—I must away."

"A brave cuirassier of the Guard should never say so while he has a chance left to serve his Emperor in another field of battle."

"*Vive l'Empereur! vive l'Empereur!*" shouted he, madly, as he lifted his helmet and tried to wave it above his head; but the exertion brought on a violent fit of coughing, which choked his utterance, while a torrent of red blood gushed from his mouth, and deluged his neck and chest.

"Ah! *mon Dieu,* that cry has been his death," said the other, wringing his hands in utter misery.

"Where is he wounded?" said I, kneeling down beside the sick man, who now lay, half on his face, upon the grass.

"In the chest, through the lung," whispered the other; "he doesn't know the doctor saw him; it was he told me there was no hope. 'You may leave him,' said he; 'an hour or two more are all that's left him'—as if I could leave a comrade we all loved. My poor fellow, it is a sad day for the old Fourth when thou art taken from them."

"Ha! was he of the Fourth, then?" said I, remembering the regiment.

"Yes, *parbleu!* and though but a corporal, he was well known throughout the army—Pioche—"

"Pioche," cried I, in agony; "is this Pioche?"

"Here," said the wounded man, hearing the name, and answering as if on parade—"here, *mon commandant,* but too faint, I'm afraid, for duty; I feel weak to-day," said he, as he pressed his hand upon his side, and then slowly sank back against the rock, and dropped his arms at either side.

"Come," said I, "we must lose no time; let us carry him to the rear. If nothing else can be done he'll meet with care—"

"Hush, mon lieutenant, don't let him hear you speak of that; he stormed and swore so much when the 'ambulance' passed, and they wanted to bring him along, that it brought on a coughing fit, just like what you saw, and he lay in a faint for half an hour after; he vows he'll never stir from where he is. Truth is, commandant," said he, in the lowest whisper, "he is determined to die; when his squadron fell back from the Russian square, he rode on their bayonets, and cut at the men while the artillery was playing all about him. He told me this morning he'd never leave the field."

"Poor fellow, what was the meaning of this sad resolution?"

"*Ma foi,* a mere trifle, after all," said the other, shrugging his shoulders, and making a true French grimace of contempt; "you'll smile when I tell you; but he takes it to heart, poor fellow. His mistress has been false to him—no great matter that, you'd say—but so it is, and nothing more. See how still he lies now; is he sleeping?"

"I fear not; he looks exhausted from loss of blood. Come, we must have him out of this; here comes my orderly to assist us. If we carry him to the road I'll find a carriage of some sort."

I said this in a tone of command, to silence any scruples he might still have about obeying his comrade, in preference to the orders of an officer. He obeyed with the instinct of discipline, and proceeded to fold his cloak, in such a manner that we could carry the wounded man between us.

The poor corporal, too weak to resist us, faint from bleeding and semi-stupid, suffered himself to be lifted upon the cloak, and never uttered a word or a cry, as we bore him along between us.

We had not proceeded far when we came up with a convoy, conducting several carts with the wounded to the convent of Reygern, which had now been fitted up as an hospital. On one of these we secured a place for our poor friend, and walked along beside him toward the convent. As we went along, I questioned his comrade closely on the point, and he told me that Pioche had resolved never to survive the battle, and had taken leave of his friends the evening before. "Ah, *parbleu!*" added he, with energy, "mademoiselle is pretty enough—there's no denying that—but her head is turned by flattery and soft speeches; all the gay young fellows of the hussar regiment, the aides-de-camp—ay, and some of the generals, too—have paid her so much attention, that it could not be expected she'd care for a poor corporal—not but that Pioche is a brave fellow and a fine soldier—*sacristi!* he'd be no discredit to any girl's choice; but Minette—"

"Minette, the vivandière—"

"Ay, to be sure, mon lieutenant—I'd warrant you must have known her."

"What of her—where is she?" said I, burning with impatience.

"She's with the wounded, up at Reygern yonder. They sent for her to Heilbrunn yesterday, where she was with the reserve battalions. *Ma foi*, you don't think our fellows would do without Minette at the 'ambulance,' where there was a battle to be fought. They say they'd hard work enough to make her come up. After all, she's a strange girl—that she is."

"How was that? Has she taken offense with the Fourth?"

"No, that is not it; she likes the old regiment in her heart. I'd never believe she didn't, but"—here he dropped his voice to a low whisper, as if dreading to be overheard by the wounded man—"but they say—who knows if it's true—that when she was left behind at Ulm or Elchingen, or somewhere up there on the Danube, that there was a young fellow—I heard his name, too, but I forget it—who was brought in, badly wounded, and that mademoiselle was left to watch and nurse him. He got well in time, for the thing was not so serious as they thought; and what do you think was the return he made the poor girl?—he seduced her!"

"It's false, false as hell!" cried I, bursting with passion; "who has dared to spread such a calumny?"

"Don't be angry, mon lieutenant; there are plenty to answer for the report; and if it was yourself—"

"Yes; it was by *my* bedside she watched; it was to *me* she gave that care and kindness by which I recovered from a dangerous wound; but so far from this base requital—"

"Why did she leave you, then, and march night and day with the chasseur brigade in the Tyrol? Why did she tell her friends that she'd never see the old Fourth again? Why did she fret herself into an illness—"

"Did she do this, poor girl?"

"Ay, that she did; but, mayhap, you never heard of all this. I can only say, mon lieutenant, that you'd be safer in a broken square, charged by a heavy squadron, than among the Fourth, after what you've done."

I turned indignantly from him without a reply, for while my pride revolted at answering an accusation from such a quarter, my mind was harassed by the sad fate of poor Minette, and perplexed how to account for her sudden departure. My silence at once arrested my companion's speech, and we walked along the remainder of the way without a word on either side.

The day was just breaking when the first wagon of the convoy entered the gates of the convent. It was an enormous mass of building, originally destined for the reception of about three thousand persons; for, in addition to the priestly inhabitants, there were two great hospitals and several schools, included within the walls. This, before the battle, had been tenanted by the staffs of many general officers, and the corps of engineers and sappers, but now was entirely devoted to the wounded of either army; for Austrians and Russians were everywhere to be met with, receiving equal care and attention with our own troops.

It was the first time I had witnessed a military hospital after a battle, and the impression was too fearful to be ever forgotten by me.

The great chambers and spacious rooms of the convent were soon found inadequate for the numbers who arrived; and already the long corridors and passages of the building were crowded with beds, between which a narrow path scarcely permitted one person to pass. Here, promiscuously, without regard to rank, officers in command of regiments lay side by side with the meanest privates, waiting the turn of medical aid; as no other order was observed than the necessities of each case demanded. A black mark above the bed, indicating that the patient's state was hopeless, proclaimed that no further attention need be bestowed; while the same mark, with a white bar across it, implied that it was a case for operation. In this way the surgeons who arrived at each moment from different corps of the army, discovered, at a glance, where their services were required, and not a minute's time was lost.

The dreadful operations of surgery, for which, in the events of every-day life, every provision of delicate secrecy, and every minute detail which can alleviate dread, are so rigidly studied, were here going forward on every side; the horrible preparations moved from bed to bed, with a rapidity which showed that where suffering so abounded, there was no time for sympathy; and the surgeons, with arms bare to the shoulder, and bedaubed with blood, toiled away as though life no longer moved in the creeping flesh beneath the knife, and human agony spoke not aloud with every motion of their hand.

"Place there—move forward!" said an hospital surgeon, as they carried up the litter on which Pioche lay stretched and senseless.

"What's this?" cried a surgeon, leaning forward and placing his hand on the sick man's pulse. "Ah!—take him back again—it's all over there!"

"Oh, no!" cried I, in agony, "it can scarcely be—they lifted him alive from the wagon."

"He's not dead, sir," replied the surgeon in a whisper, "but he will soon be—there's internal bleeding going on from that wound, and a few hours, or less, perhaps, must close the scene."

"Can nothing be done—nothing?"

"I fear not." He opened the jacket of the wounded man as he spoke, and slitting the inner clothes asunder with a quick stroke of his scissors, disclosed a tremendous sabre wound in the side. "That is not the worst," said he; "look here," pointing to a small bluish mark of a bullet-hole above it—"here lies the mischief."

An hospital aid whispered something at the instant in the surgeon's ear, to which he quickly replied, "When?"

"This instant, sir, the ligature slipped, and—"

"Remove him," was the reply. "Now, sir, I have a bed for your poor fellow here; but I have little hope to give you. His pulse is stronger, otherwise the endeavor would be lost time."

While they carried the litter forward, I perceived that another party were lifting from a bed near a figure, over whose face the sheet was carelessly thrown. I guessed from the gestures that the form they lifted was lifeless; the heavy sumph of the body upon the ground showed it beyond a doubt. The bearers replaced the dead man by the dying body of poor Pioche, and, from a vague feeling of curiosity, I stooped down and drew back the sheet from the face of the corpse. As I did so, my limbs trembled, and I leaned back almost fainting against the wall. Pale with the pallor of death, but scarcely altered from life, I beheld the dead features of Amedée Pichot, the captain whose insolence had left an unsettled quarrel between us. The man, for whose coming I waited to expiate an open insult, now lay cold and lifeless at my feet. What a rush of sensations passed through my mind as I gazed on that motionless mass; and, oh, what gratitude my heart gushed, to think that he did not fall by *my* hand!

"A brave soldier, but a quarrelsome friend," said the surgeon, stooping down to examine the wound, with all the indifference of a man who regarded life as a mere problem. "It was a cannon-shot carried it off."

As he said this he disclosed the mangled remains of a limb, torn from the trunk too high to permit of amputation. "Poor Amedée, it was the death he always wished for. It was a strange horror he had of falling by the hand of an adversary, rather than being carried off thus; and now for the cuirassier."

So saying, he turned toward the bed on which Pioche lay, still as death itself. A few minutes' careful investigation of the case enabled him to pronounce that although the chances were many against recovery, yet it was not altogether hopeless.

"All will depend on the care of whoever watches him," said the surgeon. "Symptoms will arise, requiring prompt attention, and a change in treatment, and this is one of those cases where a nurse is worth a hundred doctors. Who takes charge of this bed?" he called aloud.

"Minette, monsieur," said a sergeant

"She has lain down to take a little rest, for she was quite worn out with fatigue."

"*Me voici!*" said a silvery voice I knew at once to be hers; and the same instant she pierced the crowd around the bed, and approached the patient. No sooner had she beheld the features of the sick man, than she reeled back, and grasped the arms of the persons on either side. For a few seconds she stood, with her hands pressed upon her face, and when she withdrew them, her features were almost ghastly in their hue, while, with a great effort over her emotion, she said, in a low voice, "Can he recover?"

"Yes, Minette," replied the surgeon, "and will, if care avail anything. Just hear me for a moment."

With that he drew her to one side, and commenced to explain the treatment he proposed to adopt. As he spoke, her cloak, which up to this instant she wore, dropped from her shoulders, and she stood there in the dress of the vivandière—a short frock coat, of light blue, with a thin gold braid upon the collar and the sleeve—loose trowsers of white jean, strapped beneath her boots. A silk sash of scarlet and gold intwined was fastened round her waist, and fell in a long fringe at her side; while a cap of blue cloth, with a gold band and tassel, hung by a hook at her girdle. Simple as was the dress, it displayed to perfection the symmetry of her figure and her carriage, and suited the character of her air and gesture, which, abrupt and impatient at times, was almost boyish in the wayward freedom of her action.

The surgeon soon finished his directions, the crowd separated, and Minette alone remained by the sick man's bed. For some minutes her cares did not permit her to look up, but when she did, a slight cry broke from her, and she sank down upon the seat at the bedside.

"Minette, dear Minette, you are not angry with me?" said I, in a low and trembling tone; "I have not done aught to displease you—have I so?"

She answered not a word, but a blush of the deepest scarlet suffused her face and temples, and her bosom heaved almost convulsively.

"To you I owe my life," continued I, with earnestness; "nay more, I owe the kindness which made of a sick bed a place of pleasant thoughts and happy memories. Can I, then, have offended you, while my whole heart was bursting with gratitude?"

A paleness—more striking than the blush that preceded it—now stole over her features, but she uttered not a word. Her eyes turned from me and fell upon her own figure, and I saw the tears fill up and roll slowly along her cheeks.

"Why did you leave me, Minette," said I, wound up by her obstinate silence beyond further endurance. "Did the few words of impatience—"

"No—no—no!" broke she in, "not that—not that."

"What then? Tell me, for Heaven's sake, how have I earned your displeasure? Believe me, I have met with too little kindness in my way through life, not to feel poignantly the loss of a friend. What was it, I beseech you?"

"Oh, do not ask me!" cried she, with streaming eyes—"do not, I beg of you; enough that you know, and this I swear to you, that no fault of yours was in question. You were always good and always kind to me—too kind—too good—but not even your teaching could alter the waywardness of my nature. Speak of this no more, I ask you, as the greatest favor you can bestow on me. See here," cried she, while her lips trembled with emotion, "I have need of all my courage to be of use to him, and you will not, I am sure, render me unequal to my task."

"But we are friends, Minette—friends as before," said I, taking her hand, and pressing it within mine.

"Yes, friends," muttered she, in a broken voice, while she turned her head from me. "Adieu! monsieur, adieu!"

"Adieu, then, since you wish it so, Minette; but whatever your secret reason for this change toward me, you never can alter the deep-rooted feeling of my heart, which makes me know myself your friend forever."

The more I thought of Minette's conduct, the more puzzled I was. No jealousy on the part of Pioche could explain her abrupt departure from Elchingen, and her resolve never to rejoin the Fourth. She was, indeed, a strange girl, wayward and self-willed, but her impulses all had their source in high feelings of honor and exalted pride. It might have been, that some chance expression had given her offense; yet she denied this—but still, her former frankness was gone, and a sense of coldness, if not distrust, had usurped its place. I could make nothing of it. One thing alone did I feel convinced of—she did not love Pioche. Poor fellow, with all the fine traits of his honest nature, and manly simplicity and openness of his character, he had not those arts of pleasing which win their way with a woman's mind; besides that Minette, from habit and tone of thought, had im-

bibed feelings and ideas of a very different class in society, and, with a feminine tact, had contrived to form acquaintance with, and a relish for, the tastes and pleasures of the cultivated world. The total subversion of all social order effected by the Revolution, had opened the path of ambition in life equally to women as to men; and all the endeavors of the Consulate and the Empire had not sobered down the minds of France to their former condition. The sergeant, to-day, saw no reason why he might not wear his epaulettes to-morrow, and in time exchange his shako even for a crown; and so the vivandière, whose life was passed in the intoxicating atmosphere of glory, might well dream of greatness which should be hers, hereafter, and of the time when, as the wife of a marshal or a peer of France, she would walk the salons of the Tuileries as proudly as the daughter of a Rohan or a Tavanne.

There was, then, nothing vain or presumptuous in the boldest flight of ambition. However glittering the goal, it was beyond the reach of none; and the hopes which, in better-ordered communities, had been deemed absurd, seemed here but fair and reasonable. And from this element alone proceeded some of the greatest actions, and by far the greatest portion of the unhappiness of the period. The mind of the nation was unfixed; men had not as yet resolved themselves into those grades and classes, by the means of which public opinion is brought to bear upon individuals, from those of his own condition. Each was a law unto himself, suggesting his own means of advancement, and estimating his own powers of success; and the result was, a general scramble for rank, dignity, and honors, the unfitness of the possessor for which, when attained, brought neither contempt nor derision. The epaulette was noblesse—the shako, a coronet. What wonder, then, if she, whose personal attractions were so great, and whose manners and tone of thought were so much above her condition, had felt the stirrings of that ambition within her heart which now appeared to be the moving spirit of the nation.

Lost in such thoughts I turned homeward toward my quarters, and was already some distance from the convent, when a dragoon galloped up to my side, and asked eagerly if I were the surgeon of the Sixth Grenadiers. As I replied in the negative, he muttered something between his teeth, and added louder, "The poor general—it will be too late after all." So saying, and before I could question him further, he set spurs to his horse, and dashing onward, soon disappeared in the darkness of the night. A few minutes afterward I beheld a number of lanterns straight before me on the narrow road, and, as I came nearer, a sentinel called out,

"Halt there; stand!"

I gave my name and rank, when the man, advancing toward me, said, in a half whisper,

"It is our general, sir; they say he cannot be brought any further, and they must perform the operation here."

The soldier's voice trembled at every word, and he could scarcely falter out, in reply to my question, the name of the wounded officer.

"General St. Hilaire, sir, who led the grenadiers on the Pratzen," said the poor fellow, his sorrow struggling with his pride.

I pressed forward, and there, on a litter, lay the figure of a large and singularly fine-looking man. His coat, which was covered with orders, lay open, and discovered a shirt stained and clotted with blood; but his most dangerous wound was from a grape-shot in the thigh, which shattered the bone, and necessitated amputation. A young staff surgeon, the only medical man present, was kneeling at his side, and occupied in compressing some wounded vessels to arrest the bleeding, which, at the slightest stir of the patient, broke out anew. The remainder of the group were grenadiers of his own regiment, in whose sad and sorrow-struck faces one might read the affection his men invariably bore him.

"Is he coming? Can you hear any one coming?" said the young surgeon, in an anxious whisper to the soldier beside him.

"No, sir, but he cannot be far off now," replied the man.

"Shall I ride back to Reygern for assistance?" said I, in a low voice, to the surgeon.

"I thank you, sir," said the wounded man, in a low, calm tone—for with the quick ear of suffering he had overheard my question—"I thank you, but my orderly has already been sent thither. If you could relieve my young friend here from his fatiguing duty for a little, you would render us both a service—I am truly grieved to see him so much exhausted."

"No, no, sir," stammered the youth, as the tears ran fast down his cheeks, "this is my place; I will not leave it."

"Kind fellow," muttered the General, as he pressed his hand gently on the young man's arm, "I can bear this better than you can."

"Ah, here he comes now," said the sur-

tinel, and the same moment a man dismounted from his horse, and came forward toward us. It was Louis, the surgeon of the Emperor himself, dispatched by Napoleon the moment he heard of the event.

At any other moment, perhaps, the abrupt demeanor of this celebrated surgeon would have savored little of delicacy or feeling, nor even then could I forgive the sudden announcement in which he conveyed to the sufferer that immediate amputation must be performed.

"No chance left but this, Louis?" said the General.

"None, sir," replied the doctor, while he unlocked an instrument case, and busied himself in preparation for the operation.

"Can you defer it a little—an hour or two I mean?"

"An hour, perhaps, not more, certainly."

"But am I certain of your services then, Louis?" said the General, trying to smile. "You know I always promised myself your aid when this hour came."

"I shall return in an hour," replied the Doctor, pulling out his watch; "I am going to Rapp's quarters."

"Poor Rapp; is he wounded?"

"A mere sabre-cut; but Sebastiani has suffered more severely. Now then, Lanusse," said he, addressing the young surgeon, "you remain here—continue as you are doing, and in an hour—"

"In an hour," echoed the wounded man, with a shudder, as though the anticipation of the dreadful event had thrilled through his very heart; nor was it till the retiring sounds of the surgeon's horse had died away in the distance, that his features recovered their former calm and tranquil expression.

"A prompt fellow is Louis," said he, after a pause, "and though one might like somewhat more courtesy in the Faubourg, yet on the field of battle it is all for the best; this is no place nor time for compliments."

The young man answered not a word, either not daring to criticise too harshly his superior, or, perhaps, his emotion at the moment was too strong for utterance. In reply to my offer to remain with him, however, he thanked me heartily, and seemed gratified that he was not to be left alone in such a trying emergency.

"Come," said St. Hilaire, after a pause, "I have asked for time, and am already forgetting how to employ it. Who can write here? Can you, Guilbert?"

"Alas! no, sir," said a dark grenadier, blushing to the very eyes.

"If you will permit a stranger, sir," said I, "I will be but too proud and too happy to render you any assistance in my power. I am on the staff of General d'Auvergne, and—"

"A French officer, sir," interrupted he; "quite enough; I ask for no other guerdon of your honor. Sit down here, then, and—but first try if you can discover a pocket-book in my sabretasche; I hope it has not been lost."

"Here it is, General," said a soldier, coming forward with it; "I found it on the ground beside you."

"Well, then, I will ask you to write down from my dictation a few lines, which, should this affair"—he faltered slightly here—"this affair prove unfortunate, you will undertake to convey, by some means or other, to the address I shall give you in Paris. It is not a will, I assure you," continued he, with a faint smile. "I have no wealth to leave; but I know his Majesty too well to fear anything on that score; but my children, I wish to give some few directions—" Here he stopped for several minutes, and then, in a calm voice, added: "Whenever you are ready."

It was with a suffering spirit and a faltering hand I wrote down, from his dictation, some short sentences, addressed to each member of his family. Of these it is not my intention to speak, save in one instance, where St. Hilaire himself evinced a wish that his sentiments should not be a matter of secrecy.

"I desire," said he, in a firm tone of voice, as he turned round and addressed the soldiers on either side of him—"I desire that my son, now at the Polytechnique, should serve the Emperor better than, and as faithfully as, his father has done, if his Majesty will graciously permit him to do so, in the grenadier battalion, which I have long commanded; it will be the greatest favor I can ask of him." A low murmur of grief, no longer repressible, ran through the little group around the litter. "The Grenadiers of the Sixth," continued he, proudly, while for an instant his pale features flushed up, "will not love him the less for the name he bears. Come, come, men, do not give way thus; what will my kind young friend here say of us, when he joins the hussar brigade? This is not their ordinary mood, believe me," said he, addressing me. "The Russian Guard would give a very different account of them: they are stouter fellows at the '*pas de charge*' than around the litter of a wounded comrade."

While he was yet speaking, Louis returned, followed by two officers, one of whom, notwithstanding his efforts at concealment, I recognized to be Marshal Murat.

"We must remove him, if it be possible,"

said the surgeon, in a whisper; "and yet the slightest motion is to be dreaded."

"May I speak to him?" said Murat, in a low voice.

"Yes, that you may," replied Louis, who now pushed his way forward and approached the litter.

"Ah, so soon!" said the wounded man, looking up; "a man of your word, Louis. And how is Rapp? Nothing in this fashion, I hope," added he, pointing to his fractured limb with a sickly smile.

"No, no," replied the surgeon; "but here is Marshal Murat come to inquire after you, from the Emperor."

A flush of pride lit up St. Hilaire's features as he heard this, and he asked eagerly, "Where—where?"

"We must remove you, St. Hilaire," said Murat, endeavoring to speak calmly, when it was evident his feelings were highly excited; "Louis says you must not remain here."

"As you like, marshal. What says his Majesty—is the affair as decisive as he looked for?"

"Far more so; the allied army is destroyed—the campaign is ended."

"Come, then, this is not so bad as I deemed it," rejoined St. Hilaire, with a tone of almost gayety; "I can afford to be invalided if the Emperor has no further occasion for me."

While these few words were interchanging, Louis had applied a tourniquet around the wounded limb, and having given the soldiers directions how they were to step, so as not to disturb or displace the shattered bones, he took his place beside the litter, and said,

"We are ready now, general."

They lifted the litter as he spoke, and moved slowly forward. Murat pressed the hand St. Hilaire extended to him without a word; and then, turning his head away, suffered the party to pass on.

Before we reached Reygern, the wounded general had fallen into a heavy sleep, from which he did not awake as they laid him on the bed in the hospital.

"Good-night, sir, or rather good-morning," said Louis to me, as I turned to leave the spot; "we may chance to have better news for you than we anticipated, when you visit us here again."

And so we parted.

CHAPTER L.

A "MAITRE D'ARMES."

THE day after the battle of Austerlitz the Prince of Lichtenstein arrived in our camp, with, as it was rumored, proposals for a peace. The negotiations, whatever they were, were strictly secret, not even the marshals themselves being admitted to Napoleon's confidence on this occasion. Soon after mid-day, a great body of the Guard who had been in reserve the previous day, were drawn up in order of battle, presenting an array of several thousand men, whose dress, look, and equipment—fresh as if on parade before the Tuileries—could not fail to strike the Austrian envoy with amazement. Everything that could indicate the appearance of suffering, or even fatigue, among the troops, was sedulously kept out of view. Such of the cavalry regiments as suffered least in the battle were under arms, while the generals of division received orders to have their respective staffs fully equipped and mounted, as if on a day of review. It was late in the afternoon when the word was passed along the lines to stand to arms; and the moment after a *calèche*, drawn by six horses, passed in full gallop, and took the road toward Austerlitz. The return of the Austrian envoy set a thousand conjectures in motion, and all were eager to find out what had been the result of his mission.

"We must soon learn it all," said an old colonel of artillery near me; "if the game be war, we shall be called up to assist Davoust's movement on Göding. The Russians have but one line of retreat, and that is already in our possession."

"I cannot for the life of me understand the Emperor's inaction," said a younger officer; "here we remain just as if nothing had been done. One would suppose that a Russian army stood in full force before us, and that we had not gained a tremendous battle."

"Depend on it, Auguste," said the old officer, smiling, "his Majesty is not the man to let slip his golden opportunities. If we don't advance, it is because it is safer to remain where we are."

"Safer than pursue a flying enemy?"

"Even so—it is not Russia, nor Austria, we have in the field against us, but Europe—the world."

"With all my heart," retorted the other, boldly. "Nor do I think the odds unfair; all I would ask is, the General Bonaparte of Cairo or Marengo, and not the purple-clad Emperor of the Tuileries."

"It is not while the plain is yet reeking with the blood of Austerlitz that such a reproach should be spoken," said I, indignantly; "never was Bonaparte greater than Napoleon."

"Monsieur has served in Egypt?" said

the young man, contemptuously, while he measured me from head to foot.

"Would that I had!—would that I could give whatever years I may have before me, for those whose every day shall live in history!"

"You are right, young man," said the old Colonel; "they were glorious times, and a worthy prelude to the greatness that followed them."

"A bright promise of the future—never to come," rejoined the younger, with a flash of anger on his cheek.

"*Parbleu*, sir, you speak boldly!" said a harsh, low voice from behind. We turned—it was Napoleon, dressed in a gray coat, all covered with fur, and looking like one of the couriers of the army. "I did not know my measures were so freely canvassed as I find them. Who are you, sir?"

"Legrange, sire, chef d'escadron of the Second Voltigeurs," said the young man, trembling from head to foot, while he uncovered his head, and stood, cap in hand, before him.

"Since when, sir, have I called you into my counsels, and asked your advice? or what is it in your position which entitles you to question one in mine? Duroc, come here—your sword, sir."

The young man let fall his shako from his hand, and laid it on his sword-hilt.

"Ah!" cried the Emperor, suddenly; "what became of your right arm?"

"I left it at Aboukir, sire."

Napoleon muttered something between his teeth, then added, aloud, "Come, sir, you are not the first whose hand has saved his head; return to your duty, and—mark me!—be satisfied with doing yours, and leave me to mine. And you, sir," said he, turning toward me and using the same harsh tone of voice, "I should know your face."

"Lieutenant Burke, of the 8th Hussars."

"Ah! I remember—the Chouanist; so, sir, it seems that I stand somewhat higher in your esteem than when you kept company with Messieurs Georges and Pichegru—eh?"

"No, sire; your Majesty ever occupied the first place in my admiration and devotion."

"Sacristi! then you took a strange way to show it, when first I had the pleasure of your acquaintance. You are on General St. Hilaire's staff?"

"General d'Auvergne's, sire."

"True. D'Auvergne, a word with you." He turned and whispered something to the old general, who during the whole colloquy stood at his back, anxious, but not daring to interpose a word.

"Well, well," said Napoleon, in a voice of much kinder accent, "I am satisfied; your general, sir, reports favorably of your zeal and capacity. I do not desire to let your former conduct prove any bar to your advancement, and on his recommendation, of which I trust you may prove yourself worthy, I name you to a troop in your own regiment."

"And still to serve on my staff?" said the General, half questioning the Emperor.

"As you wish it, d'Auvergne." With that he moved forward ere I could do more than express my gratitude by a respectful bow.

"I told you, Burke, the time would come for this," said d'Auvergne, as he pressed my hand warmly, and followed the cortége of the Emperor.

Hitherto I had lived an almost isolated life: my staff duties had so separated me from my brother officers that I only knew them by name; while the other aides-de-camp of the general were men much older than myself, and with none of them had I formed any intimacy whatever. It was not without a sense of this loneliness that I now thought over my promotion. The absence of those who sympathize with our moments of joy and sorrow reduces our enjoyment to a narrow limit indeed. The only one of all I knew who would really have felt happy in my advancement was poor Pioche. He was beyond every thought of pleasure or grief. Thus reflecting, I turned toward my quarters at Brunn. It was evening: the watch-fires were lighted, and round them sat groups of soldiers at their supper, chatting away pleasantly, and recounting the events of the battle. Many had been slightly wounded, and by their bandaged foreheads and disabled arms claimed a marked pre-eminence above the rest. A straw bivouac, with its great blazing fire in front, would denote some officer's quarters, and here were generally some eight or ten assembled, while the savory odor of some smoking dish, and the merry laughter, proclaimed that feasting was not excluded from the life of a campaign.

As I passed one of these, I heard the tones of a voice which, well known, had somehow not been heard by me for many a day before. Who could it be? I listened, but in vain. I asked myself whose was it. I dismounted, and leading my horse by the bridle, passed before the hut. The strong light of the blazing wood lit up the interior, and showed me a party of about a

dozen officers, seated and lying on a heap of straw, occupied in discussing a supper, which, however wanting in all the elegancies of table equipment, even where I stood had a most appetizing odor. Various drinking vessels—some of them silver—passed from hand to hand rapidly, and the clinking of cups proclaimed that, although of different regiments—as I saw they were—a kindly feeling united them.

"Well, François," said the same voice whose accents were so familiar to me without my being able to say why—"well, François, you have not told us how it happened."

"Easily enough," said another; "he broke my blade in his back, and gave point afterward and ran me through the chest." It was the 'Maître d'armes' of the Fourth, my old antagonist, who said this, and I drew near to hear the remainder. "You could not call the thing unfair," continued he, "but, after all, no one ever heard of such a '*passe*.'"

"I could have told you of it, though," rejoined the other; "for I remember once, in the fencing school at the Polytechnique, I saw him catch his antagonist's blade in his sleeve, and when he had it secure, snap it across, and then thrust home with his own. *Parbleu*, he lost a coat by it, and I believe, at the time, poor fellow, he could ill spare it."

This story, which was told of myself, was an incident which occurred in a school duel, and was only known to two or three others; and again was I puzzled to think which of my former companions the speaker could be. My curiosity was now stronger than aught else, and so, affecting to seek a light for my cigar, I approached the blaze.

"Hallo, comrade! a cup of wine with you," cried out a voice from within; "Melniker is no bad drinking—"

"When Chambertin can't be had," said another, handing me a goblet of red wine.

"*Par St. Denis!* It's the very man himself," shouted a third. "Why, Burke, my old comrade, do you forget Tascher?"

"What!" said I, in amazement, turning from one to the other of the moustached faces, and unable to discover my former friend, while they laughed loud and long at my embarrassment.

"Make way for him there—make way, lads! Come, Burke, here's your place," said he, stretching out his hand and pressing me down beside him on the straw. "So you did not remember me?"

In truth, there was enough of change in his appearance, since last I saw him, to warrant my forgetfulness. A dark, bushy beard, worn cuirassier fashion, around the mouth and high on the cheeks, almost concealed his face, while in figure he had grown both taller and stouter.

"Art colonel of the 8th regiment?" said he, laughing; "you know I promised you were to be, when we were to meet again."

"No; but if I mistake not," said a hussar officer opposite, "monsieur is in the way to become so. Were you not named to a troop, about half an hour ago, by the Emperor himself?"

"Yes!" said I, with an effort to suppress my pride.

"*Diantre bleu!*" exclaimed Tascher, "what good fortune you always have! I wish you joy of it, with all my heart. I say, comrades, let us drown his commission for him."

"Agreed—agreed!" cried they all in a breath. "François will make us a bowl of punch for the occasion."

"Most willingly," said the little "maître d'armes." "Monsieur le Capitaine, I am sure, bears me no ill-will for our little affair. I thought not," added he, seizing my hand in both his. "*Ma foi*, you spoiled my *tierce* for me—I shall never be the same man again. Now, gentlemen, pass down the brandy, and let the man with most credit go seek for sugar at the canteen."

While François commenced his operations, Tascher proceeded to recount to me the miserable life he had spent in garrison towns, till the outbreak of the campaign had called him on active service.

"It was no use that I asked the Empress to intercede for me, and get me appointed to another regiment; being the nephew of Napoleon seemed to set a complete bar to my advancement. Even now," said he, "my name has been sent forward by my colonel for promotion, and I wager you fifty Naps I shall be passed over."

"And what if you be?" said a huge, heavy-browed major beside him—"what great hardship is it to be a lieutenant in the cuirassiers at two-and-twenty? I was a sergeant ten years later."

"Ay, *parbleu!*" cried another, "I won my epaulettes at Cairo, when three officers were reported living, in a whole regiment."

"To be sure," said François, looking up from his operation of lemon squeezing; "here am I, a maître d'armes, after twenty-six years' service; and there's Davoust, who never could stand before me, he's a general of brigade."

The whole party laughed aloud at the grievances of Maître François, whose seriousness on the subject was perfectly real.

"Ah! you may laugh," said he, half in pique; "but what a mere accident can determine a man's fortune in life! Would not there be a major-general to-day if he did not measure six feet without his boots? We were at school together, and, *ma foi*, he was always at the bottom of the class."

"And so, François, it was your size, then, that stopped your promotion?"

"Of course it was. When a man is but five feet—with high heels, too—he can only be advanced as a maître d'armes. *Parbleu!* what should I be now if I had only grown a little taller?"

"It is all better as it is," growled out an old captain, between the puffs of his meerschaum. "If thou wert an inch bigger, there would be no living in the same brigade with thee."

"For all that," rejoined Maître François, "I have put many a pretty fellow his full length on the grass."

"How many duels, François, did you tell us, the other evening, that you fought in the Twenty-second?"

"Seventy-eight!" said the little man—"not to speak of two affairs which, I am ashamed to confess, were with the broadsword; but they were fellows from Alsace, and they knew no better."

"*Tonnerre de ciel!*" cried the Major, "a little devil like that is a perfect plague in a regiment. I remember we had a fellow called Piccotin—"

"Ah! Piccotin—poor Piccotin! We were foster-brothers," interrupted François—"we were both from Châlons-sur-Marne."

"Egad! I'd have sworn you were," rejoined the Major, "One might have thought ye were twins."

"People often said so," responded François, with as much composure as though a compliment had been intended. "We both had the same colored hair and eyes, the same military air, and gave the '*passe en tierce*' always outside the guard exactly in the same way."

"What became of Piccotin?" asked the Major. "He left us at Lyons."

"You never heard, then, what became of him?"

"No. We knew he joined the *chasseurs à pied.*"

"I can tell you, then," said François; "no one knows better. I parted from Piccotin when we were ordered to Egypt. We did our best to obtain service in the same brigade, for we were like brothers, but we could not manage it; and so, with sad hearts, we separated, he, to return to France, I, to sail for Alexandria. This was in the spring of 1798, or, as we called it, the year Six of the Republic. For three years we never met; but when the eighth demi-brigade returned from Egypt, we went into garrison at Bayonne, and the first man I saw on the ramparts was Piccotin himself. There was no mistaking him; you know the way he had of walking with a long stride, rising on his instep at every step, squaring his elbows, and turning his head from side to side, just to see if any one was pleased to smile, or even so much as to look closely at him. Ah! *ma foi*, little Piccotin knew how to treat such as well as any one. Methinks I see him approaching his man with a slide and a bow, and then, taking off his cap, I hear him say, in his mildest tone, 'Monsieur assuredly did not intend that stare and that grimace for me. I know I must have deceived myself; monsieur is only a fool—he never meant to be impertinent.' Then, *parbleu*, what a storm would come on, and how cool was Piccotin the whole time! How scrupulously timid he would be of misspelling the gentleman's name, or misplacing an accent over it! How delicately he would inquire his address, as if the curiosity was only pardonable! And then with what courtesy he would take his leave, retiring half a dozen paces before he ventured to turn his back on the man he was determined to kill next morning!"

"Quite true, perfectly true, François," said the Major; "Piccotin did the thing with the most admirable temper and good-breeding."

"That was the tone of Châlons when we were both boys," said François, proudly; "he and I were reared together." He finished a bumper of wine as he made this satisfactory explanation, and looked round at the company with the air of a conqueror.

"Piccotin saw me as quickly as I perceived him, and the minute after we were in each other's arms. 'Ah! *mon cher*, now many?' said he to me, as soon as the first burst of enthusiasm had subsided.

"'Only eighteen,' said I, sadly; 'but two were Mamelukes of the Guard.'

"'Thou wert ever fortunate, François,' he replied, wiping his eyes with emotion; 'I have never pinked any but Christians.'

"'Come, come,' said I, 'don't be downhearted; good times are coming. They say *le Petit Caporal* will have us in England soon.'

"'Mayhap,' said he, sorrowfully, for he could not get over my Turks. Well, in order to cheer him up a little, I proposed that we should go and sup together at the

'Grenadier Rouge;' and away we went accordingly.

"It would amuse you, perhaps," said Maître François, "were I to tell some of the stories we related to each other that night. We both had had our share of adventure since we met, and some droll ones among the number. However, that is not the question at present. We sat late—so late that they came to close the *café* at last, and we were obliged to depart. You know the 'Grenadier Rouge,' don't you?"

"Yes, I know it well," replied the Major; "it's over the glacis, about a mile outside the barrier."

"Just so; and there's a pleasant walk across the glacis to the gate. As Piccotin and I set out together on our way to the town, the night was calm and mild: a soft moonlight shed a silvery tint over every object, and left the stately poplars to throw a still longer shadow on the smooth grass. For some time we walked along without speaking; the silence of the night, the fragrant air, the mellow light, were all soft and tranquilizing influences, and we sank each into his own reflections.

"When we reached the middle of the plain—you know the spot, I'm sure—there's a little bronze fountain, with four cedars round it—" The major nodded, and he resumed: "Piccotin came to a sudden halt, and, seizing my hand in both of his, said, 'François, canst thou guess what I'm thinking of?'

"I looked at him, and I looked around me, and after a few seconds' pause I answered, 'Yes, Piccotin, I know it, it is a lovely spot.'

"'Never was anything like it!' cried he, in a rapture; 'look at the turf, smooth as velvet, and yet soft to the foot; see the trees, how they fall back to give the light admittance; and there, that little fountain, if one felt thirsty—eh!—what say you?'

"'Agreed,' said I, grasping him by both hands; 'for this once—once only, Piccotin.'

"'Only once, François; a few passes, and no more.'

"'Just so—the first touch.'

"'Exactly—the first touch,' said he, as, taking off his cloak, and folding it neatly, he laid it on the grass.

"It was a strange thing, but in all our lives, from earliest boyhood up, we never had measured swords together, and though we were both 'maître d'armes,' we never crossed blades, even in jest. Often and often had our comrades pitted us against each other, and laid wagers on the result, but we never would consent to meet—I cannot say why. It was not fear—I know not how to account for it, but such was the fact.

"'What blade do you wear, François?' said he, approaching me, as I arranged my jacket and vest, with my cap, on the ground.

"'A Rouen steel,' said I; 'too limber for most men, but I am so accustomed to it I prefer it.'

"'Ah! a pretty weapon, indeed,' said he, drawing it from the scabbard, and making one or two passes with it against an elder trunk. 'Was this the blade you had with you in Egypt?'

"'Yes, I have worn none other for eight years.'

"'Ah! *ma foi*, those Mamelukes—how I envy you those Mamelukes,' he muttered to himself, as he walked back to his place.

"'Move a little, a very little, to the left—there's a shadow from that tree—can you see me well?' said I.

"'Perfectly—are you ready? Well—*en garde!*'

"'Piccotin's forte, I soon saw, lay in the long meditated attack, where each movement was part of an artfully devised series; and I perceived that he suffered his adversary to gain several trifling advantages, by way of giving him a false confidence, biding his own time to pay off the scores. In this description of fence he was more than my equal. ***My*** strength was in the skirmishing passages, where most men lunge at random; then, no matter how confused the rally, I was as cool as in the salute.

"For some time I permitted him to play his game out; and certainly nothing could be more beautiful than his passes over the hilt. Twice he planted his point within an inch of my bosom; and nothing but a spring backward would have saved me.

"At length, after a long-contested struggle, he made a feint within, and then without, the guard, and succeeded in touching my sword-arm, above the wrist.

"'A touch, I believe,' said he.

"'A mere nothing,' said I; for although I felt the blood running down my sleeve, and oozing between my fingers, I was annoyed to think he had made the first hit.

"'Ah, François, these Mamelukes were not of the "première force," after all. I have only been jesting all this time—see here.' With that he closed on me, in a very different style from his former attack. Pushing and parrying with the rapidity of lightning, he evinced a skill in 'skirmish' I did not believe him possessed of. In this, however, I was his master,

and in a few seconds gave him my point sharply, but not deeply, in the shoulder.

"Instead of dropping his weapon when he received mine, he returned the thrust. I parried it, and touched him again, a little lower down. He winced this time, and muttered something I could not catch. 'You shall have it now,' said he, aloud; 'I owe you this—and this.' True to his word, he twice pierced me in the back, outside the guard. Encouraged by success, he again closed on me, while I, piqued by his last assault, advanced to meet him.

"Our tempers were both excited; but his far more than mine. The struggle was a severe one. Three several times his blade passed between my arm and my body; and, at last, after a desperate rally, he dropped on one knee, and gave me the point here, beneath the chest. Before he could extricate his blade, I plunged mine into his chest, and pushed till I heard the hilt come clink against his ribs. The blood spurted upward, over my face and breast, as he fell backward. I wiped it hurriedly from my eyes, and bent over him. He gave a shudder and a little faint moan, and all was still."

"You killed him?" cried out three or four of us together.

"*Ma foi*, yes. The 'coup' was mortal—he never stirred after. As for me," continued François, "I surrendered myself a prisoner to the officer on guard at the gate. I was tried ten day after by a military commission, and acquitted. My own evidence was my accusation and my defense."

"*Ventrebleu*—had I been on the court-martial, you had not been here to tell the story," said the old Major, as his face became almost purple with passion.

"Nonsense," said Tascher, jeeringly; "what signifies a maître d'armes the more or the less."

"Monsieur will probably explain himself," said François, with one of his cold smiles of excessive deference.

"It is exactly what I mean to do, François."

"Come, sirs, none of this," broke in the Major. "Lieutenant Tascher, you may not fancy being placed under an arrest when the enemy is in the field. Master François, do you forget the sentence of a court-martial is hanging over your head for an affair at Elchingen, where you insulted a young officer of the hussars?"

"In that case, I must be permitted to say that Maître François conducted himself like a man of honor," said I.

"*Parbleu!*—and got the worse of it besides," cried he, placing his hand on his hip. The tone of his voice as he said this, and the grimace he made, restored the party once more to good humor, and we chatted away pleasantly till day was breaking.

As Tascher strolled along with me toward my quarters, I was rejoiced to discover that he had never heard of my name as being mixed up in the Chouan conspiracy; nor was he aware with how little reason he believed me to be favored by fortune.

I received, however, all his congratulations without any desire to undeceive him. Already had I learned the worldly lesson, that while friends cling closer in adversity, your mere acquaintance deems your popularity your greatest merit; and I at length perceived that, however ungenial, in many respects, the companionship, the life of isolation I led had rendered me suspected by others, and in a career, too, where frankness was considered the first of virtues.

I assented at once with pleasure to the prospect of our meeting frequently while in camp. My own regiment had joined Davoust's corps, and I was glad to have the society of some others of my own age, if only to wean myself from my habits of solitude. While I formed these plans for the future, I little anticipated what events were in store for me, nor how soon I should be thrown among scenes and people totally different from those with which I had ever mixed before.

"You mess with us, then, Burke—that's agreed," said Tascher. "They're excellent fellows, these cuirassiers of ours, and I know you'll like them."

With this promise we parted, hoping to meet on the morrow.

CHAPTER LI.

THE MILL ON THE HOLITSCH ROAD.

At an early hour on the morning of the 4th came orders for the "Garde à Cheval" to hold themselves in readiness, with two squadrons of the carbineers, on the road to Holitsch; part of this force being under the command of General d'Auvergne. We found ourselves fully equipped and in waiting soon after eight o'clock. From the "tenue" and appearance of the troops, it was evident that no measure of active service was contemplated. Yet, if a review were intended, we could not guess why so small a force had been selected. As usual on such occasions, many conjectures were

hazarded, and a hundred explanations passed current—one scarcely a whit better than the other—when at last we perceived a peloton of dragoons advancing toward us at a brisk trot.

The word was passed to close up and draw swords—and scarcely was it obeyed when the staff of the Emperor came up. They were all in the full blaze of their gala uniforms, brilliant with crosses and decorations. Napoleon alone wore the simple costume of the "Chasseurs" of the "Garde," with the decoration of the Legion; but his proud look and his flashing eye made him conspicuous above them all. He was mounted on his favorite charger "Marengo," and seemed to enjoy the high spirit of the mettled animal, as he tossed his long mane about, and lashed his sides with his great silken tail.

As the *cortége* passed we closed up the rear, and followed at a sharp pace, more than ever puzzled to divine what was going forward. After about two hours' riding, during which we never drew bridle, we saw a party of staff officers in front, who, saluting the Emperor, joined the *cortége*. At the same instant General d'Auvergne passed close beside me, and whispered in my ear, "Bernadotte has just come up, and been most coldly received." I wished to ask him what was the object of the whole movement, but he was gone before I could do so. In less than a quarter of an hour afterward we left the high-road, and entered upon a large plain, where the only object I could perceive was an old mill, ruined and dilapidated. Toward this the imperial staff rode forward, while the peloton in front wheeled about, and rode to the rear of our squadrons. The next moment we were halted, and drawn up in order of battle. While these movements were going forward, I remarked that the Emperor had dismounted from his horse, and dismissed his staff, all save Marshal Berthier, who stood at a little distance from him. Several dismounted dragoons were employed in lighting two immense fires, a process which Napoleon appeared to watch with great interest for a second or two, and then, taking out his glass, he remained for several minutes intently surveying the great road to Holitsch.

In this direction at once every eye was turned, but nothing could we see. The road led through a wide open country for some miles, and at last disappeared in the recesses of a dark pine wood, that covered the horizon for miles on either side. Meanwhile Napoleon, with his hands clasped behind his back, walked hurriedly backward and forward beside the blazing fires, stopping at intervals to look along the road, and then resuming his walk as before. He was not more than two hundred paces from where we stood, and I could mark well his gesture of impatience, as he closed his glass each time, after looking in vain toward Holitsch.

"I say, Burke," whispered one of my brother officers beside me, "I should not fancy being the man who keeps him waiting in that fashion. Look at Berthier, how he keeps aloof; he knows that something is brewing."

"What can it all mean?" said I. "Who can he be expecting here?"

"They say now," whispered my companion, "that Davoust cannot hold the bridge of Göding, and must fall back before the Russian columns; and that Napoleon has invited Alexander to a conference here to gain time to reinforce Davoust."

"Exactly; but the Czar is too wily an enemy for that to succeed, and probably hence the delay, which appears to irritate him now."

The supposition, more plausible than most of those I heard before, was still contradicted by the account of the Emperor Alexander's retreat; and again was I at a loss to reconcile these discrepancies, when I beheld Napoleon, with his glass to his eye, motion with his hand for Berthier to come forward. I turned toward the road, and now could distinguish in the distance a dark object moving toward us. A few minutes after the sun shone out, and I remarked the glitter of arms, stretching in a long line, while my companion, with the aid of a glass, called out,

"I see them plainly, they are lancers; the escort are Hungarians, and there's a *calèche*, with four horses, in front."

The Emperor stood motionless, his arms folded on his breast, and his head a little leaned forward, exactly as I have seen him represented in so many pictures and statues; his eyes were thrown downward, and as he stirred the blazing wood with his foot, one could easily perceive how intensely his mind was occupied with deep thought. The clattering sound of cavalry now turned my attention to another quarter, and I saw exactly in front of us, and about five hundred paces off, a regiment of Hungarian hussars and some squadrons of Hulans drawn up. I had little time to mark their gorgeous equipment and splendid uniform, for already the *calèche* had drawn up at the roadside, and Prince John of Lichtenstein, descending, took off his chapeau, and of-

fered his arm to assist another to alight. Slowly, and, as it seemed, with effort, a tall thin figure, in the white uniform of the Austrian Guard, stepped from the carriage to the ground. The same instant the officers of the staff fell back, and I saw Napoleon advance with open arms to embrace him. The Austrian Emperor—for it was Francis himself—seemed scarcely able to control the emotion he felt at this moment; and we could see that his head rested for several seconds on Napoleon's shoulder. And, what a moment must that have been! How deeply must the pride of the descendant of the Cæsars have felt the humiliation, which made him thus a suppliant before one he deemed a mere Corsican adventurer! What a pang it must have cost his haughty spirit, as he uttered the words, "*Mon frère!*"

As they walked side by side toward the plateau, where the fires were lighted, it was easy to mark that Napoleon was the speaker, while Francis merely bowed from time to time, or made a gesture of seeming assent.

As the Emperor arrived at the place of conference, we fell back some fifty yards; and although the air was still and frosty, and the silence was perfect around, we could not catch a word on either side. After about an hour the conversation appeared to assume a tone of gayety and good-humor, and we could hear the sovereigns laughing repeatedly.

The conference lasted for above two hours, when once more the Emperors embraced, and, as we thought, with more cordiality, and separated. The Emperor of Austria returning, accompanied by Prince Lichtenstein, while Napoleon stood for some minutes beside the fire, as if musing, and then, beckoning his staff to follow, he walked toward the high-road.

Scarcely had the Austrian Emperor reached his carriage, when Savary, bareheaded and breathless, stood beside the door of it. He was the bearer of a message from Napoleon. The next moment the *calèche* started, accompanied by Savary, who, with a single aide-de-camp, took the road toward the Austrian head-quarters.

As Napoleon was about to mount his horse, I saw General D'Auvergne move forward toward him. A few words passed between them, and then the general, riding up to where I stood, said, "Burke, you are to remain here, and if any orders arrive from General Savary, hasten with them to the head-quarters of his Majesty. In twelve hours you will be relieved." So saying, he galloped back to the imperial staff, and soon after the squadrons defiled into the road, the *cortége* dashed forward, and all that remained of that memorable scene was the dying embers of the fires, beside which the fate of Europe was decided.

The old mill of Holitsch had been deserted when the Austrian and Russian columns took up their position before Austerlitz. The miller and his household fled at the first news of the advance, and had not dared to return. It was a solitary spot at best—a wild heath, without shelter of any kind, stretched away for miles on all sides—but now, in its utter loneliness, it was the most miserable-looking place that can be conceived. While, therefore, I contented myself with the hope that my stay there might not be long, I resolved to do what I could to render my quarters more comfortable. My first care was my horse, which I picketed in the kitchen, where I was happy to find an abundant supply of firewood; my next was to explore the remainder of the concern, in which I discovered traces of its having been already occupied by the allied troops—rude caricatures of the French army in full "*déroute*," before terrible-looking dragoons, in Austrian and Russian uniforms, ornamented the walls in many parts; whole columns of French prisoners were depicted begging their lives from a single Austrian grenadier: and one figure, which, it could easily be discovered, was intended for Napoleon himself, was about to be hanged upon a tree, to the very marked satisfaction, as it would seem, of a group of Russian officers, who stood by, laughing. It is easy to smile at the ridicule of which fortune has thwarted the application, and so I amused myself a good while by contemplating these grotesque frescoes. But a more welcome sight still awaited me, in a small chamber at the top of the building, where, in large letters, written with chalk on the door, I read, "Rittmeister von Oxenhausen's quarters." Here, to my exceeding delight, I discovered a neatly furnished chamber, with a bed, sofa, and, better still, a table, on which the remains of the Rittmeister's supper yet stood: a goodly ham, the greater part of a capon, a loaf of wheaten bread, and an earthenware crock, with a lid of brass, containing about two bottles of Austrian red wine. This was a most agreeable surprise to me—a pleasant exchange from the meager meal of bread and cheese I had but time to procure from a sergeant of my troop at parting. It need not be supposed that I hesitated long about becoming the Rittmeister's successor—and so I drew the chair to the table, and the table nearer to

the fire; for, singularly enough, the embers of a wood fire still slumbered on the hearth. Having taken the keen edge off an appetite the cold air had whetted to the sharpest, I began an inspection of my quarters, first having replenished the fire with some logs of wood.

The chamber was an octagon, with five windows in as many of the faces, a fireplace and two doors occupying the other three. One of the doors, that by which I entered, opened from the stairs—the other led into a granary, or something of that nature—at least, so I conjectured, from a heap of sacks which littered the floor, and filled one corner completely. As I could not discover any corn, I resolved on sharing my loaf with my horse, a meal every campaigning steed is well accustomed to make; and now, returning to my little chamber, I resumed my supper with all the satisfaction of one who felt he had made his rounds of duty, and might enjoy repose.

As I knew the château de Holitsch, where the Emperor Francis held his quarters, was some six leagues distant, I guessed that General Savary was not likely to return from his mission before morning at very soonest; and so it behoved me to make my arrangements for passing the night where I was. Having, then, looked to my horse, for whose bedding I made free with some dozen of the corn-sacks in the granary, I brought up to my own quarters a supply of wood; and having fastened the door, and secured the windows as well as I was able, I lit my meerschaum, and lay down before the fire in as happy a frame of mind as need be. Indeed, I began to fancy that fortune had done tormenting, and was now about to treat me more kindly. The notice of the Emperor had relieved my heart of a load which never ceased to press on it, and I could not help feeling that a fairer prospect was opening before me. It is true, time and misfortune had both blunted the ardor of enthusiasm with which I started in life—the daring aspirations after liberty, the high-souled desire for personal distinction, had subsided into calmer hopes and less ambitious yearnings. Young as I yet was, I experienced in myself that change of sentiment and feeling which comes upon other men later on in life, and I was gradually reconciling myself to that sense of duty which teaches a man well to play his part, in whatever station he may be called to act, rather than indulge in those overweening wishes for pre-eminence, which in their accomplishment are so often disappointing, and in their failure a source of regret and unhappiness. These feelings were impressed on me, more by the force of events than by any process of my own reasoning. The career in which I first started as a boy had led to nothing but misfortune. The affection I conceived for one—the only one I ever loved—was destined equally to end unhappily. The passion for liberty, in which all my first aspirations were centered, had met the rude shocks which my own convictions suggested; and I now perceived that I must begin life anew, endeavoring to forget the influences whose shadows darkened my early days, and carve out my destiny in a very different path from what I once intended.

These were my last waking thoughts, as my head sank on my arm, and I fell into a deep sleep. The falling of a log from the fire awoke me suddenly. I rubbed my eyes, and for a second or two could not remember where I was. At length I became clearer in mind, and, looking at my watch, perceived it was but two o'clock. As the flame of the replenished fire threw its light through the room, I remarked that the door into the granary stood ajar. This struck me as strange. I thought I could remember shutting it before I went to sleep. Yes; I recollected perfectly placing a chair against it, as the latch was bad, and a draught of cold air came in that way; and now the chair was pushed back into the room, and the door lay open. A vague feeling, half suspicion, half curiosity, kept me thinking of the circumstance, when, by chance—the merest chance—my eyes fell upon the table, where I had left my sabre and my pistols. What was my amazement to find that one of the latter—that which lay nearest the door—was missing. In an instant I was on my feet. Nothing can combat drowsiness like the sense of fear; and I became perfectly awake in a moment. Examining the room with caution, I found everything in the same state as I had left it, save the door and the missing pistol. The granary alone, then, could be the shelter of the invader, whoever he might be. What was to be done? I was totally unprovided with light, save what the fire afforded, and even were it otherwise, I should expose myself by carrying one, long before I could hope to detect a concealed enemy. The best plan I could hit upon seemed to secure the door once more; and then, placing myself in such a position as not to be commanded by it again, to wait for morning patiently. This, then, I did at once; and having examined my remaining pistol, and found the charge and priming all safe, I drew my

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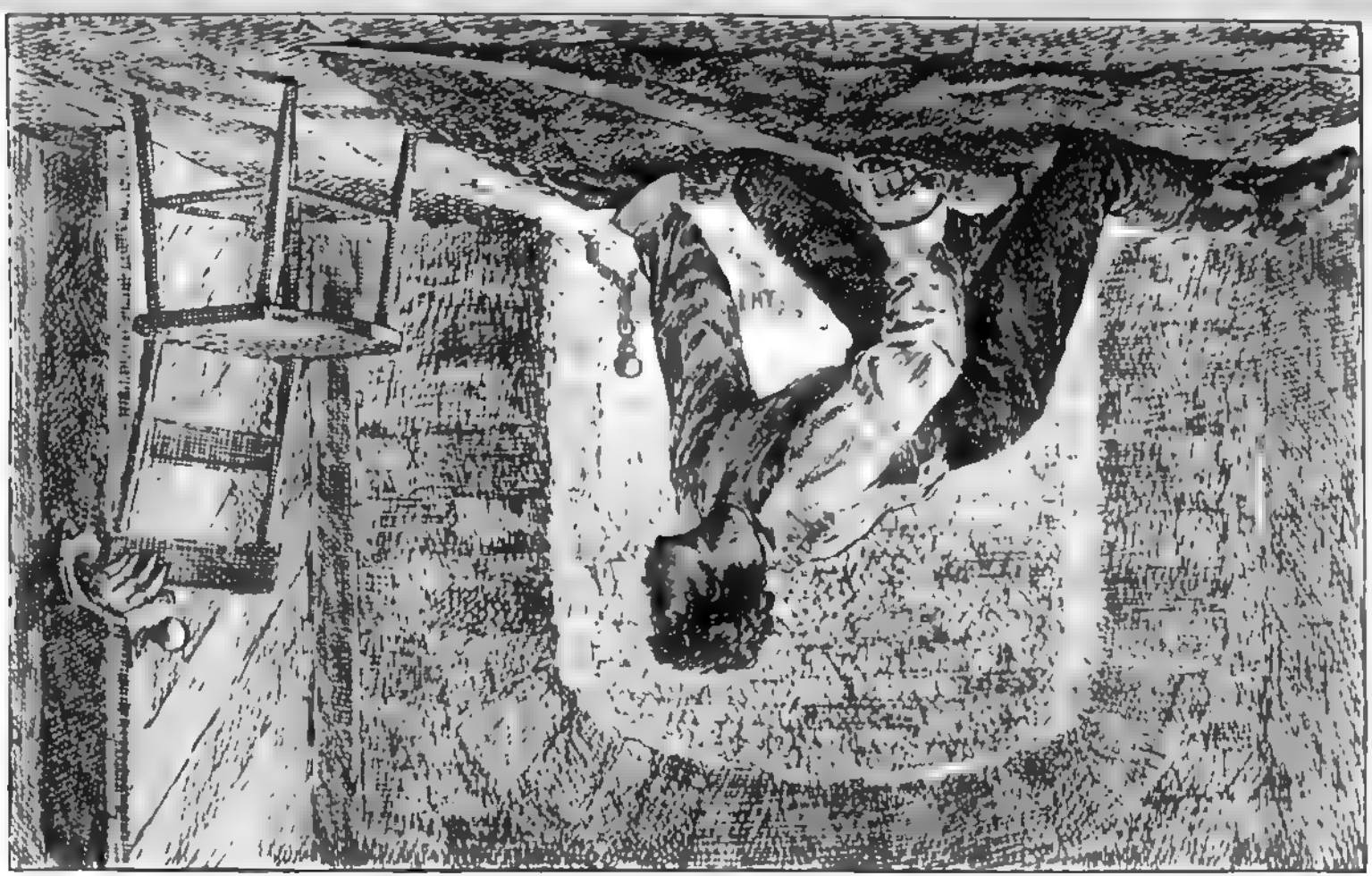

sabre, and sat down between the door and the window, but so that it should open against me.

Few sensations are more acutely painful than the exercise of the hearing when pushed to intensity. The unceasing effort to catch the slightest sound soon becomes fatigue; and as the organ grows weary, the mental anxiety grows more acute, and then begins a struggle between the failing sense and the excited brain. The spectral images of the eye in fever are not one half so terrible as the strange discordant tones that jar upon the tympanum in such a state as this. Each inanimate object seems endowed with its own power of voice, and whispering noises come stealing through the dead silence of midnight.

In this state of almost frenzied anxiety I sat long—my eyes turned toward the door, which oftentimes I fancied I could perceive to move. At length the thought occurred to me that, by affecting sleep, if any one lay concealed within whose object was to enter the room, this would probably induce him.

I had not long to wait for the success of my scheme. The long-drawn breathing of my seeming slumber was not continued for more than a few minutes, when I saw the door slowly, almost imperceptibly, move. At first it stirred inch by inch—then gradually it opened wider and wider till it met the obstacle of the chair. There now came a pause of several seconds, during which it demanded all my efforts to sustain my part—the throbbing at my throat and temples increasing almost beyond endurance, and the impulse to dash forward, and, flinging wide the door, confront my enemy, being nearly too much for my resistance. Again it moved noiselessly as before—and then a hand stole out, and, laying hold of the chair, pushed it slowly backward. The gray light of the breaking day fell upon the spot, and I could see that the cuff of the coat was laced with gold. This time my anxiety became intense. Another second or two and I should be engaged in the conflict—I knew not against how many. I clutched my sabre more fairly in my grasp, as my breathing grew thicker and shorter. The chair still continued to slide silently into the room, and already the arm of the man within protruded. Now was the moment, or never, and, with a spring, I threw myself on it, and, pinioning the wrist in my hands, held it down upon the floor while I opposed my weight against the door. Quick as lightning the other hand appeared, armed with a pistol, and I had but a moment to crouch my head nearly to the ground, when a bullet whizzed past, and smashed through the window behind me, while, with a crash, the frail door gave way to a strong push, and a man sprang fiercely forward to seize me by the throat. Jumping backward I recovered my feet, but before I could raise my pistol he made a spring at me, and we both rolled together on the floor. On the pistol both our hands met, and the struggle was for the weapon. Twice was it pointed at my heart; but my hand held the lock, and not all his efforts could unclasp it. At last I freed my right hand from the sword-knot of my sabre, and, striking him with my clenched knuckles on the forehead, threw him back. His grasp relaxed at the instant, and I wrenched the pistol from his fingers, and placed the muzzle against his chest. Another second and he would have rolled a corpse before me, when, to my horror and amazement, I saw in my antagonist my once friend, Henri de Beauvais. I flung the weapon from me, as I cried out, "De Beauvais, forgive me—forgive me." A deathly paleness came over his features; his eyes grew glazed and filmy, and, with a low groan, he fell fainting on the floor. I bathed his temples with water; I moistened his pale lips; I rubbed his clammy fingers; but it was long before he rallied, and when he did come to himself, and looked up, he closed his eyes again, as though the sight of me was worse than death itself.

"Come, Henri," said I, "a cup of wine, my friend! and you will be better presently. Thank God this has not ended as it might." He raised his eyes toward me, but with a look of proud and unforgiving sternness, while he uttered not a word.

"It is unfair to blame me, De Beauvais, for this," said I. "Once more I say, forgive me."

His lips moved, and some sounds came forth, but I could not hear the words.

"There, there," cried I, "it's past and over now. Here is my hand."

"You struck me with that hand," said he, in a deep, distinct voice, as though every word came from the very bottom of his chest.

"And if I did, Henri, my own life was on the blow."

"Oh that you had taken mine with it!" said he, with a bitterness I can never forget. "I am the first of my name that ever received a blow. Would I were to be the last."

"You forget, De Beauvais—"

"No, sir, I forget nothing. Be assured, too, I never shall forget this night. With any other than yourself I should not despair of that atonement for an injury which alone

can wash out such a stain; but *you*—I know you well—*you* will not give me this."

"You are right, De Beauvais—I will not," said I, calmly. "Sorry am I that even an accident should have brought us into collision. It is a mischance I feel deeply, and shall for many a day."

"And I, sir," cried he, as, starting up, his eyes flashed with passion and his cheek grew scarlet—"and I, sir—what are to be my feelings? Think you that, because I am an exile and an outcast—forced by misfortune to wear the livery of one who is not my rightful sovereign—that my sense of personal honor is the less, and that the mark of an insult is not as blood-stained on my conscience as ever it was?"

"Nothing but passion could blind you to the fact that there can be no insult where no intention could exist."

"Spare me your casuistry, sir," replied he, with an insolent wave of his hand, while he sank into a chair, and laid his head upon the table.

For an instant my temper, provoked beyond endurance, was about to give way, when I perceived that a handkerchief was bound tightly around his leg above the knee, where a great stain of blood marked his trowser. The thought of his being wounded banished every particle of resentment, and laying my hand on his shoulder, I said,

"De Beauvais, I know not one but yourself to whom I would three times say, forgive me; but we were friends once, when we were both happier. For the sake of him who is no more—poor Charles de Meudon—"

"A traitor, sir—a base traitor to the king of his fathers."

"This I will not endure," said I passionately. "No one shall dare—"

"Dare!"

"Ay, dare, sir—such was the word. To asperse the memory of one like him, is to dare that which no man can with truth and honor."

"Come, sir, I'm ready," said De Beauvais, rising, and pointing to the door—"*Sortons!*" No one who has not heard that one word pronounced by the lips of a Frenchman can conceive how much of savage enmity and deadly purpose it implies. It is the challenge, which, if unaccepted, stamps cowardice forever on the man who declines it; from that hour all equality ceases between those whom a combat had placed on the same footing.

"*Sortons!*" The word rung in my ears, and tingled through my very heart, while a host of different impulses swayed me. Shame, sorrow, wounded pride, all struggling for the mastery; but, above them all, a better and a higher spirit—the firm resolve, come what would, to suffer no provocation De Beauvais could offer, to make me stand opposite him as an enemy.

"What am I to think, sir?" said he, with a voice scarcely articulate from passion—"what am I to think of your hesitation, or why do you stand inactive here? Is it that you are meditating what new insult can be added to those you have heaped on me?"

"No, sir," I replied, firmly; "so far from thinking of offense, I am but too sorry for the words I have already spoken. I should have remembered, and, remembering, should have made allowance for, the strength of partisan feelings, which have their origin in a noble, but, as I believe, a mistaken source.

"Indeed!" interrupted he, in mockery; "is it, then, come to this? Am I, a Frenchman born, to be lectured on my loyalty and allegiance by a foreign mercenary?"

"Not even that taunt, De Beauvais, shall avail you anything; I am firm in my resolve."

"*Pardieu!* then," cried he, with savage energy, "there remains but this." As he spoke, he leaped from his chair, and sprang toward me. In so doing, however, his knee struck the table, and, with a groan of agony, he reeled back and fell on the floor, while from his reopened wound a torrent of blood gushed out and deluged the room.

For a second or two he motioned me away with his hand; but as his weakness increased, he lay passive and unresisting, and suffered me to arrest the bleeding by such means as I was able to practice.

It was a long time ere I could stanch the gaping orifice, which had been inflicted by a sabre, and cut clean through the high boot, and deep into the thigh. Fortunately for his recovery, he had himself succeeded in getting off the boot before, and the wound lay open to my surgical skill. Lifting him cautiously in my arms, I laid him on the bed, and moistened his lips with a little wine. Still the debility continued: no signs of returning strength were there, but his features, pale and fallen, were glazed with a cold sweat that hung in heavy drops upon his brow and forehead. Never was agony like mine. I saw his life was ebbing fast; the respiration was growing fainter and more irregular, his pulse could scarce be felt, yet dare I not leave my post to seek for assistance. A hundred thoughts whirled through my puzzled brain, and, among the rest, the

self-accusing one that I was the cause of his death. "Yes," thought I, "better far to have stood before his pistol, at all the hazard of my life, than see him thus."

In an instant all his angry speeches and his insulting gestures were forgotten. He looked so like what I once knew him, that my mind was wandering back again to former scenes and times, and all resentment was lost in the flood of memory.

Poor fellow! what a sad destiny was his; fighting against the arms of his country—a mourner over the triumphs of his native land! Alien that I was, this pang at least was spared me. As these thoughts crossed my mind, I felt him press my hand. Overjoyed, I knelt down and whispered some words in his ear.

"No, no," muttered he, in a low, plaintive tone; "not all lost—not all. La Vendée yet remains." He was dreaming.

CHAPTER LII.

THE ARMISTICE.

As I sat thus watching with steadfast gaze the features of the sleeping man, I heard the clattering of a horse's hoofs on the pavement beneath, and the next moment the heavy step of some one ascending the stairs. Suddenly the door was flung wide open, and an officer in the handsome uniform of the Austrian Imperial Guard entered.

"Excuse this scant ceremony, monsieur," said he, bowing with much courtesy, "but I almost despaired of finding you out. I come from Holitsch with dispatches for your Emperor; they are most pressing, as I believe this note will inform you."

While I threw my eye over the few lines addressed by General Savary to the officer in waiting at Holitsch, and commanding the utmost speed in forwarding the dispatch that accompanied them, the officer drew near the bed where De Beauvais was lying.

"*Mère de ciel*, it is the count!" cried he, starting back with astonishment.

"Yes," said I, interrupting him, "I found him here on my arrival; he is badly wounded, and should be removed at once. How can this be done?"

"Easily. I'll dispatch my orderly at once to Holitsch, and remain here till he return."

"But if our troops advance?"

"No, no—we're all safe on that score; the armistice is signed. The very dispatch in your hands, I believe, concludes the treaty."

This warned me that I was delaying too long the important duty intrusted to me, and, with a hurried entreaty to the Austrian not to leave De Beauvais, I hastened down the stairs, and proceeded to saddle for the road.

"One word, monsieur," said the officer, as I was in the act of mounting. "May I ask the name of him to whom my brother officers owe the life of a comrade much beloved?"

"My name is Burke—and yours, monsieur?"

"Berghausen, chef d'escadron of the Imperial Guard. If ever you should come to Vienna—" But I lost the words that followed, as, spurring my horse to a gallop, I set out toward the head-quarters of the Emperor.

As I rode forward, my eyes were ever anxiously bent in the direction of our camp, not knowing at what moment I might see the advance of a column along the road, and dreading lest, before the dispatches should reach the Emperor's house, the advanced vedettes should capture the little party at Holitsch. At no period of his career was Napoleon more incensed against the adherents of the Bourbons; and if De Beauvais should fall into his hands, I was well aware that nothing could save him. The Emperor always connected in his mind, and with good reason, too, the machinations of the royalists with the plans of the English government. He knew that the land which afforded the asylum to their king was the refuge of the others also; and many of the heaviest denunciations against the "perfide Albion" had no other source than the dread of which he could never divest himself, that the legitimate monarch would one day be restored to France.

While such were Napoleon's feelings, the death of the Duc d'Enghien had heightened the hatred of the Bourbonists to a pitch little short of madness. My own unhappy experience made me more than ever fearful of being in any way implicated with the members of this party, and I rode on, as though life itself depended on my reaching the imperial head-quarters some few minutes earlier.

As I approached the camp, I was overjoyed to find that no movement was in contemplation. The men were engaged in cleaning their arms and accoutrements, restoring the broken wagons and gun-carriages, and repairing, as far as might be, the disorders of the day of battle. The

officers stood in groups here and there, chatting at their ease, while the only men under arms were the new conscripts just arrived from France—a force of some thousands—brought by forced marches from the banks of the Rhine.

The crowd of officers near the head-quarters of the Emperor pressed closely about me as I descended from my horse, eager to learn what information I brought from Holitsch, for they were not aware that I had been stationed nearly half-way on the road.

"Well, Burke," said General d'Auvergne, as he drew his arm within mine, "your coming has been anxiously looked for this morning. I trust the dispatches you carry may, if not contradict, at least explain what has occurred."

"Is this the officer from Holitsch?" said the aide-de-camp of the Emperor, coming hurriedly forward. "The dispatch, sir," cried he; and the next moment hastened to the little hut, which Napoleon occupied as his bivouac. The only other person in the open space where I stood was an officer of the lancers, whose splashed and travel-stained dress seemed to say he had been employed like myself.

"I fancy, monsieur," said he, bowing, "that you have had a sharp ride also this morning. I have just arrived from Göding—four leagues—in less than an hour, and, with all that, too late, I believe, to remedy what has occurred."

"What, then, has happened?"

"Davoust has been tricked into an armistice, and suffered the Russians to pass the bridge. The Emperor Alexander has taken advantage of the negotiations with Austria, and got his army clear through—so, at least, it would seem. I saw Napoleon tear the dispatch into fragments, and stamp his foot upon them—but here he comes."

The words were scarcely spoken when the Emperor came rapidly up, followed by his staff. He wore a gray surtout, trimmed with dark fur, and had his hands clasped within the cuffs of the coat. His face was pale as death, and, save a slight contraction of his brows, there was nothing to show any appearance of displeasure.

"Who brought the dispatch from Göding?"

"I did, sire," said the officer.

"How are the roads, sir?"

"Much cut up, and in one place a torrent has carried away part of a bridge."

"I knew it—I knew it," said he, bitterly; "it is too late. Duroc," cried he, while the words seemed to come forth with a hissing sound, "did I not tell you, '*Gratez le Russe, et vous trouverez le Tartare?*'"

The words were graven in my memory from that hour; even yet, I can recall the very accents as when I heard them.

"And you, sir," said he, turning suddenly toward me, "you came from General Savary. Return to him with this letter. Have you written, Duroc? Well, you'll deliver this to General Savary at Holitsch. He may require you to proceed to Göding—are you well mounted?

"Yes, sire."

"Come, then, sir; I made you a captain yesterday, let us see if you can win your spurs to-day."

From the time I received the dispatch to that in which I was in the saddle not more than five minutes elapsed. The idea of being chosen by the emperor himself for a service was a proud one, and I resolved to acquit myself with credit. With what concert does one's heart beat to the free stride of a mettled charger; how does each bold plunge warm the blood and stir up the spirits; and as, careering free over hill and valley, we pass in our flight the clouds that drift above, how does the sense of freedom, realized as it is, impart a feeling of ecstasy to our minds—our thoughts, revelling on the wayward liberty our course suggests, rise free and untrammeled from the doubts and cares of every-day life. Onward I went, and soon the old mill came in sight, rearing its ruined head amid the black desolation of the plain. I could not resist the impulse to see what had become of De Beauvais, and leading my horse into the kitchen, I hastened up the stairs, and through the rooms; but all were deserted the little chamber lay open—the granary too—but no one was there.

With a mind relieved, in a great measure from anxiety, I remounted and continued my way; and soon entered the dark woods of Holitsch. The château and demesne were a private estate of the Emperor Francis, and once formed a favorite resort of Joseph II in his hunting excursions. The château itself was a large, irregular mass of building; but still, with all its incongruity of architecture, not devoid of picturesque effect—and the older portion of it was even handsome. While I stood in front of a long terrace, on which several windows opened from a gallery that ran along one side of the château, I was somewhat surprised that no guard was to be seen, nor even a single sentinel on duty. I dismounted, and, leading my horse, approached the avenue that led up between a double range of statues to the door. An old man, dressed in the

slouched hat and light blue jacket of a Bohemian peasant, was busily engaged in wrapping matting around some shrubs, to protect them from the frost. A little boy —his second self in costume—stood beside him, with his pruning-knife, and stared at me with a kind of stupid wonder as I approached. With some difficulty I made out from the old man that the Emperor occupied a smaller building called the Kaiser-Lust, about half a league distant in the forest, having given strict orders that no one was to approach the château nor its immediate grounds. It was his favorite retreat, and, perhaps, he did not wish it should be associated in his mind with a period of such misfortune. The old peasant continued his occupation while he spoke, never lifting his head from his work, and seeming all absorbed in the necessity of what he was engaged in. As I inquired the nearest road to the imperial quarters, he employed me to assist him for a moment in his task, by holding one end of the matting, with which he was now about to envelop a marble statue of Maria Theresa.

I could not refuse a request so naturally proffered, and while I did so, a little wicket opened at a short distance off, and a tall man, in a gray surtout and a plain cocked-hat without a feather, came forward; he held a riding-whip in his hand, and seemed, from his splashed equipment, to have just descended from the saddle.

"Well, Fritz," said he, "I hope the frost has done us no mischief?"

The old gardener turned round at the words, and, touching his hat respectfully, continued his work, while he replied, "No, Mein Herr, it was but a white hoar, and everything has escaped well."

"And whom have you got here for an assistant, may I ask?" said he, pointing to me, whom he now saw for the first time. As the question was asked in German, although I understood it, I left the reply to the gardener.

"God knows," said the old fellow, in a tone of easy indifference; "I think he must be a soldier of some sort."

The other smiled at the remark, and turning toward me, said, in French, "You are, perhaps, unaware, sir, being a stranger, that it is the Emperor of Austria's desire this château should not be intruded on."

"My offending, sir," interrupted I, "was purely accidental. I am the bearer of dispatches for General Savary and, having stopped to inquire from this honest man—"

"The general has taken his departure for Göding," he broke in, without paying further attention to my explanation.

"For Göding; and may I ask, what distance that may be?"

"Scarcely a league, if you can hit upon the right path; the road lies yonder, where you see that dead fir-tree."

"I thank you, sir," said I, touching my hat; "and must now ask my friend here to release me—my orders are of moment."

"You may find some difficulty in the wood, after all," said he; "I'll send my groom part of the way with you."

Before I could proffer my thanks suitably for such an unexpected politeness, he had disappeared in the garden through which he entered a few minutes before.

"I say, my worthy friend, tell me the name of that gentleman; he's one of the Emperor's staff, if I mistake not. I'm certain I've seen the face before."

"If you had," said the old fellow, laughing, "You could scarcely forget him; old Frantzerl is just the same these twenty years."

"Whom did you say?"

Before he could reply, the other was at my side.

"Now, sir," said he, "he will conduct you to the high-road. I wish you a good journey."

These words were uttered in a tone somewhat more haughty than his previous ones; and contenting myself with a civil acknowledgment of his attention, I bowed and returned to my horse, which the little peasant child had been holding.

"This way, monsieur," said the groom, who, dressed in a plain dark brown livery, was mounted on a horse of great size and symmetry.

As he spoke, he dashed forward at a gallop, which all my efforts could not succeed in overtaking. In less than ten minutes the man halted, and, waiting till I came up, he pointed to a gentle acclivity before me, across which the high-road led.

"There lies the road, sir; continue your speed, and in twenty minutes you reach Göding."

"One word," said I, drawing forth my purse as I spoke—"one word. Tell me, who is your master?"

The groom smiled, slightly touched his hat, and, without uttering a word, wheeled round his horse, and, before I could repeat my question, was far on his road back to the château.

Before me lay the river, and the little bridge of Göding, across which now the Russian columns were marching in rapid but compact order. Their cavalry had nearly all passed, and was drawn with some field-guns along the bank; while, at half-

cannon-shot distance, the corps of Davoust were drawn up in order of battle, and standing spectators of the scene. On an eminence of the field a splendid staff were assembled, accompanied by a troop of Tartar horsemen, whose gay colors and strange equipment were a remarkable feature of the picture; and here I learned the Emperor Alexander then was, accompanied by General Savary.

As I drew near, my French uniform caught the eye of the latter, and he cantered forward to meet me. Tearing open the dispatch with eagerness, he rapidly perused the few lines it contained; then, seizing me by the arm in his strong grasp, he exclaimed,

"Look yonder, sir; you see their columns extending to Serritz. Go back and tell his Majesty; but no, my own mission here is ended. You may return to Austerlitz."

So saying, he rode back to the group around the Emperor, where I saw him a few minutes after addressing his Majesty, and then, after a formal leave-taking, turn his horse's head and set out toward Brunn.

As I retraced my steps toward the camp, I began to muse over the events which had just occurred; and even by the imperfect glimpses I could catch of the negotiations, could perceive that the Czar had out-maneuvered Napoleon. It is true, I was not aware by what means the success had been obtained, nor was it for many a year after that I became cognisant of the few autograph lines by which Alexander induced Davoust to suspend his operations, under the pretense that the Austrian armistice included the Russian army. It was an unworthy act, and ill-befitting one whose high personal courage and chivalrous bearing gave promise of better things.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE "COMPAGNIE D'ELITE."

WITH whatever triumphant feelings the Emperor Napoleon may have witnessed the glorious termination of this brief campaign, to the young officers of the army it brought anything rather than satisfaction; and the news of the armistice was received in the camp with gloom and discontent.

The brilliant action at Elchingen, and the great victory at Austerlitz, were hailed as a glorious presage of future successes, for which the high-sounding phrases of a bulletin were deemed but a poor requital. A great proportion of the army were new levies, who had not seen service, and felt proportionably desirous for opportunities of distinction; and to them the promise of a triumphant return to France was a miserable exchange for those battle-fields on which they dreamed they should win honor and fame, and from whence they hoped to date their rise of fortune. Little did we guess that, while words of peace and avowals of moderation were on his lips, Napoleon was at that very moment meditating on the opening of that great campaign which, beginning at Jena, was to end in the most bloody and long-sustained of all his wars.

Nothing, however, was now talked of but the fêtes which awaited us on our return to Paris, while liberal grants of money were made to all the wounded; and no effort was spared which should mark that feeling of the Emperor's, which so conspicuously opened his bulletin, in the emphatic words — "Soldiers, I am content with you!"

Napoleon well understood, and, indeed, appeared to have anticipated, the disappointment the army would experience at this sudden cessation of hostilities, and endeavored now to divert the torrent of their enthusiasm into another and a safer channel. The bulk of the army were cantoned around Brunn and Olmutz; some picked regiments were recalled to Vienna, where the Emperor was soon expected to establish his head-quarters, while many of those who had suffered most severely from forced marches and fatigues were formed into corps of escort, to accompany the Russian prisoners—sixteen thousand in number—on their way to France; and lastly, a "*compagnie d'élite*," as it was called, was selected to carry to the senate the glorious spoils of victory — forty-five standards, taken on the field of Austerlitz, and now destined to grace the Palace of the Luxembourg.

I had scarcely seated myself to the humble supper of my bivouac, when an orderly came to command me to General d'Auvergne's quarters. The little sitting-room he occupied, in a peasant hut, was so filled with officers, that it was some time before I could approach him; and my impatience was not lessened by more than once hearing my name mentioned aloud—a circumstance not a little trying to a young man in the presence of his superiors in station.

"But here he is," said the General, beckoning to me to come forward. "Burke, his Majesty has most graciously permitted me to include your name in the *compagnie d'élite*—a testimony of his satis-

faction you've every reason to be proud of; and just at the moment I was about to communicate the fact to you, I have received a message from Marshal Murat, requesting that I may permit you to serve on his own staff."

"Yes, captain," said an officer in the uniform of a colonel—it was the first time I had been addressed by my new title, and I cannot express what a thrill of pleasure the word gave me—"Marshal Murat witnessed with pleasure the alacrity and steadiness of your conduct on the 2nd, and has sent me with an offer which I fancy few officers would not deem a flattering one."

"Unquestionably it is, colonel," said General d'Auvergne. "Nay, more, I will say I regard it as the making of a young man's fortune, thus early in his career to have attracted such high notice. But I must be passive here—Captain Burke shall decide for himself."

"In that case, sir, I shall cause you but little delay, if you will still permit me to serve on your own staff."

"But stay, my boy, do not be rash in this affair; I will not insult your better feeling by dwelling on the little power I possess, and the very great enjoyed by Marshal Murat, of serving your interests; but I must say, that with him, and on his personal staff, opportunities of distinction—"

"And here I must interpose," said the Colonel, smiling courteously; "with no officer in this army can a man expect to see service, in its boldest and most heroic colors, rather than with General d'Auvergne."

"I know it—I feel it, too—and with him, if he will allow me—"

"Enough, my dear boy," said the old man, grasping my hand in his. "Colonel, you must explain to the marshal how stands this matter; and he is too kind of heart, and too noble of soul, to think the worse of any of us for our obstinacy. And now, my young friend, make your arrangements to join the *compagnie d'élite*—they march to-morrow afternoon, and this is a service you cannot decline. Leave me to make your acknowledgments to the marshal, and lose no more time here."

Short as had been my absence from my quarters, when I re-entered, I descried Tascher seated at the table, and busily employed in discussing the last fragments of my supper. "You see, my dear friend," said he, speaking with his mouth full—"you see what it is to have a '*salmi*' for supper. I sat eating a confounded mess of black bread, and blacker veal, for fifteen minutes, when the breeze brought me the odor of your delicious 'plat.' It was in vain I summoned all my virtue to resist it; if there ever was a dish made to seduce a subaltern on service, it is this. But I say, won't you eat something?"

"I fear not," said I, half angrily.

"And why?" replied he. "See what a capital wing that is—a little bare, to be sure—and there's the back of a pigeon. *Ma foi*, you have no reason to complain. I say, is it true you are named among the '*compagnie d'élite?*'"

I nodded, and ate on.

"*Diable!* There never was such fortune. What a glorious exchange for this confounded swamp, with its everlasting drill, from morning to night, shivering under arms for four hours, and shaking with the ague the rest of the day after—marching, mid-leg in water, half frozen, and trying quick movements, when the very blood is in icicles; and then you'll be enjoying Paris—delightful Paris—dining at the 'Rocher,' supping at the 'Cadran,' lounging into the salons, at the very time we shall be hiding ourselves amidst the straw of our bivouacs. I go mad to think of it; and what's worse than all, there you sit, as little elated as if the whole thing were only the most natural in the world. I believe, on my word, you'd not condescend to be surprised if you were gazetted Maréchal de France in to-morrow's gazette."

"When I can bear, without testifying too much astonishment, to see my supper eaten by the man who does nothing but rate me into the bargain, perhaps I may plume myself on some equanimity of temper."

"Confound your equanimity! It's very easy to be satisfied when one has everything his own way."

"And so, Tascher, you deem me such a fortunate fellow?"

"That I do," replied he, quickly. "You have had more good luck, and made less of it, than any one I ever knew. What a career you had before you when we met first. There was that pretty girl at the Tuileries quite ready to fall in love with you. I know it, because she rather took an air of coldness with me. Well, you let her be carried off by an old general, with a white head and a queue—unquestionably a bit of pique on her part. Then, somehow or other, you contrived to pink the best swordsman of the army, little François there; and I never heard that the circumstance gained you a single conquest."

"Quite true, my friend," said I, laughing; "I confess it all; and, what is far worse, I acknowledge that until this mo-

ment I did not even know the advantages I was willfully wasting."

"And even now," continued he, not minding my interruption—"even now, you are about to return to Paris as one of the '*élite.*' Well, I'll wager twenty Naps that the only civil speeches you'll hear will be from some musty old senators at the Luxembourg. Oh, dear! if my amiable aunt, the Empress, would only induce my most benevolent uncle, the Emperor, to put me on that same list, depend upon it you'd hear of Lieutenant Tascher in the 'Faubourg St. Honoré.'"

"But you seem to forget," said I, half piqued at last by the impertinence of his tone, "that I have neither friends nor acquaintances—that, although a Frenchman by service, I am not so by birth."

"And I—what am I?" interrupted he—"a Creole, come from Heaven knows what far-away place beyond seas—that there never was a man with more expensive tastes, and smaller means to supply them—with worse prospects, and better connections; in short, a kind of live antithesis: and yet, with all that, exchange places with me now, and see if, before a fortnight elapse, I have not more dinner invitations than any officer of the same grade within the Boulevards. Watch, if the prettiest girl at Paris is not at my side in the Opera. But here comes your official appointment, I take it."

As he said this, an orderly of the "Garde" delivered a sealed packet into my hands, which, on opening, I discovered was a letter from General Duroc, wherein I read, "that it was the wish of his Majesty, Emperor and King, that I, his well-beloved Thomas Burke, in conformity with certain instructions, to be afterward made known to me, should proceed with the *compagnie d'élite* to Paris, then and there—"

As I read thus far aloud, Tascher interrupted me, snatching the paper from my hands, and continued thus:

"Then and there to mope, muse, and be *ennuyé*, until such time as active service may again recall him to the army. My dear Burke, I am really sorry for you—wars and campaigning may be, indeed they are, very fine things, but as the means, not the end. His Majesty, my uncle—whom may Heaven preserve and soften his heart to his relations—loves them for their own sake; but we, you and I, for instance, what possible reason can we have for risking our bones, and getting our flesh mangled, save the hope of promotion—and to what end that same promotion, if not for a wider sphere of pleasure and enjoyment? Think what a career a colonel, at our age, would have in Paris!"

"Come, Tascher, I will not believe you in all this. If there were not something higher to reward one for the fatigues and dangers of a campaign than the mere sensual delights you allude to, I, for one, would soon doff the epaulettes."

"You are impracticable," said he, half angrily; "but it is as much from the isolation in which you have lived as any conviction on the subject. You must let me introduce you to some relatives of mine in Paris, they will be delighted to know you; for, as one of the *compagnie d'élite*, you might figure as a very respectable '*lion*' for two, nay, three entire evenings; and you will have the *entrée* to the pleasantest house in Paris. They receive every evening—and all the best people resort there. I only exact one condition."

"And that is—"

"You must not make love to Pauline. That you will fall in love with her yourself is a fact I can't help—nor you either. But no advance on your part—promise me that."

"In such case, Tascher, it were best for all parties I should not know the lady. I have no fancy, believe me, for being smitten whether I will or no."

"I see, Master Burke, there is a bit of impertinence in all this—you sneer at my warnings about '*la belle cousine.*' Now, I am determined you shall see her at least; besides, you must do me a service with the countess. I have had the bad luck to be for some time out of favor with my aunt Josephine—some trumpery debts of mine they make a work about at the Tuileries. Well, perhaps you could persuade Madame de Lacostellerie to take up my cause—she has great influence with the Empress, and can make her do what she pleases; and, if I must confess it, it was this brought me over to your quarters to-night; and I ate your supper just to pass away time till you came back again. You'll not refuse me?"

"Certainly not; but reflect for a moment, Tascher, and you will see that no man was ever less intended for a diplomate. It is only a few minutes since you laughed at my solitary habits and hermit propensities."

"I've thought of all that, Burke, and am not a whit discouraged—on the contrary, you are the more likely to think of my affairs because you have none of your own—and I don't know any one but yourself I should fancy to meet Pauline frequently and on terms of intimacy."

"This, at least, is not a compliment," said I, laughing.

He shrugged his shoulders, and threw up his eyebrows with a French expression, as though to say, it can't be helped, and then continued: "And now remember, Burke, I count on you—get me out of this confounded place. I'd rather be back at Toulon again, if need be; and—as I shall not see you again before you leave—farewell. I'll send the letter for the countess early to-morrow."

We shook hands warmly and parted; he to return to his quarters, and I to sit down beside my fire, and muse over the events that had just occurred, and think of Tascher himself, whose character had never been so plainly exposed to me before.

If De Beauvais, with his hot-headed impetuosity, his mad devotion to the cause of the Legitimists, was a type of the followers of the Bourbons, so, in all the easy indifference and quiet selfishness of his nature, was Tascher a specimen of another class of his countrymen—a class which, wrapped up in its own circle of egotistical enjoyments, believed Paris the only habitable spot of the whole globe. Without any striking traits of character, or any very decided vices, they led a life of pleasure and amusement, rendering every one and everything around them, so far as they were able, subservient to their own plans and wishes, and perfectly unconscious the while how glaring their selfishness had become, and how palpable, even to the least observant, was the self-indulgence they practiced on every occasion. Without cleverness or tact enough to conceal their failings, they believed they imposed on others because they imposed on themselves—just as the child deems himself unseen when he closes his eyes.

Josephine's followers were, many of them, like this, and formed a striking contrast to the young men of the Napoleonite party, who, infatuated by the glorious successes of their chief, deemed the career of arms alone honorable. St. Cyr and the Polytechnique were the nurseries of these; the principles instilled there were perpetuated in after life; and however exaggerated their ideas of France and her destiny, their undoubted heroism and devotion might well have palliated even heavier errors. It was in ruminating thus over the different characters of the few I had ever known intimately, that I came to think seriously on my own condition, which, for many a day before, I had rather avoided than sought to reflect on. I felt, as how many must have done, that the bond of a common country—the inborn patriotism of the native of the soil—is the great resource on which men fall back when they devote themselves to the career of arms; that the alien's position, disguise it how he will, is that of the mere mercenary. How can he identify himself with interests on which he is but half-informed, or feel attachment to a land wherein he has neither hearth nor home? In the very glory he wins he can scarce participate. In a word, his is a false position, which no events nor accidents of fortune can turn to good account, and he must rest satisfied with a life of isolation and estrangement.

I felt how readily, if I had been a Frenchman born, I could have excused and palliated to my conscience many things which now were matters of reproach. Aggressive war had lost its horrors in the glory of enlarged dominions; the greatness of France, and the honor of her arms, had made me readily forget the miseries entailed on other nations by her lust of conquest. But I—the stranger, the alien—had no part in the inheritance of glory; and personal ambition, what means it, save to stand high amongst those we once looked up to as superiors? For me there were no traditions of a childhood passed amid great names, revered and worshiped; no early teachings of illustrious examples beside the paternal hearth. And yet there was one, although lost to me forever, before whose eyes I would gladly seem to hold a high place. Yes; could I but think that she had not forgotten me, would hear my name with interest, or feel one throb of pleasure if I were spoken of with honor—I asked no more.

"A letter, *Monsieur le Capitaine*," said my servant, as he deposited a package on my table. Supposing it was the epistle of which Tascher spoke, I paid but slight attention to it, when, by chance, I remarked it was in General d'Auvergne's handwriting. I opened it at once, and read as follows:

"MY DEAR BURKE,—No one ever set off for Paris without being troubled with commissions for his country friends, and you must not escape the ills of common humanity. Happily for you, however, the debt is easily acquitted: I have neither undiscovered shades of silk to be matched, nor impossible bargains to be effected. I shall simply beg of you to deliver with your own hand the inclosed letter to its address at the Tuileries, adding, if you think fit, the civil attentions of a visit.

"We shall both, in all likelihood, be

much hurried when we meet to-morrow—for I also have received orders to march—so that I take the present opportunity to inclose you a check on Paris for a trifle in advance of your pay—remembering too well, in my own aide-de-camp days, the dilatory habits of the War Office with new captains.

"Yours ever, dear Burke,

"D'AUVERGNE, Lieut.-General.

"Bivouac, 11 o'clock."

The letter of which he spoke had fallen on the table, where I now read the address—"*A Madame la Comtesse d'Auvergne, née Comtesse de Meudon, dame d'honneur de S. M. l'Impératrice.*" As I read these lines, I felt my face grow burning hot, my cheeks flushed up, and I could scarcely have been more excited were I actually in her presence to whom the letter was destined. The poor general's kind note, his check for eight thousand francs, lay there—I forgot them both, and sat still, spelling over the letters of that name so woven in my destiny. I thought of the first night I had ever heard it—when, a mere boy, I wept over her sorrows, and grieved for her whose fate was so soon to throw its shadow over my own. But, in a moment, all gave way before the one thought—I should see her again, speak to her, and hear her voice. It is true, she was the wife of another, but, as Marie de Meudon, our destinies were as wide apart; under no circumstances could she have been mine, nor did I ever dare to hope it. My love to her, for it was such—ardent and passionate—was more the devotion of some worshiper at a shrine, than an affection that sought return. The friendless soldier of fortune—poor, unknown, uncared for—how could he raise his thoughts to one for whose hand the noblest and the bravest were suitors in vain? Yet, with all this, how my heart throbbed to think that we should meet again. Nor was the thought less stirring that I felt that, even in the short interval of absence, I had won praise from him, for whom her admiration was equal to my own. With all the turmoil of my hopes and fears I felt a rush of pleasure at my heart; and when I slept, it was to dream of happy days to come, and a future far brighter than the past.

My first thought, when morning broke, was to ride over to Reygern, to learn the fate of my wounded friends. On my way thither, I fell in with several officers, bound on a similar errand, for already the convent had become the great hospital, to which the sufferers were brought from every part of the camp. As we went along, I was much struck by the depression of spirit so remarkable everywhere; the battle over, all the martial enthusiasm seemed to have evaporated. Many grumbled at the tiresome prospect of a winter in country quarters, or cantoned in the field; some regretted the briefness of the campaign; while others again complained, that to return to France after so little of active service would only expose them to ridicule from their companions, who had seen Italy and Egypt.

"Spare your sorrows on that score, my young friends," said a colonel, who listened patiently to the complaints around him. "We shall not see the dome of the Invalides for some time yet. Except the *compagnie d'élite*, I fancy few of us will figure on the Boulevards."

"There again," cried another; "I never heard anything so unfair as that *compagnie d'élite;* they have been, with two solitary exceptions, taken from the cavalry. Austerlitz was to be the day of honor for the infantry of France, said the bulletin."

"And so it was," interrupted a little dark-eyed major; "and I suppose his Majesty thought we had enough of it on the field, and did not wish to surfeit us with glory. But I ask pardon," said he, turning toward me, "Monsieur is, if I mistake not, named one of the *élite.*"

As I replied in the affirmative, I observed all eyes turned toward me, but not with any kindly expression—far from it. I saw that there was a deliberate canvass of me, as though to see by my outward man how I could possibly deserve such a favor.

"Can you explain to us, monsieur," said the little major to me, "on what principle the *élite* were chosen? for we have a thousand contradictory reports in the camp—some say, by ballot—some, that it was only those who never soiled their jackets in the affair of the other day, and looked fresh and smart."

A burst of laughter from the rest interrupted the major's speech, for its impertinence was quite sufficient to secure it many admirers.

"I believe, sir," said I, angrily, "I can show you some reasons against the selection of certain persons." As I got thus far, an officer whispered something into the major's ear, who, with a roar of laughing, exclaimed,

"A thousand pardons; ten thousand, *parbleu.* I didn't know you. It was monsieur pinked François, the *maître d'armes*—yes, yes; don't deny it," said he, as I made no reply whatever to a question I believed

quite irrelevant to the occasion. "Don't deny it; that lunge over the guard was a thing to be proud of; and, by Jove! you shall not practice it at my expense."

This speech excited great amusement among the party, who seemed to coincide perfectly with the reasoning of the speaker; while I myself remained silent, unable to decide whether I ought to be annoyed, or the reverse.

"Come, monsieur," resumed the major, addressing me with courtesy, "I ask pardon for the liberty of my speech. By St. Denis! if all the *compagnie d'élite* have the same skill of fence, I'll not question their appointment." The candor of the avowal was too much for my gravity, and I now joined in the mirth of his companions.

If I have mentioned so trivial an incident as this here, it is because I wish to mark, even thus passingly, a trait of French military life. The singular confession of a man, who regretted his impertinence because he discovered his adversary was a better swordsman, would, under any other code, or in any other country, have argued poltroonery. Not so here; no one for a moment suspected his comrade's courage, nor could any circumstance arise to make it doubtful, save an actual instance of cowardice. The inequality of the combat was reason enough for not engaging in it. The odds were unfair, because dueling was like a game, where each party was to have an equal chance, and hence no shame was felt at declining a contest where this inequality existed.

Such a system, it is obvious, could not have prevailed in communities where dueling was only resorted to in extreme cases; but here it was an every-day occurrence, and often formed but a brief interval, scarce interrupting the current of an old friendship. Any resentful spirit, any long-continued dislike to the party with whom you once fought, would have been denounced as unofficer-like and ungenerous; and every day saw men walking arm-in-arm, in closest intimacy, who, but the morning before, stood opposed to each other's weapons.

I now perceived the truth of what Minette had once said, and which, at the time, I but imperfectly comprehended. "Maître François will be less troublesome in future, and you, lieutenant, will have an easier life also."

"Halt there!" shouted a sentry, as we approached the narrow causeway that led up to the convent. We now discovered that, by a general order, no one was permitted to approach the hospital save such as were provided with a leave from the medical staff. A bulletin of the deaths was daily published on the guard-house, except which no other information was afforded of the condition of the wounded; and to this we turned eagerly, and with anxious hearts, lest we might read the name of some friend lost forever. I ran over with a rapid glance the list, where neither St. Hilaire nor poor Pioche occurred, and then, setting spurs to my horse, hurried back to my quarters at the top of my speed. When I arrived, the preparations for the departure of the *élite* were already in progress, and I had but time to make my few arrangements for the road, when the order came to join my comrades.

CHAPTER LIV.

PARIS IN 1806.

A PORTION of the Luxembourg was devoted to the reception of the *compagnie d'elité*, for whom a household, on the most liberal scale, was provided, a splendid table maintained, and all that wealth and the taste of a voluptuous age could suggest, procured, to make their life one of daily magnificence and pleasure. Daru himself, the especial favorite of the Emperor, took the head of the table each day, to which generally some of the ministers were invited, while the *Moniteur* of every morning chronicled the festivities, giving *éclat* to the most minute circumstance, and making Paris re-echo to the glories of him of whose fame they were but the messengers.

The most costly equipages—saddle-horses of great price—grooms in gorgeous liveries—all that could attract notice and admiration, were put in requisition; while ceremonies of pomp went forward day by day, and the deputation received in state the congratulatory visits of different departments of the government.

While thus this homage was paid to the semblance of Napoleon's glory, his progress through Germany was one grand triumphal procession. One day we read of his arrival at Munich, whither the Empress had gone to meet him—there, he was welcomed with the most frantic enthusiasm. He had restored to them their army almost without loss, and covered with laurels; he had elevated their elector to a throne, while he cemented the friendship between the two nations by the marriage of Eugene Beauharnais with the Princess of Bavaria. Another account would tell us of sixteen thou-

sand Russian prisoners on their way to France, accompanied by two thousand cannon, taken from the Austrians. All that could excite national enthusiasm, and gratify national vanity, was detailed by the government press, and popular excitement raised to a higher pitch than in the wildest periods of the revolution.

Hourly was his arrival looked forward to with anxiety and impatience. Fêtes on the most splendid scale of magnificence were in preparation, and the public bodies of Paris held meetings to concert measures for his triumphal reception. At last a telegraphic dispatch announced his arrival at Strasburg. He crossed the Rhine at the very place where, exactly one hundred days before, he passed over on his march against the Austrians—one hundred days of such glory as not even his career had equaled. Ulm and Austerlitz, vanquished Russia, and ruined Austria, the trophies of this brief space. Never had his genius shone with greater splendor—never had fortune shown herself more the companion of his destiny.

Each hour was now counted, and every thought turned to the day when he might be expected to arrive; and on the evening of the 24th came the intelligence that the Emperor was approaching Paris. He had halted part of a day at Nancy to review some regiments of cavalry, and now might be expected in less than twenty-four hours. The next morning all Paris awoke at an early hour, when, what was the surprise and disappointment to see the great flag floating from the pavilion of the Tuileries. His Majesty had arrived during the night, when, at once sending for the minister of finance, he proceeded, without taking a moment's repose, to examine into the dreadful crisis which threatened the Bank of France, and the very existence of the government.

At eleven, the council of state were assembled at the Tuileries; and at twelve, a proclamation, dispersed through Paris, announced that M. Molien was appointed minister, and M. Marbois was dismissed from his office. The rapidity of these changes, and the avoidance of all public homage by the Emperor, threw, for several days, a cast of gloom over the whole city, which was soon dissipated by the reappearance of Napoleon, and the publication of that celebrated report by M. Champagny, in which the glories of France—her victories—her acquisitions in wealth, territory, and influence—were recited in terms whose adulation it would be now difficult to digest.

From that moment the festivities of Paris commenced, and with a splendor unsurpassed by any period of the Empire. It was the Augustan era of Napoleon's life, in all that concerned the fine arts—for literature, unhappily, did not flourish at any time beneath his reign. Gérard and Gros, David, Ingres, and Isabey, committed to canvas the glories of the German campaigns; and the capitulation of Ulm, the taking of Vienna, the passage of the Danube, and the field of Austerlitz, still live in the genius of these great painters.

The opera, too, under the direction of Cimerosa, had attained to an unwonted excellence; while Spontini and Boieldieu, in their separate walks, gave origin to the school so distinctly that of the comic opera. Still, the voluptuous tastes of the day prevailed above all; and the ballet, and the strange conceptions of Nicolo, a Maltese composer, in which music, dancing, romance, and scenery all figured, were the passion of the time.

Dancing was, indeed, the great art of the era. Vestris and Trénis were the great names in every saloon; and all the extravagant graces and voluptuous groupings of the ballet were introduced into the amusements of society: even the taste in dress was made subordinate to this passion—the light and floating materials, which mark the figure and display symmetry, replacing the heavier and more costly robes of former times. The reaction to the stern puritanism of the republican age had set in, and secretly was favored by Napoleon himself, who saw in all this extravagance and abandonment to pleasure the basis of that new social state on which he proposed to found his dynasty.

Never were the entertainments at the Tuileries more costly—never was a greater magnificence displayed in all the ceremonial of state. The marshals of the Empire were enjoined to maintain a style corresponding to their exalted position; and the reports of the police were actually studied, respecting such persons as lived in what was deemed a manner unbefitting their means of expense.

Cambacérès and Fouché, Talleyrand and Murat, all maintained splendid establishments. Their dinners were given twice each week, and their receptions were almost every evening. If the Emperor conferred wealth with a liberal hand, so did he expect to see it freely expended. He knew well the importance of conciliating the affections of the *bourgeoisie* of Paris, and that by no other means could such an end be accomplished more readily than by a lavish expenditure of money throughout all classes of society. This was alone wanting to efface

every trace of the old republican spirit. The simple habits and uncostly tastes of the Jacobins were at once regarded as meannesses—their frugal and unpretending modes of life pronounced low and vulgar—and many, who could have opposed a stout heart against the current of popular feeling on stronger grounds, yielded to the insinuations and mockeries of their own class, and conformed to tastes which eventually engendered opinions and even principles.

I ask pardon of my reader for digressing from the immediate subject of my own career, to speak of topics which are rather the province of the historian than a mere story-teller like myself; still, I should not be able to present to his view the picture of manners I desired, without thus recalling some features of that time, so pregnant with the fate of Europe and the future destiny of France. And now to return.

Immediately on the Emperor's arrival, the Empress and her suite took their departure for Versailles, from whence it was understood they were not to return before the end of the month, for which time a splendid ball was announced at the Tuileries. Unwilling to detain General d'Auvergne's letter so long, and unable, from the position I occupied, to obtain leave of absence from Paris, I forwarded the letter to the comtesse, and abandoned the only hope I had of meeting her once more. The disappointment from this source—the novelty of the circumstances in which I found myself—the fascinations of a world altogether strange to me—all conspired to confuse and excite me, and I entered into the dissipation of those around me, if not with all their zest, at least with as headlong a resolution to drown all reflection in a life of voluptuous enjoyment.

The only person of my own standing among the *compagnie d'élite* was a captain of the Chasseurs of the Guard, who, although but a few years my senior, had seen service in the Italian campaign. By family a Bourbonist, he joined the revolutionary armies when his relatives fled from France, and slowly won his steps to his present rank. A certain hauteur in his manner with men—an air of distance he always wore—had made him as little liked by them as it usually succeeds in making a man popular with women, to whom the opposite seems at once a compliment. He was a man who had seen much of the world, and in the best society; gifted with a most fascinating address, whenever he pleased to exert it, and singularly good-looking, he was the *beau idéal* of the French officer of the highest class.

The Chevalier Duchesne and myself had traveled together for some days, without exchanging more than the ordinary civilities of distant acquaintance, when some accident of the road threw us more closely together, and ended by forming an intimacy which, in our Paris life, brought us every hour into each other's society.

Stranger as I was in the capital, to me the acquaintance was a boon of great price.

He knew it thoroughly. In the gorgeous and stately salons of the Faubourg—in the guingettes of the Rue St. Denis—in the costly mansion of the modern banker, the new aristocracy of the land—or in the homely ménage of the shopkeeper of the Rue St. Honoré, he was equally at home, and, by some strange charm, had the entrée too.

The same "sesame" opened to him the coulisse of the Opera, and the penetralia of the Français. In fact, he seemed one of those privileged people who are met with occasionally in life, in places the most incongruous, and with acquaintances the most opposite, yet never carrying the prestige of the one or the other an inch beyond the precincts it belongs to.

Had he been wealthy I could have accounted for much of this; for never was there a period when riches more abounded, nor when their power was more absolute; but he did not seem so. Although in no want of money, his retinue and simple style of living betrayed nothing beyond fair competence; neither, as far as I could perceive, did he incline to habits of extravagance—on the contrary, he was too apt to connect every display with vulgarity, and condemn, in his fastidiousness, the gorgeous splendor that characterized the period.

Such, without going further, did Duchesne appear to be, as we took up our quarters at the Luxembourg, and commenced an intimacy which each day served to increase

"Well, thank Heaven, this vaudeville is over at last!" said he, as he threw himself into a large chair at my fire, and pitched his chapeau, all covered with gold and embroidery, into a far corner of the room. We had just returned from Notre-Dame, where the grand ceremonial of receiving the standards was held by the Senate, with all the solemnity of a high mass, and the most imposing observances.

"Vaudeville?" said I, turning round rapidly.

"Yes. What else can you call it? What, I ask you, had those poor decrepit senators—those effeminate priests, in the costumes of *béguines*, to do with the eagles of a brave

but unfortunate army? In what way can you connect that incense and that organ with the smoke of artillery and the crash of mitraille? And lastly—was it like old Daru himself, to stand there, half crouching, beside some wretched half-palsied priest? But I feel heartily ashamed of myself, though I played but the smallest part in the whole drama."

"Is it thus you can speak of the triumph of our army?—the glories—"

"You mistake me much. I only speak of that miserable mockery which converts our hard-won laurels into chaplets of artificial flowers. These displays are far beneath us, and would only become the victories of some national guard."

"So then," said I, half laughingly, "it is your republican gorge that rises against all this useless ceremonial."

"You are the very first ever detected me in that guise," said he, bursting into a hearty laugh. "But come, I'd wager you agree with me all this while. This was a very contemptible exhibition; and, for my own part, I'd rather see the colors back again, with those poor fellows we chased at Austerlitz, than fluttering in the imbecile hands of dotage and bigotry."

"Then I must say we differ totally. I like to think of the warlike spirit nourished in a nation, by the contemplation of such glorious spoils. I am young enough to remember how the Invalides affected me—"

"When you took your Sunday walk there from the Polytechnique, two and two, with a blue ribbon round your neck, for being a good boy during the week. Oh, I know it all. Delicious times they were, with their souvenirs of wooden legs and plum-pudding. Happy fellow you must be, if the delusion can last this while."

"You are determined it shall not continue much longer," said I, laughing; "that is quite evident."

"No. On the contrary, I should be but too happy to be your convert, instead of making you mine; but, unfortunately, 'Sa Majesté, Empereur et Roi,' has taught me some smart lessons since I gave up mathematics, and I have acquired a smattering of his own policy, which is, to look after the substance and leave the shadow, or the 'drapeau,' if you like it better, to whoever pleases."

"I confess, however," said I, "I don't well understand your enthusiasm about war, and your indifference about its trophies. To me, the associations they suggest are pleasurable beyond anything.

"I think I remember something of that kind in myself formerly," said he, musing. "There was a time when the blast of a trumpet, or even the clank of a sabre, used to set my heart thumping. Happily, however, the organ has grown steeled against even more stirring sounds; and I listened to the salute to-day, fired as it was by that imposing body, the artillery of the 'Garde Nationale,' with an equanimity truly wonderful. Apropos, my dear Burke, talk of heroism and self-devotion as you will, but show me anything to compare with the gallantry of those fellows we saw to-day on the 'Quai Voltaire'—a set of grocers, perfumers, wig-makers, umbrella and sausage-men, with portly paunches and spectacles, ramming down charges, sponging, loading, and firing real cannon. On my word of honor, it was fearful."

"They say his Majesty is very proud indeed of the National Guard of Paris."

"Of course he is; look at them, and just think what must be the enthusiasm of men who will adopt a career so repugnant, not only to their fancy, but their very formation; remember, that he who runs yonder with a twenty-four pounder, never handled anything heavier than a wig-block; and that the only charges of the little man beside him have been made in his day book. By St. Denis! the dromedary guard we had in Egypt were more at home in their saddles, than the squadron who rode beside the archbishop's carriage."

"It is scarcely fair, after all," said I, half laughing, "to criticise them so severely; and the more as I think you had some old acquaintances among them."

"Ha! you saw that, did you?" said he, smiling. "No, by Jove! I never met them before; but that *confrérie* of soldiers—you understand—soon made us acquainted; and I saw one old fellow speaking to a very pretty girl I guessed to be his daughter, and soon cemented a small friendship with him; here's his card."

"His card! Why, are you to visit him?"

"Better again; I shall dine there on Monday next. Let us see how he calls himself. 'Hippolyte Pierrot, stay and corset-maker to her Majesty the Empress, No. 22, Rue du Bac—third floor above the *entresol*.' *Diable!* we're high up. Unfortunately, I am scarcely intimate enough to bring a friend."

"Oh, make no excuses on that head," said I, laughing, "I really have no desire to see Monsieur Hippolyte Pierrot's ménage. And now, what are your engagements for this evening—are you for the opera?"

"I don't well know," said he, pausing; "Madame Caulaincourt receives, and of

course expects to see our gay jackets in her salon any time before or after supper. Then there's the Comtesse de Nevers; I never go there without meeting my tailor; the fellow's a spy of the police, and a confectioner to boot, and he serves the ices, and reports the conversations in the Place Vendôme, and that side of the Rue St. Honoré. I couldn't take a glass of lemonade without being dunned. Then, in the Faubourg, I must go in plain clothes, they would not let the 'livery of the Usurper' pass the porter's lodge; besides, they worry one with their enthusiastic joy or grief, as the last letter from England mentions whether the Comte d'Artois has eaten too many oysters, or found London beer too strong for him."

"From all which I guess that you are indisposed to stir."

"I believe that is about the fact. Truth is, Burke, there is only one *soirée* in all Paris I'd take the trouble to dress for this evening, and, strange enough, it's the only house where I don't know the people. He is a commissary-general, or a 'fournisseur' of some kind or other of the army—always from home, they say; with a wife, who was once, and a daughter, who is now, exceeding pretty; keeps a splendid house, and, like an honest man, makes restitution of all he can cheat in the campaign, by giving good dinners in the capital. His Majesty, at the solicitation of the Empress, I believe, made him a count—God's mercy it was not a king!—and as they come from Guadaloupe, or Otaheite, no one disputes their right; besides, this is not a time for such punctilio. This is all I know of them, for, unfortunately, they settled here since I joined the army."

"And the name?"

"Oh, a very plausible name, I assure you. Lacostellerie—Madame la Comtesse de Lacostellerie."

"By Jove! you remind me, I have letters for her; a circumstance I had totally forgotten, though it was coupled with a commission."

"A letter!—why nothing was ever so fortunate; don't lose a moment; you have just time to leave it, with your card, before dinner; you'll have an invitation for this evening at once."

"But I have not the slightest wish."

"No matter, *I* have, and you shall bring me."

"You forget," said I, mimicking his own words, "I am, unfortunately, not intimate enough."

"As to that," replied he, "there is a vast difference between the etiquette Rue du Bac, No. 22, three floors above the *entresol*, and the gorgeous salons of the Hôtel Clichy, Rue Faubourg St. Honoré; ceremony has the advantage in the former by a height of three pair of stairs, not to speak of the *entresol*."

"But I don't know the people."

"Nor I."

"But how am I to present you."

"Easily enough. 'Captain Duchesne, Imperial Guard;' or, if you prefer it, I'll do the honors for *you*."

"With all my heart, then," said I, laughing; and prepared to pay the visit in question.

CHAPTER LV.

THE "HÔTEL DE CLICHY."

DUCHESNE was correct in all his calculations. I had scarcely reached the Luxembourg when a valet brought me a card for the comtesse's soirée for that evening. It was accordingly agreed upon that we were to go together—I, as the invited, he, as my friend.

"All your finery, Burke, remember that," said he, as we separated to dress. "The uniform of the *compagnie d'élite* is as much a decoration in a salon as a camelia or a geranium."

When he re-entered my room, half an hour later, I was struck by the blaze of orders and decorations with which his jacket was covered, while at his side there hung a magnificent *sabre d'honneur*, such as the Emperor was accustomed to confer on his most distinguished officers.

"You smile at all this bravery," said he, willfully misinterpreting my look of admiration; "but remember where we are going."

"On the contrary," interrupted I; "but it is the first time I knew you had the cross of the Legion."

"*Parbleu!*" said he, with an insolent shrug of his shoulders, "I had lent it to my hairdresser, for a ball at the 'Cirque.' But here comes the carriage."

While we drove along toward the Faubourg, I had time to learn some further particulars of the people to whose house we were proceeding, and for my reader's information may as well impart them here, with such other facts as I subsequently collected myself.

Like most of the salons of the new aristocracy, Madame Lacostellerie's received people of every section of party, and every class of political opinion. Standing equal-

ly aloof from the old régime and the members of the Jacobin party, her receptions were a kind of neutral territory, where each could come without compromise of dignity; for already, except among the most starched adherents of the Bourbons, few of whom remained in France, there was a growing spirit to side with the Napoleonists, in preference to the revolutionary section; while the latter, with all their pretensions to simplicity and primitive tastes, felt no little pride in mixing with the very aristocracy they so loudly inveighed against.

Besides all this, wealth had its prestige. Never, in the palmiest days of the royalty, were entertainments of greater splendor; and the legitimists, however disposed to be critical on the company, could afford to be just regarding the "*cuisine;*" the luxury of these modern dinners eclipsing the most costly displays of former times, where hereditary rank and ancient nobility contributed to adorn the scene. And, lastly, the admixture of every grade and class extended the field of conversational agreeability, throwing in new elements, and eliciting new features, in a society where peers, actors, poets, bankers, painters, soldiers, speculators, journalists, and adventurers, were confusedly mixed together, making, as it were, a common fund of their principles and their prejudices, and starting anew in life with what they could seize in the scramble.

After following the long line of carriages far above an hour, we at last turned into a large court-yard, lit up almost to the brightness of day. Here the equipages of many of the ministers were standing, a privilege accorded to them above the other guests. I recognized among the number the splendid liveries of Decrès, and the stately carriage of Talleyrand, whose household always proclaimed itself as belonging to a "seigneur" of the oldest blood of France, the most perfect type of a high-bred gentleman. Our progress from the vestibule to the stairs was a slow one. The double current of those pressing up and downward delayed us long; and at last we reached a spacious ante-chamber, where even greater numbers stood awaiting their turn, if happily it should come, to move forward.

While here, the names of those announced conveyed to us a fair impression of the whole company. Among the first was Le Général Junot—Berthollet, the celebrated chemist—Lafayette—Monges—Daru—Count de Mailles, a Legitimist noble—David, the regicide—the Ambassador of Prussia—M. Pasquier—Talma. Such were the names we heard following in quick succession, when suddenly an avenue was opened by a master of the ceremonies before me, who read from my card the words,

"Le Capitaine Burke, officier d'élite—Le Chevalier Duchesne, présenté par lui."

And, advancing within the doorway, I found myself opposite a very handsome woman, whose brilliant dress and blaze of diamonds concealed any ravages time might have made upon her beauty.

She was conversing with the Arch-Chancellor, Cambacérès, when my name was announced, and, turning rapidly round, touched my arm with her bouquet, as she said with a most gracious smile,

"I am but too much flattered to see you on so short an invitation, but M. de Tascher's note led me to hope I might presume so far. Your friend, I believe?"

"I have taken the great liberty—"

"Indeed, Madame la Comtesse," said Duchesne, interrupting, "I must exculpate my friend here. This intrusion rests on my own head, and has no other apology than my long-cherished wish to pay my homage to the most distinguished ornament of the Parisian world."

As he spoke, the quiet flow of his words, and the low, deferential bow with which he accompanied them, completely divested his speech of its tone of gross flattery, and merely made it seem a very fitting and appropriate expression.

"This would be a very high compliment, indeed," replied Madame de Lacostellerie, with a flush of evident pleasure on her cheek, "had it even come from one less known than the Chevalier Duchesne. I hope the Duchesse de Montserrat is well—your aunt, if I mistake not?"

"Yes, madame," said he, "in excellent health. It will afford her great pleasure when I inform her of your polite inquiry."

Another announcement now compelled us to follow the current in front, which I was but well content to do, and escape from an interchange of fine speeches, of whose sincerity, on one side at least, I had very strong misgivings.

"So, then, the comtesse is acquainted with your family," said I, in a whisper.

"Who said so?" replied he, laughing.

"Did she not ask after the Duchesse de Montserrat?"

"And then?"

"And didn't you promise to convey her very kind message?"

"To be sure I did; but are you simple enough to think that either of us were serious in what we said? Why, my dear friend, she never saw my aunt in her life;

nor, if I were to hint at her inquiry for her to the duchesse, am I certain it would not cost me something like a half-million of francs the old lady has left me in her will? On my word, I firmly believe she'd never forgive it. You know little what these people of the 'vieille roche,' as they call themselves, are like. Do you see that handsome fellow yonder, with a star on a blue cordon?"

"I don't know him, but I see he's a Marshal of France."

"Well, I saw that same aunt of mine rise up and leave the room, because *he* sat down in her presence."

"Oh! that was intolerable."

"So she deemed his insolence. Come, move on; they're dancing in the next saloon;" and, without saying more, we pushed through the crowd in the direction of the music.

It is only by referring to the sensations experienced by those who see a ballet at the Opera for the first time, that I can at all convey my own on entering the "salle de danse." My first feeling was that of absolute shame. Never before had I seen that affectation of stage costume which then was the rage in society. The short and floating jupe—formed of some light and gauzy texture, which, even where it covered the figure, betrayed the form and proportions of the wearer—was worn low on the bosom and shoulders, and attached at the waist by a ribbon, whose knot hung negligently down in seeming disorder. The hair fell in long and floating masses loose upon the neck, waving in free tresses with every motion of the figure, and adding to that air of "abandon" which seemed so studiously aimed at; but more than anything in mere costume was the look and expression, in which a character of languid voluptuousness was written, and made to harmonize with the easy grace of floating movements, and sympathize with gestures full of passionate fascination.

"Now, Burke," said Duchesne, as he threw his eyes over the room, "shall I find a partner for you? for I believe I know most of the people here. That pretty blonde yonder, with the diamond buckles in her shoes, is Mademoiselle de Rancy, with a dowry of some millions of francs. What say you to pushing your fortune there? Don't forget the *officier d'élite* is a trump card just now; and there's no time to lose, for there will soon be a new deal."

"Not if she had the throne of France in reversion," said I, turning away in disgust from a figure which, though perfectly beautiful, outraged at every movement that greatest charm of womanhood, her inborn modesty.

"Ah, then, you don't fancy a blonde," said he, carelessly; whether willfully misunderstanding me or not I could not say. "Nor I either," added he. "There, now, is something far more to my taste. Is she not a lovely girl?"

She to whom he now directed my attention was standing at the side of the room, and leaning on her partner's arm, her head slightly turned, so that we could not see her features; but her figure was actually faultless. Hers was not one of those gossamer shapes which flitted around and about us, balancing on tiptoe, or gracefully floating with extending arms. Rather strongly built than otherwise, she stood with the firm foot and the straight ankle of a marble statue. Her arms, well rounded, hung easily from her full, wide shoulders, while her head, slightly thrown back, was balanced on her neck with an air at once dignified and easy. Her dress well suited the character of her figure: it was entirely of black, covered with a profusion of deep lace—the jupe looped up in Andalusian fashion, to display the leg, whose symmetry was perfect. Even her costume, however, had something about it too theatrical for my taste; but there was a stamp of firmness, "*fierté*," even in her carriage and her attitude, that at once showed hers was no vulgar desire of being remarkable, but the womanly consciousness of being dressed as became her. She suddenly turned her head around, and we both exclaimed in the same breath, "How lovely!" Her features were of that brilliant character only seen in southern blood—eyes large, black, and lustrous, fringed with lashes that threw their shadow on the very cheek; full lips, curled with an air of almost saucy expression, while the rich olive tint of her transparent skin was scarce colored with the pink flush of exercise, and harmonized perfectly with the proud repose of her countenance.

"She must be Spanish—that's certain," said Duchesne. "No one ever saw such an instep come from this side of the Pyrenees; and those eyes have got their look of sleepy wickedness from Moorish blood. But here comes one will tell us all about her."

This was the Baron de Trève, a withered-looking, dried-up old man, rouged to the eyes, and dressed in the extravagance of the last fashion—the high collar of his coat rising nearly to the back of his head, as his deep cravat in front entirely con-

cealed his mouth, and formed a kind of barrier around his features.

As Duchesne addressed him, he stopped short, and assuming an attitude of great intended grace, raised his glass slowly to his eye, and looked toward the lady.

"Ah! the Senorina—don't you know *her?* Why, where have you been, my dear chevalier? Oh! I forgot. You've been in Austria, or Russia, or some barbarous place or other. She is the belle, *par excellence.* Nothing else is talked of in Paris."

"But her name? Who is she?" said Duchesne, impatiently.

"Mademoiselle de Lacostellerie, the daughter of the house," said the Baron, completely overcome with astonishment at our ignoranee; "and you not to know this—you, of all men living. Why," he continued, dropping his voice to a lower key, "there never was such a fortune. Mines of rubies and emeralds; continents of coffee, rice, and sandal-wood; spice islands and sugar plantations, to make one's mouth water."

"By Jove! baron, you seem somewhat susceptible yourself."

"I had my thoughts on the subject," said he, with a half sigh; "but, hélas! there are so many ties to be broken—so many tender chains one must snap asunder!"

"I understand," said Duchesne, with an air of well-assumed seriousness. "The thing was impossible. Now, then, what say you to assist a friend!"

"You—yourself, do you mean?"

"Of course, baron—no other."

"Come this way," said the old man, taking him by the arm, and leading him along to another part of the room, while Duchesne, with a sly look at me, followed.

While I stood awaiting his return, my thoughts became fixed on Duchesne himself, of whose character I never felt free from my misgivings. The cold indifference he manifested on ordinary occasions to everything and everybody, I now saw could give way to strong impetuosity; but even this might be assumed also. As I pondered thus, I had not remarked that the dance was concluded; and already the dancers were proceeding toward their seats, when I heard my name uttered beside me—"Capitaine Burke." I turned; it was the countess herself, leaning on the arm of her daughter.

"I wish to present you to my daughter," said she, with a courteous smile. "The college friend and brother officer of your cousin Tascher, Pauline."

The young lady courtesied with an air of cold reserve; I bowed deeply before her, while the countess continued,

"We hope to have the pleasure of seeing you frequently during your stay in Paris, when we shall have a better opportunity of making your acquaintance."

As I expressed my sense of this politeness, I turned to address a few words to mademoiselle; and requesting to have the honor of dancing with her, she looked at me with an air of surprise, as though not understanding my words, when suddenly the countess interposed,

"I fear that my daughter's engagements have been made long since; but another night—"

"I will hope—" But before I could say more, the countess addressed another person near her, and mademoiselle, turning her head superciliously away, did not deign me any further attention; so that, abashed and awkward at so unfavorable a *début* in the gay world, I fell back, and mixed with the crowd. As I did so, I found myself among a group of officers, one of whom was relating an anecdote just then current in Paris, and which I mention merely as illustrating in some measure the habits of the period.

At the levee of the Emperor on the morning before, an old general of brigade advanced to pay his respects, when Napoleon observed some drops of rain glistening on the embroidery of his uniform. He immediately turned toward one of his suite, and gave orders to ascertain by what carriage the general had arrived. The answer was, that he had come in a "fiacre," a hired vehicle, which, by the rules of the Court, was not admitted within the court of the Tuileries, and thus he was obliged to walk above one hundred yards before he could obtain shelter.

The old officer, who knew nothing of the tender solicitude of the Emperor, was confounded with astonishment to observe at his departure a handsome calèche and two splendid horses at his service.

"Whose carriage is this?" said he.

"Yours, Monsieur le Général."

"And the servant, and the horses?"

"Yours, also. His Majesty has graciously been pleased to order them for you, and desires you will remember that the sum of six thousand francs will be deducted from your pay to meet the cost of the equipage, which the Emperor deems befitting your rank in the service."

"It is thus," said the narrator, "the Emperor would inforce that liberality on others he so eminently displays himself. The spoils of Italy and Austria are destined,

not to found a new noblesse, but to enrich the bourgeoisie of this good city of Paris. I say, Edward, is not that Duchesne yonder? I thought he was above patronizing the salons of a mere commissary-general."

"You don't know the chevalier," replied the other. "No game flies too high or too low for his mark. Depend upon it, he's not here for nothing."

"If mademoiselle be the object," said a third, "I'll swear he shall have no rivalry on my side. By Jove! I'd rather face a charge of Hulans than speak to her."

"If thou wert a Marshal of France, Claude, thou wouldst think differently."

"If I were a Marshal of France," repeated he, with energy, "I'd rather marry Minette, the vivandière of ours."

"And no bad choice either," broke in a large, heavy-looking officer; "there is but one objection to such an arrangement."

"And that, if I might ask—"

"Simple enough. She wouldn't have you."

The young man endeavored to join in the laugh this speech excited among the rest, though it was evident he felt ill at ease from the ridicule.

"A thousand pardons, my dear Burke," said Duchesne, at this moment, as he slipped his arm through mine; "but I thought I should have been in need of your services a few minutes ago."

"Ah! how?"

"Move a little aside, and I'll tell you. I wished to ask mademoiselle to dance, and approached her for the purpose. She was standing with a number of people, all strangers to me, at the doorway yonder—Dobretski, that Russian prince, the only man I knew amongst them. A very chilling 'Engaged, sir,' was the answer of the lady to my first request. The same reply met my second and third, when the Russian—as if desirous to increase the awkwardness of my position—interposed with, 'And the fourth set mademoiselle dances with me.'

"'In that case,' said I, 'I may fairly claim the fifth.'

"'On what grounds, sir?' said she, with a look of easy impertinence.

"'The Emperor's orders, mademoiselle,' said I, proudly.

"'Indeed, sir! May I ask how and when?'

"'Austerlitz, December 2. The order of four o'clock, dated from Reygern says—"The Imperial Guard will follow closely on the track of the Russians." Signed—"NAPOLEON."'

"'In that case, sir,' said she, 'I cannot dispute his Majesty's orders. I shall dance the fifth with you.'"

"And the Russian—what said he?"

"*Ma foi*, I paid no attention to him; for, as mademoiselle moved off with her partner, I strolled away in search of you."

If I was amused at this recital of the chevalier, I could not avoid feeling piqued at the greater success he had than myself; for still the chilling reception I had met with was rankling in my mind.

"Let us move away from this quarter," said Duchesne; "here we have got ourselves among a knot of old campaigners, with their stupid stories of Cairo and Acre, Alexandria and the Adige. By Jove! if anything would make me a Legitimist it is my disgust at those confounded narratives about Kleber and Dessaix. The Emperor himself does not despise the time of the Revolution more heartily than I do. Come, there's bouillotte yonder. Let us go and win some pieces. I feel I'm in vein, and even to lose would be better than listen to these people. It was only a few minutes ago I was hunted away from Madame de Muraire by old Berthollet, who is persuading her that her diamonds are but charcoal, and that a necklace is only fit to roast an ortolan. This comes of letting savants into society; decidedly, they had much better taste in the time of the monarchy."

It was with some difficulty we succeeded in approaching the bouillette-table, where, to judge from the stakes, very high play was going forward. Duchesne was quickly recognized among the players, who made place for him among them. I soon saw that he was not mistaken in supposing he was in luck; every coup was successful, and, while he continued to win time after time, the heap of gold grew greater, till it covered the part of the table before him.

"Most certainly, Burke," said he, in a whisper, "this is a strong turn of fortune, who, being a woman, won't long be of the same mind. Five thousand francs," cried he, throwing the billet de banque carelessly before him, while he turned to resume what he was saying to me. "Were I in action now, I'd win the bâton de maréchal. I feel it. There's always an innate sense of luck when it means to be steady."

"The Chevalier Duchesne—the Chevalier Duchesne!" was repeated from voice to voice, outside the circle, "Mademoiselle de Lacostellerie is waiting to waltz with you."

"A thousand pardons," said he, rising. "Burke, continue my game, while I try if I can't push fortune the whole way."

So saying, and without listening to my

excuses about ignorance of play, he pressed me into his seat, and pushed his way through the crowd to join the dancers.

It was only when the players asked me if I intended to go on, that I was aware of the position in which I found myself. I knew little more of the game than I had learned in looking over the table, but I was aware of the strict etiquette in all the play of society, which enjoins a revenge to every loser, so that I continued to bet and stake for Duchesne as I had seen him do already, not, however, with such fortune. He had scarcely left the table when luck changed, and now I saw his riches decreasing even more rapidly than they had been accumulated. At last, after a long run of ill fortune, when I had staked a very large sum on the board, just as the banker was about to begin, I changed my mind and withdrew half of it.

"No, no, let it stay," whispered a voice in my ear; "the sooner this is over the better."

I turned—it was Duchesne himself, who for some time had been seated behind my chair and looking on at the game.

Fleeting as was the glance I had of his features, I fancied they were somewhat paler than usual. Could this be from the turn of fortune? But no. I watched him now, and I perceived that he never even looked at the game. At last, I staked all that remained in one coup, and lost; when, drawing forth my own purse, I was about to make another bet—"No, no, Burke," whispered he in my ear, "I was only waiting for this moment. Let us come away now. I rise as I sat down, messieurs," he said, gayly; while he added, in a lower tone, "*Sauf l'honneur.*"

"Have you had enough of gayety for one night?" said he, as he drew my arm within his. "Shall we turn homeward?"

"Willingly," said I; for somehow I felt chagrined and vexed at my ill luck, and was angry with myself for playing.

"Come along, then; this door will bring us to the stairs."

As we passed along hastily through the crowd, I saw that a young officer in a hussar uniform whispered something in Duchesne's ear, to which he quickly replied, "Certainly;" and as he spoke again in the same low tone, Duchesne answered, "Agreed, sir," with a courteous smile, and a look of much pleasure.

"Well, Burke," said he, turning to me, "these are about the most splendid salons in Paris; I think I never saw more perfect taste; I certainly must thank you for being my chaperon here."

"You forget, Duchesne, the Duchesse de Montserrat, it seems," said I, laughing.

"By Jove, and so I had!" said he; "yet the initiative lay with you. How the termination may be, is another matter," added he, in a mumbling voice, not intended to be heard.

"At all events," said I, puzzled what to say, and feeling I should say something, "I am happy your Russian friend took no notice of your speech."

"And why?" said he, with a peculiar smile—"and why?"

"I abhor a duel, in the first place."

"But, my dear boy, that speech smacks much more of the Ecole des Jésuites than of St. Cyr. Don't let any one less your friend than I am hear you say so."

"I care not who may hear it. Necessity may make me meet an adversary in single combat; but as to acting the cold-blooded part of a bystander—as to being the witness of my friend's crime, or his own death—"

"Come, come; when you exchange the dolman for an alb I'll listen to this from you, if I can listen to it from any one; but, happily, now we have no time for more morality, for here comes the carriage."

Chatting pleasantly about the *soirée* and its company, we rolled along toward our quarters, and parted with a cordial shake of the hand for the night.

CHAPTER LVI.

A "SALLE DE POLICE."

When I entered the breakfast-room the following morning, I found Duchesne stretched before the fire, in an easy chair, busily engaged in reading the *Moniteur* of that day, where a long list of imperial "ordonnances" filled nearly three columns.

"Here have I been," said he, "conning over this catalogue of princely favor these twenty minutes, and yet cannot discern one word of our well-beloved cousins Captains Burke and Duchesne; and yet there seems to be a hailstorm of promotions. Some of them have got grand duchies—some, principalities—some have the cross of the Legion—and here, by Jove! are some endowed with wives. Now that his Majesty has taken to christening and marrying, I suppose we shall soon see him administering all the succors of holy Church. Have you much interest in hearing that Talleyrand is to be called Prince of Benevente, and Murat is now Grand Duke of Berg; that Sebastiani

is to be married to Mademoiselle de Coigny; and Monsieur Decazes, fils de M. Decazes, has taken some one else to wife? Oh dear, oh dear! It's all very tiresome, and not even the fête of St. Napoleon—"

"Of whom?" said I, laughing.

"St. Napoleon, *parbleu!*—it's no joking matter, I assure you. Here is the letter of the cardinal legate to the archbishops and bishops of France, commanding that the first Sunday in the August of each year should be set apart to celebrate his saintship, with an account of the processions to take place, and various plenary indulgences to the pious who shall present themselves on the occasion. Fouché could tell you the names of some people who bled freely to get rid of all this trumpery; and, in good sooth, it's rather hard, if we could not endure St. Louis, to be obliged to tolerate St. Napoleon—saints, like Bordeaux wine, being all the more palatable when they have age to mellow them. I could forgive anything, however, but this system of forced marriages—it smacks too much of old Frederick for my taste; and one cannot always have the luck of your friend General d'Auvergne."

I felt my cheek grow burning hot at the words. Duchesne did not notice my confusion, but continued:

"And yet, of all the ill-assorted unions for which his sainted Majesty will have to account hereafter, that was unquestionably the most extraordinary."

"But I have heard, and I believe it too, that the marriage was not of the Emperor's making; it was purely a matter of liking."

"Come, come, Burke," said he, laughing, "you will not tell me that the handsomest girl at the court, with a large dowry, an ancient name, and every advantage of position, marries an old weather-beaten soldier—the senior officer of her own father once—of her own free will and choice. The thing is absurd. No, no. These are the imperial recompenses, when grand duchies are scarce and confiscations few. The Emperor does not travel for nothing. He brought back with him from Egypt something besides his Mameluke guard—that clever trick the pachas have of providing a favorite with an ex-sultana. There, there—don't look so angrily. We shall both be marshals of France one of these days, and that may reconcile one to a great deal."

"You are determined to owe nothing of your promotion to a blind devotion to Napoleon—that's certain," said I, annoyed at the tone of insolent disparagement in which he spoke.

"You are right—perfectly right there," replied he, in a quiet tone of voice. "No man would rather hug himself up in an illusion, if he could but make it minister to his pleasure or his enjoyment; but when it does neither—when the material is so flimsy as to be seen through at every minute—I throw it from me as a worthless garment, unfit to wear."

"Can you, then, deem Napoleon's glory such?"

"Of course, to me, it is. How am I a sharer in his triumphs, save as the charger that marches in the cavalcade? You don't perceive that I, as the descendant of an old loyalist family, would have fared far better with the Bourbons, from reasons of blood and kindred; and a hundred times better with the Jacobins, from very recklessness."

"How then came it—"

"I will spare you the question. I neither liked emigration nor the guillotine, and preferred the slow suffering of *ennui* to the quick death of the scaffold. There has been but one career in France for many a day past. I adopted it, as much from necessity as choice—I followed it more from habit than either."

"But you cannot be insensible to the greatness of your country, nor her success in arms."

"Nor am I; but these things are a small ingredient in patriotism. You, the stranger, share with us all our triumphs in the field. But the inherent features of a nation—the distinctive traits of which every son of the soil feels proud—where are they now? What is France to me more than to you? One half my kindred are exiled; of those who remain, many regard me as a renegade. Their properties confiscated, themselves suspected, what tie binds them to this country? You are not more an alien here than I am."

"And yet, Duchesne, you shed your blood freely for this same cause you condemn. You charged the Pratzen, some days ago, with four squadrons, against a whole column of Russian cavalry."

"Ay, and would again to-morrow, boy. Had you been a gambler, I needn't have told you that it is the game, not the stake, that interests the real gamester. But come, do not fancy I want to make you a convert to these tiresome theories of mine. What say you to the pretty Mademoiselle Pauline? Did you admire her much?"

"She is unquestionably very handsome; but, if I must confess it, her manner toward me was too ungracious to make me loud in her praise."

"I like that, I vow," said Duchesne; "that saucy air has an indescribable charm

for me. I don't know if it is not the very thing which pleases me most about her. She has been spoiled by flattery and admiration; for her beauty and her fortune are prizes in the great wheel. And that she is aware of the fact is nothing wonderful, considering that she hears it repeated every evening of her life, by every rank in the service, from a Marshal of France down to —a captain in the *chasseurs à cheval*," said he, laughing.

"Who, probably, was one of the last to tell her so," said I, looking at him slyly.

"What have we here?" said he, suddenly, without paying any attention to my remark, as he again took up the *Moniteur*. "'It is rumored that the Russian Prince, Drobretski, was dangerously wounded this morning in an affair of honor; the names of the other party and the seconds are still unknown; but the efforts of the police, stimulated by the express command of the Emperor, will, it is to be hoped, succeed in discovering them ere long.'"

"Is not that the name of your Russian friend of last night, Duchesne?"

"Yes; and the same person, too, formerly Russian minister at Madrid and latterly residing on his parole at Paris," continued he, reading from the paper. "'The very decided part his Majesty has taken against the practice of dueling is strengthened on this occasion by a recent order of council respecting the prisoners on parole.' *Diable!* Burke, what a scrupulous turn Napoleon seems to have taken in regard to these Cossacks. And here follows a long list of witnesses who have seen nothing, and suspicious circumstances that occur every morning in the week without remark. After all, I don't think the Empire has advanced us much on the score of police—the same threadbare jests, the same old practical jokes, amused the bourgeoisie in the time of Louis XIV."

"I don't clearly understand your meaning."

"It is simply this: that every government of France, from Pepin downward, has understood the value of throwing public interest, from time to time, on a false scent, and to this end has maintained a police. Now, if for any cause his Majesty thought proper to incarcerate that Russian Prince in the Temple, or *La Force*, the affair would cause a tremendous sensation in Paris, and soon would ring over the whole of Germany and the rest of Europe, with every variation of despotism, tyranny, and all that, attached to it, long before any advantages to be derived from the step could be realized. Whereas, see the effect of an opposite policy. By this report of a duel, for instance—I don't mean to assert it false, here—the whole object is attained, and an admirable subject of imperial praise obtained into the bargain. Governments have learned wisdom from the cuttle-fish, and can muddy the water on their enemies at the moment of danger. I should not be surprised if the affairs of the Bank looked badly this morning."

"It is evident, then, you disbelieve the whole statement about the duel."

"My dear friend," said he, smiling, "who is there in all Paris, from Montmartre to St. Denis, believes, or disbelieves, any one thing in the times we live in? Have we not trusted so implicitly for years past to the light of our reason, that we have actually injured our eyesight with its brilliancy? Little reproach, indeed, to our minds, when our very senses seem to mislead us—when one sees the people who enter the Tuileries now, with embroidered coats, who, in our fathers' days, never came nearer to it than the Place du Carrousel. *Hélas!* it's no time for incredulity, that's certain. But to conclude," said he, turning to the paper once more—"'The *commissaires de police* throughout Paris have received orders to spare no effort to unravel the mystery, and detect the other parties in this unhappy affair.' Military tribunal—prisoners on parole—rights of hospitality—honor of France—and the old peroration, the usual compliment on the wisdom which presides over every department of state. How weary I do become of all this! Let your barber puff his dye for the whiskers, or your bootmaker the incomparable effulgence of his blacking, the thing is in keeping, no one objects to it. I don't find fault with my old friend Pigault Lebrun, if he now and then plays the critic on himself, and shows the world the beauties they neglectfully slurred over. But, Burke, have you ever seen a *bureau de police?*"

"Never; and I have the greatest curiosity to do so."

"Come, then, I'll be your guide; the *commissaire* of this quarter has a very extended jurisdiction, stretching away toward the Bois de Boulogne; and if there be anything in this report, he is certain to know it; and assuredly, no other topic will be talked of till to-morrow evening, for it's not Opera night, and Talma does not play either."

I willingly accepted this proposition; and when our breakfast was over, we mounted our horses, and set out for the place in question.

"If the forms of justice where we are now going," said Duchesne, "be divested of much of their pomp and ceremony, be assured of one thing, it is not at the expense of the more material essence. Of all the police tribunals about Paris, this obscure den in the Rue de Dix Sous is the most effective. Situated in a quarter where crime is as rife as fever in the Pontine Marshes, it has become acquainted with the haunts and habits of the lowest class in Paris—the lowest class, probably, in any city of Europe. Watching with parental solicitude, it tracks the criminal from his first step in vice to his last deed in crime; from his petty theft to his murder. Knowing the necessities to which poverty impels men, and studying with attention the impulses that grow up amid despair and hunger, it sees motives through a mist of intervening circumstances that would baffle less subtle observers, and can trace the tortuous windings of crime where no other sight could find the clue. Is it not strange to think with what ingenuity men will investigate the minute anatomy of vice, and how little they will do to apply this knowledge to its remedy? Like the surgeon, enamored of his operating skill, he would rather exhibit his dexterity in the amputation, than his science in saving the limb. Such is the bureau of the police in the poorer quarters. In the more fashionable ones it takes a higher flight, amusing the world with its scenes; alternately humorous and pathetic, it forms a kind of feature in the literature of the period, and is the only reading of thousands. In these places the *commissaire* is usually a *bon vivant* and a wit; despising the miserable function of administering the law, he takes his seat upon the bench, to crack jokes with the witnesses, puzzle the complainant, and embarrass the prisoner. To the reporters alone is he civil; and in return, his poor witticisms appear in the morning papers, with the usual 'loud laughter,' that never existed save in type."

As we thus chatted, we entered a quarter of dirty and narrow streets, inhabited by a poor-looking, squalid population—the women, with little to mark their sex in their coarse, heavy countenances, wore colored kerchiefs on their heads, in lieu of a cap, and were, for the most part, without shoes or stockings. The men, a brutalized, stupid race, sat smoking in the doorways—scarcely lifting their eyes as we passed; or some were eating a coarse morsel of black rye bread, which, by their eagerness in devouring it, seemed an unusual delicacy.

"You scarcely believed there was such poverty in Paris," said he; "but this is by no means the worst of the quarter. Though M. de Champagny, in his late report, makes no mention of these 'signs of prosperity,' we are now entering the region where, even in noonday, the passage is deemed perilous; but the number of police agents on duty to-day will make the journey a safe one."

The street we entered at the moment consisted of a mass of tall houses, almost falling from decay and neglect; scarcely a window remained in many of them—while in front, a row of miserable booths, formed of rude planks, narrowed the passage to a mere path, scarce wide enough for three people abreast. There, vice of every description, and drunkenness, waited not for the dark hours to shroud them, but came forth in the sunlight—the ruffian shouts of intoxication mingling with the almost maniacal laugh of misery, or the reckless chorus of some degrading song. Half-naked wretches leaned from the windows as we passed along, some staring in stupid wonderment at our appearance; others saluting us with mockery and grimace—or even calling out to us in the slang dialect of the place.

"Yes," said Duchesne, as he saw the expression of horror and disgust the scene impressed on me, "here are the rotting seeds of revolutions putrifying, to germinate at some future day. Starvation and vice, misery, even to despair, inhabit every den around you. The furious and bloodthirsty wretch of '92, the Chouan, the Jacobite, the escaped galley-slave, the untaken murderer, are here, side by side—crime their great bond of union. To this place men come for an assassin, or a false witness, as to a market. Such are the wrecks the retiring waves of a revolution have left us. So long as the trade of blood lasted, openly, like vultures, they fattened on it; but once the reign of order restored, they were driven to murder and outrage as a livelihood."

While he was speaking, we approached a narrow arched passage, within which a flight of stone steps arose. "We dismount here," said he. At the same moment a group of ragged creatures, of every age, surrounded us to hold our horses, not noticing the orderly who rode at some distance behind us. I followed Duchesne up the steps, and along a gloomy corridor, to a little court-yard, where several dismounted gendarmes were standing in a circle, chatting. Passing through this, we entered a dirty, mean-looking house, around the door of which several people were collected, some of whom saluted the chevalier as he came up.

"Who are these fellows?" said I. "They seem to know you."

"Oh! nothing but the common police spies," said he, carelessly; "the fellows who lounge about the cabarets and the low gambling-houses. But here comes one of higher mark." As he spoke, he laid his hand on the arm of a tall, powerful-looking man, in a blouse; he wore immense whiskers, and a great beard, descending far below his chin. "Ah! Bocquin, what have we got going forward to-day? I came to show a young friend here the interior of your *salle*."

"Monsieur le Capitaine, your most obedient," said the man, in a deep voice, as he removed his casquette, and bowed ceremoniously to us; "and yours, also, monsieur," added he, turning to me. "Why, there's nothing to speak of, save that duel, capitaine."

"Come, come, Bocquin, no nonsense with me. What was that story got up for?"

"Ah! you mistake there," said Bocquin. "By Jove! there's a man badly wounded, shot through the neck, and no one to tell a word about it. No seconds present, the thing done quite privately, the wounded man left at his own door, and the other off—Heaven knows where."

"And you believe this tale, Bocquin," said Duchesne, superciliously.

"Believe it!—that I do. I have been to see the place where the man lay; and, by tracking the wheel-marks, I have discovered they came from the Champs Elysées. The cabriolet, too, was a private one—no fiacre has got so narrow a tire to the wheel."

"Closely followed up—eh, Burke?" said the Chevalier, turning toward me with a smile of admiration at his sagacity. "Go on, Bocquin."

"Well, I followed the scent to the Barrière de l'Etoile, where I learned that one cabriolet passed toward the Bois de Boulogne, and returned in about half an hour. As the pace was a sharp one, I guessed they could not have gone far, and so I turned into the wood at the first road to the right, where there is least recourse of people, and, by Jove! I was all correct. There, in a small open space between the trees, I saw the marks of recent footsteps, and a little further on, found the grass all covered with blood."

"Monsieur Bocquin! Monsieur Bocquin! the *commissaire* wants you," cried a voice from the landing of the stair; and with an apology for leaving thus suddenly, he turned away. We followed, however, curious to hear the remainder of this singular history; and, after some difficulty, succeeded in gaining admittance to a small room, now densely crowded with people, the most of whom were of the very lowest class. The *commissaire* speedily made place for us beside him on the bench; for, like every one else in any conspicuous position, he also was an acquaintance of Duchesne.

While the *commissaire* conversed with Bocquin in a low tone, we had time to observe the *salle* and its occupants. Except the witnesses, two or three of whom were respectable persons, they were the squalid-looking, ragged wretches of the quarter, listening with the greedy appetite of crime to any tale of bloodshed. The surgeon, who had just returned from visiting the wounded man, was waiting to be examined. To him now the *commissaire* directed his attention. It appeared that the wound was by no means of the dangerous character described, being merely through the fleshy portion of the neck, without injuring any part of importance. Having described circumstantially the extent of the injury, and its probable cause, he replied to a question of the *commissaire* that no entreaty could persuade the wounded man to give any explanation of the occurrence, nor mention the name of his adversary. Duchesne paid little apparent attention to the evidence, and, before it was concluded, asked me if I were satisfied with my police experience, and disposed to move away. Just at this moment there was a stir among the people around the door, and we heard the officers of the court cry out, "Room! make way there!" and the same moment General Duroc entered, accompanied by an aide-de-camp. He had been sent specially by the Emperor, to ascertain what progress the investigation had made. His Majesty had determined to push the inquiry to its utmost limits. The general appeared dissatisfied with the little prospect there appeared of elucidation; and, turning to Duchesne, remarked:

"This is peculiarly ill-timed just now, as negotiations are pending with Russia, and the prince's family are about the person of the Czar."

"But as the wound would seem of little consequence, in a few days, perhaps, the whole thing may blow over," said Duchesne.

"It is for that very reason," replied Duroc, earnestly, "that we are pressed for time. The object is to mark the sentiments of his Majesty *now*. Should the prince be once pronounced out of danger, it will be too late for sympathy."

"Oh, I perceive," said Duchesne, smiling; "your observation is most just. If

my friend, here, however, cannot put you on the track, I fear you have little to hope for elsewhere."

"I am aware of that, and Monsieur Cauchois knows the great reliance his Majesty reposes in his skill and activity."

Monsieur Cauchois, the *commissaire*, bowed with a most respectful air at the compliment, probably of all others the highest that could be paid him.

"A brilliant *soirée* we had last evening, Duchesne," said the general. "I hope this unhappy affair will not close that house at present. You are aware the prince is the suitor of mademoiselle?"

"I only suspected as much," said the Chevalier, with a peculiar smile. "It was my first evening there."

As General Duroc addressed a few words in a low tone to the *commissaire*, the man called Bocquin approached the bench, and handed up a small slip of paper to Duchesne. The chevalier opened it, and having thrown his eyes over it, passed it into my hand. All I could see were two words, written coarsely with the pencil—"How much?"

The chevalier turned the back of the paper and wrote—"Fifty Napoleons."

On reading which the large man tore the scrap, and nodding slightly with his head, sauntered from the room. We rose a few moments after, and having taken a formal leave of the general and the *commissaire*, proceeded toward the street, where we had left our horses. As we passed along the corridor, however, we found Bocquin awaiting us. He opened a door into a small, mean-looking apartment, of which he appeared the owner. Having ushered us in, and cautiously closed it behind him, he drew from his pocket a piece of cloth, to which a button and a piece of gold embroidery were attached.

"Your jacket would be spoiled without this morsel, captain," said he, laughing, in a low, dry laugh.

"So it would, Bocquin," said Duchesne, examining his coat, which I now perceived was torn on the shoulder, and a small piece, the exact one in his hand, wanting, but which had escaped my attention from the mass of gold lace and embroidery with which it was covered.

"Do you know, Bocquin," said Duchesne, in a tone much graver than he had used before, "I never noticed that?"

"*Parbleu!* I believe you," said he, laughing; "nor did I, till you sat on the bench; when I was so pleased with your coolness, I could not, for the life of me, interrupt you."

"Have you got any money, Burke?" said the Chevalier, "some twenty gold pieces—"

"No, no, captain," said Bocquin, "not now—another time. I must call upon you one of these mornings about another affair, and it will be time enough then."

"As you please, Bocquin," said the Chevalier, putting up his purse again; "and so, till we meet."

"Till we meet, gentlemen," replied the other, as he bowed us respectfully to the door.

"You seem to have but a very faint comprehension of all this, Burke," said Duchesne, as he took my arm; "you look confoundedly puzzled, I must say."

"If I didn't, I should be an admirable actor—that's all," said I.

"Why, I think the thing is plain enough, in all conscience; Bocquin found that piece of my jacket on the ground, and, of course, the affair was in his hands."

"Why, do you mean to say—"

"That I shot Monsieur le Prince this morning, at a quarter past seven o'clock—and felt devilish uncomfortable about it till the last ten minutes, my boy. If I did not confide the matter to you before, it was because that until all chance of detection was passed, I could not expose you to the risk of an examination before the préfet de police. Happily now these dangers are all over. Bocquin is too clever a fellow not to throw all the other spies on a wrong scent, so that we need have no fear of the result." I could scarcely credit the evidence of my senses, at the coolness and duplicity of the chevalier throughout an affair of such imminent risk, nor was I less astonished at the account he gave of the whole proceeding.

One word, on leaving the *soirée*, had decided there should be a meeting the following day; and as the Russian well knew the danger of his adventure, from the law which was recently passed regarding prisoners on parole, he proposed they should meet without seconds on either side. Duchesne acceded; and it was arranged that the chevalier should drive along the Rue de Rivoli, at seven the next morning, where the Russian would join him, and they should drive together to the Bois de Boulogne.

"To do my Cossack justice," said Duchesne, "he behaved admirably throughout the whole affair; and on taking his place beside me in the cab, entered into conversation freely and easily on the topics of the day. We chatted of the campaign—of the cavalry—of the Russian service—

their size and equipment only needing a higher organization to make them first-rate troops. We spoke of the Emperor Alexander, of whom he was evidently proud, and much pleased to hear the favorable opinion Napoleon entertained of his ability and capacity; and it was in the middle of an anecdote about Savary and the Czar we arrived at the Bois de Boulogne.

"I need not tell you the details of the affair, save that we loaded our own pistols, and stepped the ground ourselves. They were like other things of the same sort—the first shot concluded the matter. I aimed at his shoulder, but the pistol threw high. As to his bullet, it was only a while ago I knew it went so near me. It was nervous work, passing the barrière; for had he not made an effort to sit up straight in the cab, the sentry might have detained and examined us. All that you heard about his being left at his own door, covered with blood, and fainting, I need not tell you has no truth. I never left the spot till the door was opened, and I saw him in the hands of a servant. Of course I concealed my face, and then drove off, at full speed."

By this time we arrived at the Luxembourg, and Duchesne, with all the coolness in the world, joined a knot of persons engaged in discussing the duel, and endeavoring, by sundry clever and ingenious explanations, to account for the circumstance.

As I sauntered along to my quarters, I pondered over the adventure, and the character of the chevalier; and however I might turn the matter in my mind, one thought was ever uppermost—a sincere wish that I had not been made his confidant in the secret.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE RETURN OF THE WOUNDED.

A FEW mornings after this occurrence, when, as Duchesne himself prophesied, all memory of it was completely forgotten, the *ordre du jour* from the Tuileries commanded all the troops then garrisoned in Paris to be under arms at an early hour in the Champs Elysées, when the Emperor would pass them in review. The spectacle had, however, another object, which was not generally known. The convoys of the wounded from Austerlitz were that same day to arrive at Paris, and the display of troops was intended at once to honor this *entrée*, and give to the sad procession of the maimed and dying the semblance of a triumph. Such were the artful devices which ever ministered to the deceit of the nation, and suffered them to look on but one side of their glory.

As I anticipated, the chevalier was greatly out of temper at the whole of this proceeding. He detested nothing more than those military displays which are got up for the populace; he despised the exhibition of troops to the vulgar and unmeaning criticism of tailors and barbers; and, more than all, he shrank from the companionship of the National Guard of Paris—those shop-keeping soldiers, with their umbrellas and spectacles, who figured with such pride on these occasions.

"Another affair like this," said he, passionately, "and I'd resign my commission. A procession at the Porte St. Martin—the *bœuf gras* on Easter Monday—I'm your man for either; but to sit bolt upright on your saddle for three, maybe four hours—to be stared at by every bourgeois from the Rue du Bac—to be pointed at with pink parasols, and compared with some ribbon-vender of the Boulevards—par St. Louis! I can't even bear to think of it! Look yonder," said he, pointing to the court of the palace, where already a regiment was drawn up, under arms, and passing in inspection before the colonel; "there begins the dress-rehearsal already. His Majesty says midday—the generals of division draw out their men at eleven o'clock—the colonels take a look at their corps at ten—the *chefs de bataillon* at nine—and, *parbleu!* the corporals are at work by day-break. Then, what confounded drilling and dressing up, as if Napoleon could detect the slightest waving of the line over two leagues of ground; while you see the luckless adjutants flying hither and thither, cursing, imprecating, and threatening, and hastily reiterating at the head of each company 'Remember, men—be sure to remember—that when the drums beat to arms, you shout, "*Vive l'Empereur!*"' Rely upon it, Burke, if we had but one half of these preparations before a battle we'd not be the dangerous fellows those Russians and Austrians think us."

"Come, come," said I, "you shall not persuade me that the soldiers feel no pride on these occasions. The same men who fight so valiantly for their Emperor—"

"Stop there, I beg of you," said he, bursting into a fit of laughter. "I must really cry halt now. So long as you live, my dear friend, let nothing induce you to repeat that worn cant, 'Fight for their Emperor?' Why, they fought as bravely

for Turenne, and Villars, and Maréchal Saxe; they were as full of courage under Moreau, and Kléber, and Desaix, and Hoche—ay, and will be again when the Emperor is no more, and Heaven knows who stands in his place. The genius of a French army is fighting, not for gain, nor plunder, nor even for glory, so much as for fighting itself; and he is the best man who gives them most of it. What reduced the reckless hordes of the revolution to habits of discipline and obedience but the war-like spirit of their leaders, whose bravery they respected? And think you Napoleon himself does not feel this in his heart, and know the necessity of continual war, to feed the insatiable appetite of his followers? In a word, my friend," added he, in a tone of mock solemnity, "we are a great people, and nature intended us to be so, by giving us a language in which 'Gloire' rhymes with 'Victoire;' and now for the march, for I fancy we are late enough already."

There are few sources of annoyance more poignant than to discover any illusion we have long indulged in assailed by the sneers and sarcasms of another, who assumes a tone of superior wisdom on the faith of a difference of opinion. The mass of our likings and dislikings find their way into our heart, more from impulse than reason, and when attacked are scarcely defensible by any effort of the understanding. This very fact renders us more painfully alive to their preservation, and we shrink instinctively from any discussion of them. While such is the case, we feel more bitterly the cruelty of him who, out of mere wantonness, can sport with the sources of our happiness, and assail the hidden stores of so many of our pleasures, for, unhappily, the mockery once listened to lies associated with the idea forever.

Already had Duchesne stripped me of more than one delusion, and made me feel that I was but indulging in a deceptive happiness in my dream of life; and often did I regret that I ever knew him. It is not enough to feel the sophistry of one's adversary, you should be able to detect and expose it, otherwise the triumphant tone he assumes gives him an air of victory which ends by imposing on yourself; and of this I now felt convinced in my own case.

These thoughts rendered me silent as we wended our way toward the Tuileries, where the various officers of the staff and the *corps d'élite* were assembled. Here we found several of the marshals in waiting for the Emperor, while the Mameluke Guard, in all the splendor of its gay equipments, stood around the great entrance of the palace. Many handsome equipages were also there; one, conspicuous above the rest for its livery of white and gold, with four outriders, belonging to Madame Murat, the Grand Duchess of Berg, whose taste for splendor and show extended to every department of her household.

At last there was a movement in those nearest the palace; the drums beat to arms, the guard within the vestibule presented, and the Emperor appeared, followed by a brilliant staff. He stood for a few seconds on the steps—his hands clasped behind his back, and his head a little bent forward, as if in thought; then, drawing himself up, he looked with a gaze of proud composure on the crowd that filled the court of the palace, and where now all was silent and still. Never before had I remarked the same imperious expression of his features; but as his eye ranged over the brilliant array, now, I could read the innate consciousness of superiority in which he excelled. Ney, Murat, Victor, Bessières—how little seemed they all before that mighty genius, whose glory they but reflected.

Oh! how lightly then did I deem the mocking jests of Duchesne, or all that his spirit of sarcasm could invent. There stood the conqueror of Italy and Egypt—the victor of Marengo and Austerlitz, looking every inch a monarch and a soldier. Whether from thoughtless inattention, or studied affectation, I cannot say, but at that moment, when all stood in respectful silence before the Emperor, Duchesne had approached the grille of the palace, next to the Place du Carrousel, and was busily chatting with a pretty-looking girl, who, with a number of others, sat in a hired *calèche*. A hearty burst of laughter at something he said rang through the court, and turned every eye in that direction. In an instant the Emperor's eagle glance pierced the distance, and fastened on the chevalier, who, seated carelessly on one side of his saddle, paid no attention to what was going forward, when suddenly an aide-de-camp touched him on the arm, and said,

"Monsieur le Capitaine Duchesne, his Majesty the Emperor would speak with you."

Duchesne turned; a faint, a very faint flush covered his cheek, and, putting spurs to his horse, he galloped up to the front of the terrace, where the Emperor was standing. From the distance at which I stood, to hear what passed was impossible; but I watched with a most painful interest the scene before me.

The Emperor's attitude was unchanged

as the chevalier rode up; and when Duchesne himself seemed to listen with a respectful manner to the words of his Majesty, I could see, by his easy bearing, that his self-possession had never deserted him. The interview lasted not many minutes, when the Emperor waved his hand haughtily, and the chevalier, saluting with his sabre, backed his horse some paces, and then, wheeling round, rapidly galloped toward the gate, through which he passed.

"This evening, then, mademoiselle," said he, with a smile, "I hope to have the honor." And, with a courteous bow, rode on toward the archway opening on the quay.

"What has happened?" said I, eagerly, to the officer at my side.

He shook his head, as if doubtful, and half fearing even to whisper at the moment.

"His privilege of the *élite* is withdrawn, sir," said an old general officer. "He must leave Paris to join his regiment in twenty-four hours."

"Poor fellow!" muttered I, half aloud, when a savage frown from the veteran officer corrected my words.

"What, sir!" said he, in a low voice, where every word was thickened to a guttural sound—"what, sir! is the court of the Tuileries no more than a canteen or a bivouac? *Pardieu*, if it was not for his laced jacket, he had been degraded to the ranks—ay, and deserved it too!"

The coarse accents and underbred tone of the speaker showed me at once that it was one of the old generals of the republican army, who never could endure the descendants of aristocratic families in the service, and who were too willing always to attribute to insolence and premeditated affront even the slightest breaches of military etiquette. Meanwhile the Emperor mounted, and, accompanied by the officers of his staff, rode forward toward the Champs Elysées, while all of lesser note followed at a distance.

From the garden of the Tuileries to the Barrière de l'Etoile the troops were ranged in four lines, the cavalry of the Guard and the artillery forming the ranks along the road by which the convoy must pass. It was a bright day, with a clear, frosty atmosphere and a blue sky, and well suited the brilliant spectacle.

Scarcely had the Emperor issued from the Tuileries, when ten thousand shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" rent the air; the cannon of the Invalides thundered forth at the same moment, and the crash of the military bands added their clangor to the sounds of joy. He rode slowly along the line, stopping frequently to speak with some of the soldiers, and giving orders to his suite concerning them. Of the officers in his staff that day, the greater number had been wounded at Austerlitz, and still bore the traces of their injuries. Rapp displayed a tremendous scar from a sabre across his cheek; Sebastiani wore his sword-arm in a sling; and Friant, unable to mount his horse, followed the Emperor on foot, leaning on a stick, and walking with great difficulty.

The sight of these brave men, whose devotion to Napoleon had been proved on so many battle-fields, added to the interest of the scene, and tended to excite popular enthusiasm to its utmost; but on Napoleon still all eyes were bent. The general, who led their armies to victory—the monarch, who raised France to the proudest place among the nations, was there, within a few paces of them. Each word he spoke was sinking deeply into some heart, prouder of that moment than of rank or riches.

So slow was the Emperor's progress along the ranks, that it was near three o'clock before he had arrived at the extremity of the line. The cavalry were now ordered to form in squadrons, and move past in close order. While this movement was effecting, a cannon shot at the barrière announced the approach of the convoy. The cavalry were halted in line once more, and the same moment the first wagon of the train appeared above the summit of the hill. So secretly had the whole been managed, that none, save the officers of the various staffs, knew what was coming. While each look was turned, then, toward the barrière in astonishment, gradually the wagon rolled on, another followed, and another. These were, however, but the ambulances of the hospitals, and now the wounded themselves came in sight, a white flag—that well-known signal—waving in front of each wagon, while a guard of honor, consisting of picked men of the different regiments, rode at either side. One loud cheer—a shout echoed back from the Tuileries itself—rang out, as the soldiers saw their brave companions restored to them once more. With that impulse which, even in discipline, French soldiers never forget, the men rushed forward to the wagons, and in a moment officers and men were in the arms of their comrades. What a scene it was to see the poor and wasted forms, mangled by shot and maimed of limb, brightening up again, as home and friends surrounded them—to hear their faint voices mingle with the questions for

this one or for that, while the fate of some brave fellow met but one word in elegy. On they passed—a sad train, but full of glorious memories. There were the grenadiers of Oudinot, who carried the Russian center; eleven wagons were filled with their wounded. Here come the voltigeurs of Bernadotte's brigade. See how the fellows preserve their ancient repute, cheering and laughing, ever the same, whether roystering at midnight in the Faubourg St. Antoine, or rushing madly upon the ranks of the enemy. There are the dragoons of Nansouty, who charged the Imperial Guard of Russia. See the proud line that floats on their banner, "All wounded by the sabre." And here come the cuirassiers of the Guard, with a detachment of their own, as escort. How splendidly they look in the bright sun, and how proudly they come! As I looked, the Emperor rode forward, bare-headed, his whole staff uncovered. "*Chapeau bas, messieurs!*" said he, in a loud voice. "Honor to the brave in misfortune!" Just then the escort halted, and I heard a laugh in front, close to where the Emperor was standing; but, from the crowded staff around him, could not see what was going forward.

"What is it?" said I, curious to learn the least incident of the scene.

"Advance a pace or two, captain," said the young officer I addressed, "you can see it all."

I did so, and then beheld—oh! with what delight and surprise—my poor friend, Pioche, seated on the driving-seat of a gun, with his hand in salute as the Emperor spoke to him.

"Thou wilt not have promotion, nor a pension—what, then, can I do for thee?" said Napoleon, smiling. "Hast any friend in the service whom I could advance for thy sake?"

"Yes, *parbleu!*" said Pioche, scratching his forehead, with a sort of puzzle and confusion even the Emperor smiled at, "I have a friend; but mayhap those wouldn't like—"

"Ask me for nothing thou thinkest I could not, ought not to grant," said the Emperor, sternly. "What is't now?"

The poor corporal seemed thoroughly nonplussed, and for a second or two could not reply. At last, as if summoning all his courage for the effort, he said, "Well, thou canst but refuse, and then the fault will be all thine; she is a brave girl, and had she been a man—"

"Whom can he mean?" said Napoleon. "Is the man's head wandering?"

"No, *mon général*—all right there—that shell has turned many a sabre's edge. I was talking of Minette, the vivandière of ours. If thou art so bent on doing me a service, why, promote *her*, and thou'lt make the whole regiment proud of it."

This speech was lost in the laugh which, beginning with the Emperor, extended to the staff, and at last to all the bystanders.

"Dost wish I should make her one of my aides-de-camp?" said Napoleon, still laughing.

"*Parbleu!* thou hast more ill-favored ones among them," said Pioche, with a significant look at the grim faces of Rapp and Daru, whose hard and weather-beaten features never deigned a smile, while every other face was moved in laughter.

"But thou hast not said, yet, what I am to do," rejoined the Emperor.

"Thou used not to be so hard to understand," grumbled out Pioche. "I have seen the time thou'd have said, 'Is it Minette that was wounded at the Adige?—is that the girl stood in the square at Marengo? *Parbleu!* I'll give her the cross of the Legion!'"

"And she shall have it, Corporal Pioche," said Napoleon, as he detached the decoration he wore on the breast of his coat. "Give the order for the vivandière to advance."

Scarce were the words spoken, when the sound of a horse pressed to his speed was heard, and, mounted upon a small but showy Arab, a present from the regiment, Minette rode up. In the bloom of health, and flushed by exercise and the excitement of the moment, I never saw her look so handsome. Reining in her horse short, as she came in front of the Emperor, the animal reared up, almost straight, and pawed the air with his fore-legs, while she, with all the composure in life, raised her hand to her cap, and saluted the Emperor with an action the most easy and graceful.

"Thou hast some yonder," said Pioche, with a grim smile at the staff, "would be sore puzzled to keep their saddles as well."

"Minette," said the Emperor, while he gazed on her handsome features with evident pleasure, "your name is well known to me for many actions of kindness and self-devotion; wear this cross of the Legion of Honor; you will not value it the less that, until now, it has been only worn by me. Whenever you find one worthy to be your husband, Minette, I will charge myself with the dowry."

"Oh, sire," said the trembling girl, as she pressed the Emperor's fingers to her lips—"oh, sire, is this real?"

"Yes, *parbleu!*" said Pioche, wiping a

large tear from his eye, as he spoke; "he can make thee be a man, and make me feel like a girl."

As Duroc attached the cross to the button-hole of the vivandière's frock, she sat pale as death, totally overcome by her sensations of pride, and unable to say more than, "Oh, sire!" which she repeated three or four times at intervals.

Again the procession moved on; other wagons followed with their brave fellows; but all the interest of the scene was now, for me at least, wrapped up in that one incident, and I took but little notice of the rest.

For full two hours the *cortége* continued to roll on—wagon after wagon, filled with the shattered remnants of an army. Yet such was the indomitable spirit of the people—such the heartfelt passion for glory—all deemed that procession the proudest triumph of their arms. Nor was this feeling confined to the spectators; the wounded themselves leaned eagerly over the sides of the charrettes, to gaze into the crowds on either side, seeking some old familiar face, and looking, through all their sufferings, proudly on the dense mob beneath them. Some tried to cheer, and waved their powerless hands; but others, faint and heart-sick, turned their glazed eyes toward the "Invalides," whose lofty dome appeared above the trees, as though to say, that was now their resting-place—the only one before the grave.

He who witnessed that day could have little doubt about the guiding spirit of the French nation; nor could he distrust their willingness to sacrifice anything—nay, all—to national glory.

Suffering and misery—wounds, ghastly and dreadful, were on every side, and yet not one word of pity, not a look of compassion was there. These men were, in *their* eyes, far too highly placed for sympathy; theirs was that path to which all aspired; and their trophies were their own worn frames and mangled bodies.

And then, how they brightened up as the Emperor would draw near—how even the faintest would strive to catch his eye, and gaze with parted lips on him as he spoke, as though drinking in his very words—the balm to their bruised hearts; and the faint cry of *"L'Empereur! L'Empereur!"* passed like a murmur along the line.

Not until the last wagon had defiled before him did the Emperor leave the ground. It was then nearly dark, and already the lamps were lighted along the quays, and the windows of the palace displayed the brilliant luster of the preparations for a grand dinner to the marshals.

As we moved slowly along in close order, I found myself among a group of officers of the Emperor's staff, eagerly discussing the day and its events.

"I am sorry for Duchesne," said one; "with all his impertinences—and he had enough of them—he was a brave fellow, and a glorious leader at a moment of difficulty."

"Well, well, the Emperor has, perhaps, forgiven him by this time; and it is not likely he would mar the happiness of a day like this by disgracing an officer of the *élite*."

"You are wrong, my friend; his Majesty is not sorry for the occasion, which can prove that he knows as well how to punish as to reward. Duchesne's fate is sealed. You are not old enough to remember, as I can, the morning at Lonado, where the same *ordre du jour* conferred a mark of honor on one brother, and condemned another to be shot."

"And was this, indeed, the case?"

"Ay, was it. Many can tell you of it, as well as myself. They were both in the same regiment—the fifteenth demi-brigade of light infantry. They held a château, at Salo, against the enemy for eight hours, when, at length, the elder, who commanded at the front, capitulated, and laid down his arms; the younger refused to comply, and continued the fight. They were reinforced an hour afterward, and the Austrians beaten off. The day after they were both tried, and the result was as I have told you—the utmost favor the younger could obtain was, not to witness the execution of his brother."

As I heard this story my very blood curdled in my veins, and I looked with a kind of dread on him who now rode a few paces in front of me—the stern and pitiless Napoleon.

At last we entered the court of the Tuileries, when the Emperor, dismissing his staff, entered the palace, and we separated, to follow our own plans for the evening. For a moment or two I remained uncertain which way to turn. I wished much to see Duchesne, yet scarcely hoped to meet with him by returning to the Luxembourg. It was not the time to be away from him, at a moment like this, and I resolved to seek him out.

For above an hour I went from café to café, where he was in the habit of resorting, but to no purpose. He had not been seen in any of them during the day, so that at length I turned homeward, with the faint hope that I should see him there on my arrival.

Somehow, I never had felt more sad and

depressed; and the events of the day, so far from making me participate in the general joy, had left me gloomy and despondıng. My spirit was little in harmony with the gay and merry groups that passed along the streets, chanting their campaigning songs, and usually having some old soldier of the "Guard" amongst them; for they felt it as a fête, and were hurrying to the "cabarets" to celebrate the day of Austerlitz.

CHAPTER LVIII.

"THE CHEVALIER."

WHEN men of high courage and proud hearts meet with reverses in life, our anxiety is rather to learn what new channel their thoughts and exertions will take in future, than to hear how they have borne up under misfortune. I knew Duchesne too well to suppose that any turn of fate would find him wholly unprepared; but still, a public reprimand, and from the lips of the Emperor, too, was of a nature to wound him to the quick; and I could not guess, nor picture to myself in what way he would bear it. The loss of grade itself was a thing of consequence, as the service of the "*élite*" was reckoned a certain promotion, not to speak of—what to him was far more important—the banishment from Paris and its *salons*, to some gloomy and distant encampment. In speculations like these I returned to my quarters, where I was surprised to discover that the chevalier had not been since morning. I learned from his servant that he had dismissed him, with his horses, soon after leaving the Tuileries, and had not returned home from that time.

I dined alone that day, and sat moodily by myself, thinking over the events of the morning, and wondering what had become of my friend, and watching every sound that might tell of his coming. It is true there were many things I liked not in Duchesne: his cold, sardonic spirit, his *moqueur* temperament, chilled and repelled me; but I recognized, even through his own efforts at concealment, a manly tone of independence—a vigorous reliance on self, that raised him in my esteem, and made me regard him with a certain species of admiration. With his unsettled or unstable political opinions, I greatly dreaded the excess to which a spirit of revenge might carry him. I knew that the Jacobin party, and the Bourbons themselves, lay in wait for every erring member of the Imperial side; and I felt no little anxiety at the temptations they might hold out to him, at a moment when his excitement might have the mastery over his cooler judgment.

Late in the evening, a government messenger arrived with a large letter addressed to him from the minister of war; and even this caused me fresh uneasiness, since I connected the dispatch in my mind with some detail of duty, which his absence might leave unperformed.

It was long past midnight, as I sat, vainly endeavoring to occupy myself with a book, which each moment I laid down to listen, when suddenly I heard the roll of a *fiacre* in the court beneath, the great doors banged and closed, and the next moment the chevalier entered the room.

He was dressed in plain clothes, and looked somewhat paler than usual, but, though evidently laboring under excitement, affected his wonted ease and carelessness of manner, as, taking a chair in front of me, he sat down.

"What a day of worry and trouble this has been, my dear friend," he began: "from the moment I last saw you to the present one, I have not rested, and with four invitations to dinner, I have not dined anywhere."

He paused as he said thus much, as if expecting me to say something; and I perceived that the embarrassment he felt rather increased than otherwise. I therefore endeavored to mumble out something about his hurried departure, and the annoyance of such a sentence, when he stopped me suddenly.

"Oh, as to *that*, I fancy the matter is arranged already; I should have had a letter from the war office."

"Yes; there is one here—it came three hours ago."

He turned at once to the table, and breaking the seal, perused the packet in silence, then handed it to me, as he said,

"Read that, it will save a world of explanation."

It was dated five o'clock, and merely contained the following few words:

"His Majesty I. and R. accepts the resignation of Senior Captain Duchesne, late of the Imperial Guard; who, from the date of the present, is no longer in the service of France.

(Signed) "BERTHIER,
"Marshal of France."

A small sealed note dropped from the packet, which Duchesne took up, and broke open with eagerness.

"Ha! *parbleu!*" cried he, with energy;

"I thought not; see here, Burke—it is Duroc who writes:

"MY DEAR DUCHESNE,—I knew there was no use in making such a proposition, and told you as much. The moment I said the word 'England,' he shouted out 'No!' in such a tone, you might have heard it at the Luxembourg. You will perceive, then, the thing is impracticable; and perhaps, after all, for your own sake, it is better it should be so.—Yours ever.

"D."

"This is all mystery to me, Duchesne; I cannot fathom it in the least."

"Let me assist you—a few words will do it. I gave in my *démission* as Captain of the Guard, which, as you see, his Majesty has accepted: we shall leave it to the *Moniteur* of to-morrow to announce whether graciously or not. I also addressed a formal letter to Duroc, to ask the Emperor's permission to visit England, on private business of my own." His eyes sparkled with a malignant luster as he said these last words, and his cheek grew deep scarlet. "This, however, his Majesty has not granted, doubtless from private reasons of his own, and thus we stand. Which of us, think you, has most spoiled the other's rest for this night?"

"But still I do not comprehend. What can take you to England? You have no friends there—you've never been in that country."

"Do you not know the very word is proscribed—that the island is covered from his eyes in the map he looks upon—that *perfide Albion* is the demon that haunts his dark hours, and menaces, with threatening gesture, the downfall of all his present glory? Ah! by St. Denis! boy, had I been you, it is not such an epaulette as this I had worn."

"Enough, Duchesne; I will not hear more. Not to you, nor any one, am I answerable for the reasons that have guided my conduct; nor had I listened to so much, save that such excitement as yours may make that pardonable which, in calmer moments, is not so."

"You say right, Burke," said he quickly, and with more seriousness of manner; "it is seldom I have been betrayed into such a passionate warmth as this; I hope I have not offended you. This change of circumstance will make none in our friendship. I knew it, my dear boy. And now let us turn from such tiresome topics. Where think you I have been spending the evening? But how could you ever guess? Well, at the 'Odéon,' attending Mademoiselle Pierrot, and a very pretty friend of hers—one of our vivandières, who happens to be in the brigade with mademoiselle's brother, and dined there to-day. She only arrived in Paris this morning; and, by Jove! there are some handsome faces in our gay salons would scarcely stand the rivalry with hers. I must show you the fair Minette."

"Minette!" stammered I, while a sickly sensation, a fear of some unknown misfortune to the poor girl, almost stopped my utterance. "I know her—she belongs to the Fourth Cuirassiers."

"Ah, you know her? Who would have suspected my quiet friend of such an acquaintance? And so, you never hinted this to me. *Ma foi*, I'd have thought twice about throwing up my commission if I had seen her half an hour earlier. Come, tell me all you know of her—where does she come from?"

"Of her history I am totally ignorant; I can only tell you that her character is without a stain or reproach, in circumstances where few, if any, save herself, ever walked scathless. That on more than one occasion she has displayed heroism worthy of the best among us."

"Oh dear, oh dear, how disappointed I am; indeed, I half feared as much: she is a regular vivandière of the melodrama—virtuous, high-minded, and intrepid. You, of course, believe all this—don't be angry, Burke—but I don't, and the reason is, I can't—the gods have made me incredulous from the cradle. I have a rooted obstinacy about me, perfectly irreclaimable; thus, I fancy Napoleon to be a Corsican—a modern marshal to be a promoted sergeant—a judge of the upper court to be a public prosecutor—and a vivandière of the *grande armée*—But, I'll not offend, don't be afraid, my poor fellow, even at the risk of the rivalry. Upon my life, I'm glad to see you have a heart susceptible of any little tenderness; but you cannot blame me if I'm weary of this eternal travestie of character which goes on amongst us. Why will our republican and *sans culotte* friends try courtly airs and graces, while our real aristocracy stoop to the affected coarseness of the canaille? Is it possible that they who wish to found a new order of things do not see that all these pantomime costumes and characters denote nothing but change—that we are only performing a comedy after all? I scarcely expect it will be a five-act one; and, *à propos* of comedies, when shall we pay our respects to Madame de Lacostellerie? It will require all my diplomacy to keep my ground there, under my recent misfortune.

Nothing short of a tender inquiry from the Duchesse de Montserrat will open the doors for me. Alas, and alas! I suppose I shall have to fall back on the Faubourg."

"But is the step irrevocable, Duchesne? Can you really bring yourself to forego a career which opened with such promise?"

"And terminated with such disgrace," added he, smiling placidly.

"Nay, nay—don't affect to take it thus; your services would have placed you high, and won for you honors and rank."

"And, *ma foi*, have they not done so? Am I not a very interesting individual at this moment—more so than at any other of my life? Are not half the powdered heads of the Faubourg plotting over my downfall, and wondering how they are to secure me to the 'true cause?' Are not the hot heads of the Jacobites speculating on my admission, by a unanimous vote, into their order? And has not Fouché gone to the special expense of a new police spy, solely destined to line at the same *café*, play at the same salon, and sit in the same box of the Opera with me? Is this nothing? Well, it will be good fun after all to set their wise brains on the wrong track, not to speak of the happiness of weeding one's acquaintance, which a little turn of fortune always effects so instantaneously."

"One would suppose from your manner, Duchesne, that some unlooked-for piece of good luck had befallen you; this event seems to have been the crowning one of your life."

"Am I not at liberty, boy? Have I not thrown the slavery behind me? Is that nothing? You may fancy your collar, because there is some gold upon it; but, trust me, it galls the neck as cursedly as the veriest brass. Come, Burke, I must have a glass of champagne, and you must pledge me in a creaming bumper. If you don't join in the sentiment now, the time will come later on—we may be many a mile apart—ay, perhaps a whole world will divide us; but you'll remember my toast—'To him that is free.' I am sick of most things—women, wine, war, play—the game of life itself, with all its dashing and exciting interests—I have had them to satiety; but liberty has its charm—even to the palsied arm and the withered hand freedom is dear, and why not to him who yet can strike?"

His eyes flashed fire as he spoke, and he drained glass after glass of wine, without seeming aware of what he was doing.

"If you felt thus, Duchesne, why have you remained so long a soldier?"

"I'll tell you. He who travels unwillingly along some dreary path stops often as he goes, and looks around to see if, in the sky above or the road beneath, some obstacle may not cross his way, and bid him turn. The faintest sound of a brewing storm, the darkening shadow of a cloud, a swollen rivulet, is enough, and straightway he yields: so men seem swayed in life by trifles which never moved them, by accidents which came not near their hearts. These, which the world called their disappointments, were often but the pivots of their fortune. I have had enough, nay, more than enough, of all this. You must not ask the hackneyed actor of the melodrama to start at the blue lights, and feel real fear at burning forests and flaming châteaux; this mock passion of the Emperor—"

"Come, my friend, that is indeed too much; unquestionably there was no feigning there."

Duchesne gave a bitter laugh, and laying his hand on my arm, said,

"My good boy, I know him well; the knowledge has cost me something—but I have it. A soldier's enthusiasm!" said he, in irony; "bah! Shall I tell you a little incident of my boyhood? I detest story-telling, but this you must hear. Fill my glass—listen, and I promise you not to be lengthy."

It was the first time in our intimacy in which Duchesne referred distinctly to his past life; and I willingly accepted the offer he made, anticipating that any incident, no matter how trivial, might throw a light on the strange contrarieties of his character.

He sat for several minutes silent—his eyes turned toward the ground, a faint smile—more of sadness than aught else—played about his lips, as he muttered to himself some words I could not catch; then rallying, with a slight effort, he began thus— But, short as his tale was, we must give him a chapter to himself.

CHAPTER LIX.

A BOYISH REMINISCENCE.

"I BELIEVE I have already told you, Burke, that my family were most of them Royalists. Such as were engaged in trade followed the fortunes of the day, and cried '*Vive la République!*' like their neighbors. Some deemed it better to emigrate, and wait in a foreign land for the happy hour of returning to their own—a circumstance,

by the way, which must have tried their patience ere this; and a few, trusting to their obscure position, living in out-of-the-way, remote spots, supposed that in the general uproar they might escape undetected; and, with one or two exceptions, they were right. Among these latter was an unmarried brother of my mother, who having held a military command for a great many years in the Ile de Bourbon, retired to spend the remainder of his days in a small but beautiful château on the sea-side, about three leagues from Marseilles. The old viscount (we continued to call him so among ourselves, though the use of titles was proscribed long before) had met with some disappointment in love in early life, which had prevented his ever marrying, and turned all his affections toward the children of his brothers and sisters, who invariably passed a couple of months of each summer with him, arriving from different parts of France for the purpose. And truly it was a strange sight to see the mixture of look, expression, accent, and costume, that came to the rendezvous: the long-featured boy, with blue eyes and pointed chin—cold, wary, and suspicious—brave, but cautious, that came from Normandy; the high-spirited, reckless youth, from Brittany; the dark-eyed girl of Provence; the quick-tempered, warm-hearted Gascon; and, stranger than all, from his contrast to the rest, the little Parisian, with his airs of the capital, and his contempt for his rustic brethren, nothing daunted that in all their boyish exercises he found himself so much their inferior. Our dear old uncle loved nothing so well as to have us around him, and even the little ones, of five and six years old, when not living too far off, were brought to these *réunions*, which were to us the great events of each year of our lives.

"It was in the June of the year 1794—I shall not easily forget the date—that we were all assembled as usual at 'Le Luc.' Our party was reinforced by some three or four new visitors, among whom was a little girl of about twelve years old, Annette de Noailles, the prettiest creature I ever beheld. Every land has its own trait of birth distinctly marked. I don't know whether you have observed that the brow and the forehead are more indicative of class in Frenchmen than any other portion of the face; hers was perfect, and, though a mere child, conveyed an impression of tempered decision and mildness that was most fascinating; the character of her features was thoughtful, and, were it not for a certain vivacity in the eyes, would have been even sad. Forgive me, if I dwell—when I need not—on these traits: she is no more. Her father carried her with him in his exile, and your lowering skies and gloomy air soon laid her low. Annette was the child of royalist parents. Both her father and mother had occupied places in the royal household; and she was accustomed from her earliest infancy to hear the praise of the Bourbons from lips which trembled when they spoke. Poor child! how well do I remember her little prayer for the martyred saint—for so they styled the murdered king—which she never missed saying each morning, when the mass was over in the chapel of the château. It is a curious fact, that the girls of a family were frequently attached to the fortunes of the Bourbons, while the boys declared for the revolution; and these differences penetrated into the very core, and sapped the happiness of many whose affection had stood the test of every misfortune, save the uprooting torrent of anarchy that poured in with the revolution. These party differences entered into all the little quarrels of the school-room and the nursery; and the taunting epithets of either side were used in angry passion by those who neither guessed nor could understand their meaning. Need it be wondered if, in after life, these opinions took the tone of intense convictions, when even thus in infancy they were nurtured and fostered? Our little circle at Le Luc was, indeed, wonderfully free from such causes of contention; whatever paths in life fate had in store for us afterward, then, at least, we were of one mind. A few of the boys, it is true, were struck by the successes of those great armies the revolution poured over Europe; but even they were half ashamed to confess enthusiasm in a cause so constantly allied in their memory with everything mean and low-lived. Such, in a few words, was the little party assembled around the supper-table of the château, on one lovely evening in June. The windows, opening to the ground, let in the perfumed air from many a sweet and flowery shrub without, while already the nightingale had begun her lay in the deep grove hard by. The evening was so calm, we could hear the plash of the making tide upon the shore, and the minute peals of the waves smote on the ear with a soft and melancholy cadence that made us silent and thoughtful. As we sat for some minutes thus, we suddenly heard the sound of feet coming up the little gravel walk toward the château, and, on going to the window, perceived three men in uniform leading their horses slowly along.

The dusky light prevented our being able to distinguish their rank or condition; but my uncle, whose fears were easily excited by such visitors, at once hastened to the door to receive them.

"His absence was not of many minutes' duration, but even now I can remember the strange sensations of dread, that rendered us all speechless, as we stood looking toward the door by which he was to enter. He came at last, and was followed by two officers, one, the elder, and the superior evidently, was a thin, slight man, of about thirty, with a pale but stern countenance, in which a certain haughty expression predominated; the other was a fine, soldier-like, frank-looking fellow, who saluted us all as he came in with a smile and a pleasant gesture of his hand.

"'You may leave us, children,' said my uncle, as he proceeded toward the bell.

"'You were at supper, if I mistake not?' said the elder of the two officers, with a degree of courtesy in his tone I scarcely expected.

"'Yes, general. But my little friends—'

"'Will, I hope, share with us,' said the General, interrupting; 'and I at least am determined, with your permission, that they shall remain. It is quite enough that we enjoy the hospitality of your château for the night, without interfering with the happiness of its inmates; and I beg that we may give you as little inconvenience as possible in providing for our accommodation.'

"'Though these words were spoken with an easy and a kindly tone, there was a cold, distant manner in the speaker that chilled us all, and, while we drew over to the table again, it was in silence and constraint. Indeed, our poor uncle looked the very picture of dismay, endeavoring to do the honors to his guests, and seem at ease, while it was clear his fears were ever uppermost in his mind.

"The aide-de-camp—for such the young officer was—looked like one who could have been agreeable and amusing, if the restraint of the general's presence was not over him. As it was, he spoke in a low, subdued voice, and seemed in great awe of his superior.

"Unlike our usual ones, the meal was eaten in a mournful stillness, the very youngest amongst us feeling the presence of the stranger as a thing of gloom and sadness.

"Supper over, my uncle, perhaps hoping to relieve the embarrassment he labored under, asked permission of the general for us to remain, saying:

"'My little people, sir, are great novelists, and they ususally amuse me of an evening by their stories. Will this be too great an endurance for you?'

"'By no means,' said the General, gayly; 'there's nothing I like better; I hope they will admit me as one of the party. I have something of a gift that way myself.'

"The circle was soon formed, the general and his aide-de-camp making part of it; but, though they both exerted themselves to the utmost to win our confidence, I know not why or wherefore, we could not shake off the gloom we had felt at first, but sat awkward and ill at ease, unable to utter a word, and even ashamed to look at each other.

"'Come,' said the General, 'I see how it is; I have broken in upon a very happy party; I must make the only *amende* in my power; I shall be the story-teller for this evening.' As he said this, he looked around the little circle, and, by some seeming magic of his own, in an instant he had won us every one. We drew our chairs closer toward him, and listened eagerly for his tale. Few people, save such as live much among children, or take the trouble to study their tone of feeling and thinking, are aware how far reality surpasses in interest the force of mere fiction. The fact is with them far more than all the art of the narrative, and if you cannot say 'this was true,' more than half of the pleasure your story confers is lost forever. Whether the general knew this, or that his memory supplied him more easily than his imagination, I cannot say; but his tale was a little incident of the siege of Toulon, where a drummer-boy was killed, having returned to the breach, after the attack was repulsed, to seek for a little cockade of ribbon his mother had fastened on his cap that morning. Simple as was the story, he told it with a subdued and tender pathos that made our hearts thrill and filled every eye around him. 'It was a poor thing, it's true,' said he, 'that knot of ribbon, but it was glory to him to rescue it from the enemy; his heart was on the time when he should show it, bloodstained and torn, and say, "I took it from the ground amid the grape-shot and the musketry. I was the only living thing there that moment, and see, I bore it away triumphantly."' As the general spoke, he unbuttoned the breast of his uniform, and took forth a small piece of crumpled ribbon, fastened in the shape of a cockade. 'Here it is,' said he, holding it up before our eyes; 'it was for this he died.' We could scarce see it through our tears. Poor Annette held

her hands upon her face, and sobbed violently. 'Keep it, my sweet child,' said the General, as he attached the cockade to her shoulder; 'it is a glorious emblem, and well worthy to be worn by one so pure and so fair as you are.'

"Annette looked up, and as she did, her eyes fell upon the tricolor that hung from her shoulder—the hated, the despised tricolor—the badge of that party whose cruelty she had thought of by day and dreamed of by night. She turned deadly pale, and sat, with lips compressed and clenched hands, unable to speak or stir.

"'What is it; are you ill, child?' said the General, suddenly.

"'Annette, love—Annette, dearest,' said my uncle, trembling with anxiety, 'speak. What is the matter?'

"'It is that,' cried I, fiercely, pointing to the knot, on which her eyes were bent with a shrinking horror I well knew the meaning of—'it is that!'

"The general bent on me a look of passionate meaning as, with a hissing tone, he said, 'Do you mean this?'

"'Yes,' said I, tearing it away, and trampling it beneath my feet—'yes, it is not a Noailles can wear the badge of infamy and crime; the blood-stained tricolor can find slight favor here.'

"'Hush, boy—hush, for Heaven's sake;' cried my uncle, trembling with fear.

"The caution came too late. The general, taking a note-book from his pocket, opened it leisurely, and then turning toward the vicomte, said: 'This youth's name is—'

"'Duchesne; Henri Duchesne!'

"'And his age?'

"'Fourteen in March,' replied my uncle, as his eyes filled up; while he added, in a half whisper, 'if you mean the conscription, general, he has already supplied a substitute.'

"No matter, sir, if he had sent twenty; such defect of education as his needs correction; he shall join the levies at Toulon in three days—in three days, mark me! Depend upon it, sir,' said he, turning to me, 'you shall learn a lesson beneath that tricolor you'll be somewhat long in forgetting. Dumolle, look to this.' With this direction to his aide-de-camp he arose, and, before my poor unhappy uncle could recover his self-possession to reply, had left the room.

"'He will not do this, sir—surely, he will not,' said the vicomte to the young officer.

"'General Bonaparte does not relent, sir, and if he did, he'd never show it,' was the cold reply.

"That day week I carried a musket on the ramparts of Toulon. Here began a career I have followed ever since—with how much of enthusiasm I leave you to judge for yourself."

As Duchesne concluded this little story he arose, and paced the room backward and forward with rapid steps, while his compressed lips and knitted brow showed he was lost in gloomy recollections of the past.

"He was right, after all, Burke," said he, at length; "personal honor will make the soldier, conviction may make the patriot. I fought as stoutly for this same cause as though I did not loathe it: how many others may be in the same position? You yourself, perhaps."

"No, no; not I."

"Well, be it so," rejoined he, carelessly. "Good-night." And with that he strolled negligently from the room, and I heard him humming a tune as he mounted the stairs toward his bedroom.

CHAPTER LX.

A GOOD-BY.

"I HAVE come to bring you a card for the Court ball, capitaine," said General Daru, as he opened the door of my dressing-room the following morning. "See what a number of them I have here; but except your own the addresses are not filled up. You are in favor at the Tuileries, it would seem."

"I was not aware of my good fortune, General," replied I.

"Be assured, however, it is such," said he. "These things are not, as so many deem them, mere matters of chance. Every name is well weighed and conned over. The officers of the household serve one who does not forgive mistakes. And now that I think of it, you were intimate—very intimate, I believe—with Duchesne?"

"Yes, sir; we were much together."

"Well, then, after what has occurred, I need scarcely say your acquaintance with him had better cease. There is no middle course in these matters. Circumstances will not bring you, as formerly, into each other's company; and to continue your intimacy would be offensive to his Majesty."

"But surely, sir, the friendship of persons so humble as we are can neither be a subject for the Emperor's satisfaction nor displeasure, if he even were to know of it."

"You must take my word for that," replied the General, somewhat sternly. "The counsel I have given to-day may come as a command to-morrow, The Chevalier Duchesne has given his Majesty great and grave offense—see that you are not led to follow his example." With a marked emphasis on the last few words, and with a cold bow, he left the room.

"That I am not led to follow his example!" said I, repeating them over slowly to myself. "Is that, then, the danger of which he would warn me?"

The remembrance of the misfortunes which opened my career in life came full before me—the unhappy acquaintance with De Beauvais, and the long train of suspicious circumstances that followed; and I shuddered at the bare thought of being again involved in apparent criminality. And yet, what a state of slavery was this! The thought flashed suddenly across my mind, and I exclaimed aloud, "And this is the liberty for which I have periled life and limb; this the cause for which I have become an alien and an exile!"

"Most true, my dear friend," said Duchesne, gayly, as he slipped into the room, and drew his chair toward the fire. "A wise reflection—but most unwisely spoken; but there are men nothing can teach—not even the 'Temple,' nor the 'Palais de Justice.'"

"How, then—you know of my unhappy imprisonment?"

"Know of it! To be sure I do. Bless your sweet innocence! I have been told, a hundred times over, to make overtures to you from the Faubourg. There are at least a dozen old ladies there who believe firmly you are a true Legitimist, and wear the white cockade next your heart. I have had, over and over, the most tempting offers to make you. Faith, I'm not quite certain if we are not believed to be, at this very moment, concocting how to smuggle over the frontier a brass carronade and a royal livery, two pounds of gunpowder and a court periwig, to restore the Bourbons!" He burst into a fit of laughing as he concluded, and however little disposed to mirth at the moment, I could not refrain from joining in the emotion.

"But now for a moment of serious consideration, Burke; for I can be serious at times, at least when my friends are concerned. You and I must part here. It is all the better for you it should be so. I am what the world is pleased to call a 'dangerous companion;' and there is more truth in the epithet than they wot of who employ it. It is not because I am a man of pleasure, and occasionally a man of expensive habits and costly tastes, nor that I now and then play deep, or drink deep, or follow up with passionate determination any ruling propensity of the moment; but because I am a discontented and unsettled man, who has a vague ambition of being something, he knows not what, by means he knows not how; ever willing to throw himself into an enterprise where the prize is great and the risk greater, and yet never able to warm his wishes into enthusiasm nor his belief into a conviction. In a word, a Frenchman, born a Legitimist, reared a Democrat, educated an Imperialist, and turned adrift upon the world a scoffer—such men as I am are dangerous companions; and when they increase (as they are likely to do in our state of society), will be still more dangerous citizens. But come, my good friend, don't look dismayed, nor distend your nostrils as if you were on the scent for a smell of brimstone—'Satan s'en va!'" With these words he arose and held out his hand to me. "Don't let your Napoleonite ardor ooze out too rapidly, Burke, and you'll be a marshal of France yet. There are great prizes in the wheel, to be had by those who strive for them. Adieu!"

"But we shall meet, Duchesne?"

"I hope so. The time may come, perhaps, when we may be intimate without alarming the police of the department. But, for the present, I am about to leave Paris; some friends in the south have been kind enough to invite me to visit them, and I start this afternoon." We shook hands once more, and Duchesne moved toward the door; then, turning suddenly about, he said: "A propos of another matter—this Mademoiselle de Lacostellerie."

"What of her?" said I, with some curiosity in my tone.

"Why, I have a kind of half suspicion, ripening into something like an assurance, that when we meet again she may be Madame Burke."

"What nonsense! my dear friend—the absurdity—"

"There is none whatever. An acquaintance begun like yours is very suggestive of such a termination. When the lady is saucy and the gentleman shy, the game stands usually thus: the one needs control and the other lacks courage. Let them change the cards, and see what comes of it."

"You are wrong, Duchesne—all wrong."

"Be it so. I have been so often right, I can afford a false prediction without losing all my character as prophet. Adieu!"

No sooner was I alone than I sat down to think over what he had said. The improbability, nay, as it seemed to me, the all but impossibility, of such an event as he foretold, seemed not less now than when first I heard it, but somehow I felt a kind of internal satisfaction, a sense of gratified vanity, to think that to so acute an observer as Duchesne such a circumstance did not appear even unreasonable. How hard is it to call in reason against the assault of flattery! How difficult to resist the force of an illusion by any appeal to our good sense and calmer judgment! It must not be supposed from this that I seriously contemplated such a possible turn of fortune—far less wished for it. No. My satisfaction had a different source. It lay in the thought that I, the humble captain of hussars, should ever be thought of as the suitor of the greatest beauty and the richest dowry of the day; here was the mainspring of my flattered pride. As to any other feeling, I had none. I admired Mademoiselle de Lacostellerie greatly. She was, perhaps, the very handsomest girl I ever saw. There was not one in the whole range of Parisian society so much sought after; and there was a degree of distinction in being accounted even among the number of her admirers. Besides this, there lay a lurking desire in my heart that Marie de Meudon (for as such only could I think of her) should hear me thus spoken of. It seemed to me like a weak revenge on her own indifference to me, and I longed to make anything a cause of connecting my fate with the idea of her who yet held my whole heart.

Only men who live much to themselves and their own thoughts know the pleasure of thus linking their fortunes, by some imaginary chain, to that of those they love. They are the straws that drowning men catch at; but still, for the moment, they sustain the sinking courage, and nerve the heart where all is failing. I felt this acutely. I knew well that she was not, nor could be, anything to me; but I knew, also, that to divest my mind of her image, was to live in darkness, and that the mere chance of being remembered by her was happiness itself.

It was while hearing of her I first imbibed the soldier's ardor from her own brother. She herself had placed before me the glorious triumphs of that career in words that never ceased to ring in my ears. All my hopes of distinction, my aspirations for success, were associated with the half prediction she had uttered, and I burned for an occasion by which I could signalize myself, that she might read my name—perchance might say, "And *he* loved me!"

In such a world of dreamy thought I passed day after day. Duchesne was gone, and I had no intimate companion to share my hours with, nor with whom I could expand in social freedom. Meanwhile, the gay life of the capital continued its onward course—fêtes and balls succeeded each other, and each night I found myself a guest at some splendid entertainment—but where I neither knew nor was known to any one.

It was on one morning, after a very magnificent fête at the arch-chancellor's, that I remembered, for the first time, I had not seen my poor friend Pioche since his arrival at Paris. A thrill of shame ran through me at the thought of having neglected to ask after my old comrade of the march, and I ordered my horse at once, to set out for the Hôtel-Dieu, which had now been, in great part, devoted to the wounded soldiers.

The day was a fine one for the season, and as I entered the large court-yard I perceived numbers of the invalids moving about in groups, to enjoy the air and the sun of a budding spring. Poor fellows! they were but the mere remnants of humanity. Several had lost both legs, and few were there without an empty sleeve to their loose blue coats. In a large hall, where three long tables were being laid for dinner, many were seated around the ample fire-places, and at one of these a larger group than ordinary attracted my attention. They were not chatting and laughing, like the rest, but apparently in deep silence. I approached, curious to know the reason, and then perceived that they were all listening attentively to some one reading aloud. The tones of the voice were familiar to me; I stopped to hear them more plainly. It was Minette herself—the vivandière—who sat there in the midst; beside her, half reclining in a deep, old-fashioned arm-chair, was "le gros Pioche"—his huge beard descending midway on his chest, and his great moustache curling below his upper lip. He had greatly rallied since I saw him last, but still showed signs of debility and feebleness by the very attitude in which he lay.

Mingling unperceived with the crowd, who were far too highly interested in the recital to pay any attention to my approach, I listened patiently, and soon perceived that mademoiselle was reading some incident of the Egyptian campaign, from one of those innumerable volumes which then formed the sole literature of the garrison.

"The redoubt," continued Minette, "was

strongly defended in front by stockades and a ditch, while twelve pieces of artillery, and a force of seven hundred Mamelukes, were within the works. Suddenly an aide-de-camp arrived at full gallop, with orders for the Thirty-second to attack the redoubt with the bayonet, and carry it. The major of the regiment (the colonel had been killed that morning, at the ford) cried out:

"'Grenadiers, you hear the order—forward!' but the same instant a terrible discharge of grape tore through the ranks, killing three and wounding eight others. 'Forward, men! forward!' shouted the Major; but no one stirred."

"Tête d'enfer," growled out Pioche, "where was the tambour?"

"You shall hear," said Minette, and resumed. "'Do you hear me?' cried the Major, 'or am I to be disgraced forever? Advance! quick time! march!'

"'But, major,' said a sergeant, aloud, 'they are not roasted apples those fellows yonder are pelting.'

"'Silence!' called out the Major; 'not a word! Tambour, beat the charge!'

"Suddenly a man sprang up to his knees, from the ground, where he had been lying, and began to beat the drum with all his might. Poor fellow! his leg was smashed with a shot, but he obeyed his orders in the midst of all his suffering.

"'Forward, men, forward!' cried the Major, waving his cap above his head. 'Fix bayonets! Charge!' And on they dashed after him.

"'Hollo! comrades,' shouted the tambour, 'don't leave me behind you;' and in an instant two grenadiers stooped down and hoisted him on their shoulders, and then rushed forward through the smoke and flame. Crashing and smashing went the shot through the leading files, but on they went, leaping over the dead and dying."

"With the tambour still?" asked Pioche.

"To be sure," said Minette. "There he was; but listen:

"Just as they reached the breach a shot above their heads came whizzing past, and a terrible bang rang out as it went.

"'He is killed,' said one of the grenadiers, preparing to lower the body; 'I heard his cry.'

"'Not yet, comrade,' cried the tambour; 'it is the drum-head they have carried away, that's all;' and he beat away on the wooden sides harder than ever. And thus they bore him over the glacis, and up the rampart, and never stopped till they placed him, sitting, on one of the guns on the wall."

"Hurrah! well done!" cried Pioche; while every throat around him re-echoed the cry—"Hurrah!"

"What was his name, mademoiselle?" cried several voices. "Tell us the name of the tambour!"

"*Ma foi, messieurs,* they have not given it."

"Not given his name," growled they out. "*Ventrebleu!* that is too bad!"

"An he had been an officer of the Guard they would have told us his whole birth and parentage," said a wrinkled, sour-looking old fellow, with one eye.

"Or a lieutenant of hussars, mademoiselle!" said Pioche, looking fixedly at the vivandière, who held the book close to her face to conceal a deep blush that covered it. "But, hollo, there! Qui vive?" The cuirassier had just caught a glimpse of me at the moment, and every eye was turned at once to where I was standing. "Ah, lieutenant, you here! Not invalided, I hope?"

"No, Pioche; my visit was intended for you; and I have had the good fortune to come in for the tale mademoiselle was reading."

Before I had concluded these few words, the wounded soldiers, or such of them as could, had risen from their seats, and stood respectfully around me, while Minette, retreating behind the great chair where Pioche lay, seemed to wish to avoid recognition.

"Front rank, mademoiselle, front rank!" said Pioche. "*Parbleu!* when one has the 'cross of the Legion' from the hands of the Emperor himself, one need not be ashamed of being seen. Besides," added he, in a lower tone, but one I could well overhear, "thou art not dressed in thy uniform now, thou hast nothing to blush for!"

Still she hung down her head, and her confusion seemed only to increase; so that, unwilling to prolong her embarrassment, which I saw my presence had caused, I merely made a few inquiries from Pioche regarding his own health, and took my leave of the party.

As I rode homeward, I could not help turning over in my mind the words of Pioche, "Thou art not in thy uniform now, thou hast nothing to blush for!" Here, then, seemed the key to the changed manner of the poor girl when I met her at Austerlitz, some feeling of womanly shame at being seen in the costume of the *vivandière* by one who had known her only in another guise; but could this be so? I asked myself—a question a very little knowledge of

a woman's heart might have spared me; and thus pondering, I returned to the Luxembourg.

CHAPTER LXI.

AN OLD FRIEND UNCHANGED.

THEY who took their tone in politics from the public journals of France must have been somewhat puzzled at the new and unexpected turn of the papers in government influence at the period I now speak of. The tremendous attacks against the "*perfide Albion*," which constituted the staple of the leading articles in the *Moniteur*, were gradually discontinued. The great body of the people were separated from the "tyrannical domination of an insolent aristocracy;" an occasional eulogy would appear, too, upon the "native good sense and right feeling of John Bull," when not led captive by appeals to his passions and prejudices; and at last a wish more boldly expressed, that the two countries, whose mission it should be to disseminate civilization over the arth, could so far understand their real interest as to become "fast friends, instead of dangerous enemies."

The accession of the Whigs to power in England was the cause of this sudden revolution. The Emperor, when first Consul, had learned to know and admire Charles Fox; sentiments of mutual esteem had grown up between them, and it seemed now as if his elevation to power were the only thing wanting to establish friendly relations between the two countries.

How far the French Emperor presumed on Fox's liberalism, and the strong bias to party, inducing him to adopt such a line of policy as would run directly counter to that of his predecessors in office, and thus dispose the nation to more amicable views toward France, certain it is, that he miscalculated considerably when he built upon any want of true English feeling on the part of that minister, or any tendency to weaken, by unjust concessions, the proud attitude England had assumed at the commencement and maintained throughout the entire continental war.

A mere accident led to a renewal of negotiations between the two countries. A villain, calling himself Guillet de la Grevillière, had the audacity to propose to the English minister the assassination of Napoleon, and to offer himself for the deed. He had hired a house at Passy, and made every preparation for the execution of his foul scheme. To denounce this wretch to the French minister of foreign affairs, Talleyrand, was the first step of Fox. This led to a reply, in which Talleyrand reported, word for word, a conversation that passed between the Emperor and himself, and wherein expressions of the kindest nature were employed by Napoleon with regard to Fox, and many flattering allusions to the times of their former intimacy; the whole concluding with the expression of an ardent desire for a good understanding and a "lasting peace between two nations designed by nature to esteem each other."

Although the whole scheme of the assassination was a police stratagem devised by Fouché, to test the honor and good faith of the English minister, the result was eagerly seized on as a basis for new negotiations; and, from that hour, the temperate language of the French papers evinced a new policy toward England. The insolent allusions of journalists, the satirical squibs of party writers, the caricatures of the English eccentricity, were suppressed at once; and by that magic influence which Napoleon wielded, the whole tone of public feeling seemed altered as regarded England and Englishmen. From the leaders in the *Moniteur* to the shop windows of the "Palais," an Anglomania prevailed, and the idea was thrown out, that the two nations had divided the world between them—the sea being the empire of the British, the land that of Frenchmen. Commissioners were appointed on both sides: at first Lord Yarmouth, and then Lord Lauderdale, by England; General Clarke and M. Champagny, on the part of France. Lord Yarmouth, at that time a *détenu* at Verdun, was selected by Talleyrand to proceed to England, and learn the precise basis on which an amicable negotiation could be founded.

Scarcely was the interchange of correspondence made public, when the new tone of feeling and acting toward England displayed itself in every circle and every salon. If a proof were wanting how thoroughly the despotism of Napoleon had penetrated into the very core of society, here was a striking one: not only were many of the *détenus* liberated, and sent back to England, but were *fêted* and entertained at the various towns they stopped at on their way, and every expedient practiced to make them satisfied with the treatment they had received on the soil of France.

An English guest was deemed an irresistible attraction at a dinner party, and the most absurd attempts at imitation of English habits, dress, and language, were in-

troduced into society, as the last "mode," and extolled as the very pinnacle of fashionable excellence.

It would be easy for me here to cite some strange instances of this new taste; but I already feel that I have wandered from my own path, and owe an apology to my reader for invading precincts which scarce become me. Yet may I observe here—and the explanation will serve once for all—I have been more anxious in this "true history" to preserve some passing record of the changeful features of an eventful period in Europe, than merely to chronicle personal adventures, which, although not devoid of vicissitudes, are still so insignificant in the great events by which they were surrounded. The Consulate, the Empire, and the Restoration, were three great tableaux, differing in their groupings and color, but each part of one mighty whole—links in the great chain, and evidencing the changeful aspect of a nation crouching beneath tyranny, or dwindling under imbecility and dotage.

I have said the English were the vogue in Paris; and so they were, but especially in those salons which reflected the influence of the court, and where the tone of the Tuileries was revered as law.

Every member of the government, or all who were even remotely connected with it, at once adopted the reigning mode; and to be *à l'Anglaise* became now as much the type of fashion as ever it had been directly the opposite. Only such as were in the confidence of Fouché and his schemes knew how hollow all this display of friendly feeling was, or how ready the government held themselves to assume their former attitude of defiance when circumstances should render it advisable.

Among those who speedily took up the cause of the Imperial counsels, the salons of the Hôtel Clichy were conspicuous. English habits, as regarded table equipage, English servants—even to English cookery and French politeness extend its complaisance; and many of the commonest habits and least-cultivated tastes were imitated as the daily observances of fashionable people '*outremer*.'

In this headlong Anglomania, my English birth and family—I say English, because, abroad, the petty distinctions of Irishman or Scotchman are not attended to—marked me out for peculiar attention in society; and although my education and residence in France had well-nigh rubbed off all, or the greater part of my national peculiarities, yet the flatterers of the day found abundant traits to admire in what they recognized as my John Bull characteristics. And in this way, a blunder in French, a mistake in grammar, or a false accentuation, became actually a *succes de salon*.

Though I could not help smiling at the absurdity of a vogue whose violence alone indicated its unlikeliness to last, yet I had sufficient of the spirit of my adopted country to benefit by it, while it did exist, and never spent a single day out of company.

At the Hôtel Clichy I was a constant guest, and while with Mademoiselle de Lacostellerie my acquaintance made little progress, with the countess I became a special favorite—she honoring me so far as to take me into her secret counsels, and tell me all the little nothings which Fouché usually disseminated as state secrets, and circulated twice or thrice a week throughout Paris. From him, too, she learned the names of the various English who each day arrived in Paris from Verdun, and thus contrived to have a succession of those favored guests at her dinner and evening parties.

During all this time, as I have said, my intimacy with mademoiselle advanced but slowly, and certainly showed slight prospect of verifying the prophecy of Duchesne at parting. Her manner had, indeed, lost its cold and haughty tone, but in lieu of it there was a flippant, half impertinent, *moqueur* spirit, which, however easily turned to advantage by a man of the world like the chevalier, was terribly disconcerting to a less forward and less enterprising person like myself. Dobretski still continued an invalid, and, although she never mentioned his name nor alluded to him in any instance, I could see that she suspected I knew something more of his illness, and the cause of it, than I had ever confessed. It matters little what the subject of it be, let a secret once exist between a young man and a young woman, let there be the tacit understanding that they mutually know of something of which others are in ignorance, and from that moment a species of intelligence is established between them of the most dangerous kind. They may not be disposed to like each other; there may be attachments elsewhere; there may be a hundred reasons why love should not enter into the case—yet will there be a conscious sense of this hidden link which binds them, strangely at variance with their ordinary regard for each other, eternally mingling in all their intercourse, and suggesting modes of acting and thinking at variance with the true tenor of the acquaintanceship.

Such, then, was my position at the Hôtel

Clichy, at which I was almost daily a visitor or a guest, in the morning to hear the chit-chat of the day—the changes talked of in the administration, the intended plans of the Emperor, or the last modes in dress introduced by the Empress, whose taste in costume and extravagant habits were much more popular with the tradespeople than with Napoleon.

An illness of a few days' duration had confined me to the Luxembourg, and unhappily deprived me of the Court-ball, for which I had received my invitation several weeks before. It seemed as if my fate forbade any chance of my ever seeing her once more whose presence in Paris was the great hope I held out to myself when coming. Already a rumor was afloat that several officers had received orders to join their regiments, and now I began to fear lest I should leave the capital without meeting her, and was thinking of some plan by which I could attain that object, when a note arrived from Mademoiselle de Lacostellerie, written with more than her usual cordiality, and inviting me to dinner on the following day with a very small party, but when I should meet one of my oldest friends.

I thought of every one in turn who could be meant under the designation, but without ever satisfying my mind that I had hit upon the right one. Tascher it could not be, for the very last accounts I had seen from Germany spoke of him as with his regiment. My curiosity was sufficiently excited to make me accept the invitation, and, true to time, I found myself at the Hôtel Clichy at the hour appointed.

On entering the salon, I discovered that I was alone; none of the guests had as yet arrived, nor had the ladies of the house made their appearance, and I lounged about the splendid drawing-room, where every appliance of luxury was multiplied; pictures, vases, statues, and bronzes abounded—for the apartments had all the ample proportions of a gallery—battle scenes, from the great events of the Italian and Egyptian campaigns, busts of celebrated generals, and portraits of several of the marshals, from the pencils of Gerard and David; but more than all was I struck by one picture. It was a likeness of Pauline herself, in the costume of a Spanish peasant. Never had artist caught more of the character of his subject than in that brilliant sketch—for it was no more. The proud tone of the expression; the large, full eye, beaming a bright defiance; the haughty curl of the lip; the determined air of the figure, as she stood one foot in advance, and the arms hanging easily on either side, all conveyed an impression of high resolve and proud determination quite her own.

I was leaning over the back of a chair, my eye steadfastly fixed on the painting, when I heard a slight rustling of a dress near me. I turned about. It was mademoiselle herself. Although the light of the apartment was tempered by the closed jalousies, and scarcely more than a mere twilight admitted, I could perceive that she colored, and seemed confused, as she said, "I hope you don't think that picture is a likeness?"

"And yet," said I, hesitatingly, "there is much that reminds me of you—I mean, I can discover—"

"Say it frankly, sir. You think that saucy look is not from mere fancy. I deemed you a closer observer; but no matter. You have been ill, I trust you are recovered again."

"Oh, a mere passing indisposition, which, unfortunately, came at the moment of the Court-ball; you were there, of course?"

"Yes, it was there we had the pleasure to meet your friend, the general; but, perhaps, this is indiscreet on my part. I believe, indeed, I promised to say nothing of him."

"The general! Do you mean General D'Auvergne?"

"That much I will answer you—I do not. But ask me no more questions. Your patience will not be submitted to a long trial; he dines with us to-day."

I made no reply, but began to ponder over in my mind who the general in question could be.

"There, pray do not worry yourself about what a few moments will reveal for you, without any guessing. How strange it is, the intense feeling of curiosity people are afflicted with who themselves have secrets."

"But I have none, mademoiselle; at least, none worth the telling."

"Perhaps," replied she saucily; "but here come our guests." Several persons entered the salon at this moment, with each of whom I was slightly acquainted; they were either members of the government or generals on the staff. The countess herself soon after made her appearance, and now we only waited for the individual so distinctively termed "my friend" to complete the party.

"Pauline has kept our secret, I hope," said the Countess to me. "I shall be sadly disappointed if anything mars this surprise."

"Who can it be?" thought I; "or is

the whole thing some piece of badinage got up at my expense?" Scarcely had the notion struck me, when a servant flung wide the folding-doors, and announced le Général somebody, but so mumbled was the word, the nearest thing I could make of it was "Bulletin." This time, however, my curiosity suffered no long delay, for quickly after the announcement, a portly personage in an English uniform entered hastily, and approaching madame, kissed her hand with a most gallant air; then, turning to mademoiselle, he performed a similar ceremony. All this time my eyes were riveted upon him, without my being able to make the most remote guess as to who he was.

"Must I introduce you, gentlemen?" said the Countess. "Captain Burke."

"Eh! what! my old friend—my boy Tom! this you, with all that moustache; delighted to see you;" cried the large unknown, grasping me by the hands, and shaking them with a cordiality I had not known for many a year.

"Really, sir," said I, "I am but too happy to be recognized, but a most unfortunate memory—"

"Memory, lad! I never forgot anything in life. I remember the doctor shaking the snow off his boots the night I was born; a devilish cold December; we lived at Benhungeramud, in the Himalaya."

"What!" cried I, "is this Captain Bubbleton, my old and kind friend?"

"General, Tom — Lieutenant-General Bubbleton—with your leave," said he, correcting me. "How the boy has grown! I remember him when he was scarce so high."

"But, my dear captain—"

"General, lieutenant-general—"

"Well, lieutenant-general, to what happy chance do we owe the pleasure of seeing you here?"

"War, boy, the old story; but we shall have time enough to talk over these things, and I see we are detaining the countess." So saying, the general gave his arm to madame, and led the way toward the dinner, whither we followed, I in a state of surprise and astonishment that left me unable to collect my faculties for a considerable time after.

Although the party, with the exception of Bubbleton, were French, he himself, as was his wont, supported nearly the whole of the conversation; and if his French was none of the most accurate, he amply made up in volubility for all accidents of grammar. It appeared that he had been three years at Verdun, a prisoner; though how he came there, whence, and at what exact period, there was no discovering; and now, his arrival at Paris was an event equally shrouded in mystery, for no negotiations had been opened for his exchange whatever, but he had had the eloquence to persuade the préfet that the omission was a mere accident, some blunder of the war-office people, which he would rectify on his arrival at Paris; and there he was, though with what prospect of reaching England, none but one of his inventive genius could possibly guess.

He was brimful of politics, ministerial secrets, state news, and government intentions, not only as regarded England, but Austria and Russia, and communicated in deep confidence a grand scheme, by which the Fox ministry were to immortalize themselves, which was by giving up Malta to the Bourbons, Louis XVIII. to be king, Goza to be a kind of dependency to be governed by a lieutenant-general, whom "he would not name;" finishing his glass with an ominous look as he spoke; thence he wandered on to his repugnance to State, and dislike to any government function, illustrating his quiet tastes and simple habits by recounting a career of oriental luxury, in which he described himself as living for years past; every word he spoke, whatever the impression on others, bringing me back most forcibly to my boyish days in the old barrack, where first I met him. Years had but cultivated his talents; his visions were bolder and more daring than ever, while he had chastened down his hurried and excited tone of narrative to a quiet flow of unexaggerated description, which, taking his age and appearance into account, it was most difficult to discredit.

Whether the Frenchmen really gave credit to his revelations, or only from politeness affected to do it, at first, I cannot say, but assuredly he put all their courtesy to a rude test, by a little anecdote, before he left the dinner-room.

While speaking of the memorable siege of Valenciennes, in '93, at which one of the French officers was present, and in a high command, Bubbleton at once launched forth into some very singular anecdotes of the campaign, where, as he alleged, he also had served.

"We took an officer of one of your infantry regiments prisoner, in a sortie one evening," said the Frenchman. "I commanded the party, and shall never forget the daring intrepidity of his escape. He leaped from the wall into the fosse, a height of thirty feet and upward. *Parbleu*, we had not the heart to fire after him, though

we saw, that after the shock, he crawled out upon his hands and feet, and soon afterward gained strength enough to run. He gave me his pocket-book, with his name; I shall not forget it readily—it was Stopford."

"Ah, poor Billy—he was my junior lieutenant," said Bubbleton; "an active fellow, but he never could jump with me. Confound him, he has left me a souvenir also, though of a different kind from yours—a cramp in the stomach I shall never get rid of."

As this seemed a somewhat curious legacy from one brother officer to another, we could not help calling on the general for an explanation, a demand Bubbleton never refused to gratify.

"It happened in this wise," said he, pushing back his chair as he spoke, and seating himself with the easy attitude of your true story-teller: "the night before the assault—the 24th of July, if my memory serves me right—the sappers were pushing forward the mines with all dispatch. Three immense globes were in readiness beneath the walls, and some minor details were only necessary to complete the preparations. The stormers consisted of four British and three German regiments—my own, the Welsh Fusiliers, being one of the former. We occupied the lines stretching from L'Herault to Damies."

The French officer nodded assent, and Bubbleton resumed:

"The Fusiliers were on the right, and divided into two parties—an assaulting column and a supporting one—the advanced companies at half cannon-shot from the walls, the others a little farther off. Thus we were—when, about half-past ten, or it might be even eleven o'clock, we were drinking some mulled claret in my quarters, a low, swooping kind of a noise came stealing along the ground. We listened—it grew stronger and stronger; and then we could hear musket-shot, and shouting, and the tramp of men as if running. Out we went, and, by Jove! there we saw the first battalion in full retreat toward the camp. It was a sortie in force from the garrison, which drove in our advanced posts, and took several prisoners. The drums now soon beat to quarters—the men fell in rapidly, and we advanced to meet them; no pleasant affair, either, let me remark, for the night was pitch dark, and we could not even guess the strength of your force. It was just then that I was running with all my speed to come up with the flank companies, that my cover sergeant, a cool, old Scotch fellow, shouted out:

"'Take care, sir!—stoop there, sir!—stoop there!'

"But the advice came too late. I could just discern through the gloom something black, hopping and bounding along toward me—now striking the ground, and then rebounding again several feet in the air.

"'Stoop, sir! down!' cried he.

"But before I could throw myself flat, plump it took me here—over I went, breathless, and deeming all was finished; but, miraculous to say, in a few minutes after I found myself coming to; and except the shock, nothing the worse for the injury.

"'Was that a shell, sergeant?' said I, 'a spent shell?'

"'Na, sir,' said he, in his own broad way, 'it was naething o' the kind; it was only Lieutenant Stopford's head that was snapped aff up there.'"

"His head!" exclaimed we all of a breath—"his head!"

"Yes, poor fellow, so it was, a d—d hard kind of a bullet-head, too. The blow has left a weakness of the stomach I suppose I shall never recover from; and the occurrence being so singular, I have actually never asked for a pension. There are people, by Jove! would throw discredit on it."

This latter observation seemed so perfectly to sum up our own thoughts on the matter, that we really had nothing to remark on it; and after a silence of a few seconds, politely relieved by the countess hinting at coffee in the drawing-room, we arose and followed her.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE RUE DES CAPUCINES.

BEFORE I parted with Bubbleton that evening, he promised to breakfast with me on the following morning; and, true to his word, entered my quarters soon after ten o'clock. I longed to have an opportunity of talking to him alone, and learning some intelligence of that country, which, young as I had left it, was still hallowed in my memory as my own.

"Eh, by Jupiter! this is something like a quarter—gilded moldings, frescoes, silk hangings, and Persian rugs. I say, Tom, are you sure you haven't made a mistake, my boy, and just imagined that you were somebody else—Murat or Bernadotte, for example?—the thing is far easier than

you may think; it happened to me before now."

"Be tranquil on that score," said I; "we are both at home, though these quarters are, as you remark, far beyond the mark of a captain of hussars."

"A captain! Why, hang it, you're not captain already?"

"Yes, to be sure; what signifies it? Only think of your own rapid rise since we parted; you were but a captain then, and to be now a lieutenant-general!"

"Ah, true, very true," said he, hurriedly, while he bustled about the room, examining the furniture, and inspecting the decorations most narrowly. "Capital service this must be," muttered he, between his teeth; "not much pay, I fancy—but a deal of plunder and private robbery."

"I cannot say much on that head," said I, laughing outright at what he intended for a soliloquy; "but I must confess I have no reason to complain of my lot."

"Egad, I should think not," rejoined he; "better than Old George's street. Well, well, I wish I were but back there—that's all."

"Come, sit down to your breakfast; and perhaps when we talk it over some plan may present itself for your exchange."

How thoroughly had I forgotten my friend when I uttered the sentiment; for scarcely was he seated at table, when he launched out, as of old, into one of his visionary harangues—throwing forth dark hints of his own political importance, and the keen watch the Emperor had set upon his movements.

"No, my friend, the thing is impossible," said he, ominously; "Nap. knows me—he knows my influence with the Tories. To let me escape would be to blow all his schemes to the winds. I am destined for the 'Temple,' if not for the guillotine."

The solemnity of his voice and manner at this moment was too much for me, and I laughed outright.

"Ay, you may laugh—so does Anna Maria."

"And is Miss Bubbleton here, too?"

"Yes; we are both here," ejaculated he, with a deep sigh; "Rue Neuve des Capucines, No. 46, four flights above the entresol! ay, and in that entresol they have two spies of Fouché's police; I know them well, though they pretend to be hairdressers—I'm too much for old Fouché yet, depend upon it, Tom."

It was in vain I endeavored to ascertain what circumstances led him to believe himself suspected by the government; neither was I more fortunate to discover how he first became a *détenu*. The mist of imaginary events, places, and people which he had conjured up around him, prevented his ever being able to see his way, or know clearly any one fact connected with his present position. Dark hints about spies—suspicious innuendoes of concealed enemies—plotting préfets, and opened letters, had actually filled his brain to the exclusion of everything rational and reasonable; and I began seriously to fear for my poor friend's intellect.

Hoping by a change of topic to induce a more equable tone of thinking, I asked about Ireland.

"All right there! They've hanged 'em all," said he. Then, as if suddenly remembering himself, he added, with a slight confusion, "You were well out of that scrape, Tom. Your old friend Barton had a warrant for you the morning you left, and there was a reward of five hundred pounds for your apprehension, and something, too, for a confounded old piper, old Blast-the-Bellows, I think they called him."

"Darby! What of him, Bubbleton—they did not take him, I trust?"

"No, by Jove! They hanged two fellows, each of whom they believed to be him, and he was in the crowd looking on, they say; but he's at large still, and the report goes Barton does not stir out at night, for fear of meeting him, as the fellow has an old score to settle with him."

"And so, all hopes of liberty would seem extinguished now," said I, gloomily.

"That is as you may take it, Tom. I'm a bad judge of these things; but I fancy that a man who can live here, might contrive to eke out life under a British government, though he might yearn now and then for a secret police—a cabinet noir—or perhaps a tight cravat in the Temple."

"Hush! my friend."

"Ay! there it is. Now, if we were in Dame-street, we might abuse the ministers and the army, and the Lord-Lieutenant, to our heart's content, and if Jimmy O'Brien wasn't one of the company, I'd not mind a hit at Barton himself."

"But does England still maintain her proud tone of ascendancy toward Ireland? Is the Saxon the hereditary lord, and the Celt the slave, still?"

"There again you puzzle me. For I never saw much of this same ascendancy, or slavery either. Loyal people, some way or other, were usually in favor with the government, and had, what many thought,

a most unjust proportion of the good things to their share; but even the others got off in most cases easily too—a devilish deal better than you treated those luckless Austrians the other day. You killed some thirty thousand, and made bankrupts of the rest of the nation. But then, to be sure, it was the cause of liberty you were fighting for—and as for the Italians—"

"Yes! but you forget these were wars not of our seeking. The treachery of false-hearted allies led to these sad results."

"I suppose so. But certain it is, nations, like individuals, that have a taste for fighting, usually have the good luck to find an adversary—and as your Emperor here seems to have learned the Donny-brook Fair trick of trailing his coat after him, it would be strange enough if nobody would gratify him by standing on it."

Without being able to say why, I felt piqued and annoyed at the tone of Bubbleton's remarks, which coming from one of his narrow intelligence on ordinary topics, worried me only the more. I had long since seen, that the liberty with which in boyhood I was infatuated, had no existence, save in the dreams of ardent patriotism—that the great and the mighty felt ambition a goal, and power a birthright—that the watchwords of freedom were inscribed on banners, when the sentiments had died out of men's hearts, while, as a passion, the more dazzling one of glory, made every other pale before it, and that the calm head and moderate judgment could scarce survive contact with the intoxicating triumphs of a nation's successes.

Such was, indeed, the real change Napoleon had wrought in France. Their enthusiasm could not rest content with national liberty. Glory alone could satisfy a nation drunk with victory. Against the stern followers of the republican era, the soldiers of the Sambre and Meuse—the men of Jemmappes—he had arrayed the ardent, high-spirited youth of the Consulate and the Empire—the heroes of Arcola, of Rivoli, of Cairo, and Austerlitz. How vain to discuss questions of social order or national freedom with the cordoned and glittering bands who saw monarchy and kingdoms among the prizes of their ambition! And even I, who had few ambitious hopes, how had the ardor that once stimulated me, and led me to the soldier's life—how had it given way to the mere conventional aspirings of a class? The grade of colonel was far oftener in my thoughts than the cause of freedom. The cross of the Legion would have reconciled me to much that in my calmer judgment I might deem harsh and tyrannical.

"Believe me, Tom," said Bubbleton, who saw in my silence that his observations had their weight with me—"believe me, my philosophy is the true one—never to meddle where you cannot serve yourself, or some of your friends. The world will always consist of two parties—one governing, the other governed. We belong to the latter category, and shall only get into a scrape by poking our heads where they have no business to be."

"Why, a few moments since you were full of state secrets, and plots, and secret treaties, and Heaven knows what besides."

"To be sure I was: and for whose interest, man—for whose sake? George Frederick Augustus Bubbleton's. Ay, no doubt of it. Here am I, a *détenu*, and have been these two years and a half, wasting away existence at Verdun, while my property is going to the devil from sheer neglect. My West India estates, who can say how I shall find them? My Calcutta property, the same. Then there's that fee-simple thing in Norfolk. But I can't even think of it. Well, I verily believe no single step has been taken for my release or exchange. The Whigs, you know, will do nothing for me. I may tell you in confidence"—here he dropped his voice to a low whisper—"I may tell you, Charles Fox hates me: but more of this another time. What was I to do in all this mess of trouble and misfortune? Stand still and bear it? No, faith, that's not Bubbleton policy! You'd never guess what I did."

"I fear not."

"Well, it chanced that some little literary labors of mine—you know I dally sometimes with the muse—became known to the préfet at Verdun. I saw that they watched me, and, consequently, I made great efforts at secrecy, concealing my papers in the chimney, under the floor, sewing them in the linings of my coat, and so on. The bait took; they made a regular search; seized my MSS., put great seals on all the packages, and sent them up to Paris. The day after, I made submission; offered to reveal all to the minister for foreign affairs; and accordingly they sent me up here with an escort. What would have come next I cannot tell you, if Anna Maria had not found out Lord Lauderdale, and trumped up some story to him, so that he interfered, and we are now living at the Rue Neuve des Capucines; but how long we shall be there, and where they may send us next, I wish I could only guess."

A few minutes' consideration satisfied me

that the police were concerned in Bubbleton's movements, and knowing at once that no danger was to be apprehended from such a source, were merely holding him up for some occasion, when they could make use of him to found some charge against the British government—a maneuver constantly employed, and always successful with the Parisians, wherever an explanation became necessary in the public papers.

It would have served no purpose to impart these suspicions of mine to Bubbleton himself; on the contrary, he would inevitably have destroyed all clue to their confirmation by some false move, had I done so. With this impression, then, I resolved to wait patiently, watch events, and, when the time came, see what best could be done toward effecting his liberation.

As I was disposed to place more reliance on Miss Bubbleton's statements than those of her imaginative brother, I agreed to his proposal to pay her a visit, and accordingly we set out together for the Rue Neuve des Capucines.

Lieutenant-General Bubbleton's quarters were by no means of that imposing character which befitted his rank in the British army. Traversing a dirty court-yard, strewed with firewood, we entered a little gloomy passage, from which a still gloomier stair ascended to the topmost regions of the house, where, unlocking a door, he pushed me before him into a small, meanly furnished apartment, the center of which was occupied by a little iron stove, whose funnel pierced the ceiling above, and gave the chamber somewhat the air of a ship's cabin. Bubbleton, however, either did not, or would not, perceive any want of comfort or propriety in the whole; on the contrary, he strode the floor with the step of an emperor, and placed the chair for me to sit on as though he were about to seat me on a throne. While exchanging his coat for a most ragged dressing-gown, he threw himself on an old sofa with such energy of ease, that the venerable article of furniture creaked and groaned in every joint.

"She's out," said he, with a toss of his thumb to a half-open door; "gone to take a stroll in the Tuileries for half an hour, so that we shall have a little chat before she comes. And now, what will ye take?—a little sherry-and-water—a glass of maraschino—eh?—or what say you to a nip of real Nantz?"

"Nothing, my dear friend; you forget the hour, not to speak of my French education."

"Oh, very true," said he. "When I was in the Forty-fifth—" When he had uttered these words, he stopped suddenly, hesitated, and stammered, and at last, fairly overcome with confusion, he unfolded a huge pocket-handkerchief, and blew his nose with the sound of a cavalry-trumpet, while he resumed. "We had a habit in the old Forty-fifth—a deuced bad one, I confess—of a mess breakfast, that began after parade, and always ran into luncheon—But, hush! here she comes," cried he, in evident delight at the interruption so opportunely arriving; then, springing up, he threw open the door, and called out: "I say, Anna Maria, you'll not guess who's here?"

Either the ascent of the steep stair called for all the lady's spare lungs, or the question had little interest for her, as she certainly made no reply whatever, but continued to mount, step by step, with that plodding, monosyllabic pace one falls into at the highest of six flights.

"No," cried he aloud—"no, you're wrong—it is not Lauderdale." Then, turning toward me, with a finger to his nose, he added, with pantomimic action, "She thinks you are Yarmouth. Wrong again, by Jove! What do you say to Tom Burke—Burke of 'Ours,' as I used to call him long ago?"

By this time Miss Bubbleton had reached the door, and was holding the handle to recover her breath after the fatigue of the ascent. Even in that momentary glance, however, I recognized her. Nothing altered by time, she was the same crabbed, cross-grained-looking personage I remembered years before. She carried a little basket on her arm, of which her brother hastened to relieve her, and showed no little concern to remove out of sight. Being divested of this, she held out her hand, and saluted me with more cordiality than I looked for. Scarcely had our greetings been exchanged, when Bubbleton broke in—

"I have told him everything, Anna Maria. He knows the whole affair; no use in boring him with any more. I say, isn't he grown prodigiously, and a captain already—just think of that."

"And so, sir, you've heard of the sad predicament his folly has brought us into?"

"Hush! hush! Anna Maria," cried Bubbleton; "no nonsense, old girl. Burke will put all to rights; he's aide-de-camp to Murat, and dines with him every day—eh, Tom?"

"What if he be?" interrupted the lady without permitting me time to disclaim the honor. "How can he ever—"

"I tell you, it's all arranged between us;

and don't make a fuss about nothing. You'll only make bad worse, as you always do. Come, Tom, the secret is, I shall be ruined if I don't get back to England soon. Heaven knows who receives my dividends all this time. Then, that confounded tin mine, they've mismanaged the thing so much, I haven't received five hundred pounds from Cornwall since this time twelve months."

"That you haven't," said the lady, as with clasped hands and eyes fixed, she sat staring at the little stove, with the stern stoicism of a martyr.

"She knows that," said Bubbleton, with a nod, as if grateful for even so much testimony in his favor. "And as for that scoundrel, Thistlethwait, the West India agent, I've a notion he's broke; not a shilling from him either."

"Not sixpence," echoed the lady.

"You hear that," cried he, overjoyed at the concurrence. "And the fact is—you will smile when I tell you, but upon my honor it's true—I am actually hard up for cash."

The idea tickled him so much, and seemed so ludicrous withal, that he fell back on the sofa, and laughed till the tears ran down his face. Not so Miss Bubbleton; her grim face grew more fixed, every feature hardened, as if becoming stone, while gradually a sneer curled her thin lip, but she never spoke a word.

"I'll not speak of the annoyance of being out of England, nor the loss of influence a man sustains after a long absence," said Bubbleton, as he paced the room with his hands deep thrust in his dressing-gown pockets. "These are things one can feel, and as for me, they weigh more on my mind than mere money considerations."

"But, general," said I—

"General!" echoed the lady, with a start round, and holding up both her hands. "General! You haven't been such a fool—it's not possible you could be such a fool—"

"Will you please to be quiet? old damsel," said Bubbleton, with more of harshness than he had yet used in his manner. "Can you persuade yourself to mind your own household concerns, and leave George Frederick Augustus Bubbleton to manage his own matters as he deems best?"

Here he turned short round toward me, and throwing up his eyebrows to their full height, he touched his forehead knowingly with the tip of his fore-finger, and uttered the words, "You understand—poor thing!" concluding the pantomime with a deep sigh from the bottom of his chest, while he added something in a low whisper about "a fall from an elephant when she was a child."

"Mr. Burke, will you listen to me?" said the lady, with an energy of voice and manner there was no gainsaying—"listen to me for five minutes, and probably, short as the time is, I may be able to put you in possession of a few plain facts concerning our position, and if you have the inclination and the power to serve us, you may then know how best it can be done."

Bubbleton made me a sign to gratify her desire of loquaciousness, while with a most expressive shrug he intimated that I should probably hear a very incoherent statement. This done, he lighted his meerschaum, wrapped his ragged *robe de chambre* around him, and lay down full length on the sofa, with the air of a man who had fortified himself to undergo any sacrifices that might be demanded at his hands, taking care the while to assume his position in such a manner that he could exchange glances with me without his being observed by his sister.

"We came over, Mr. Burke, only a few months before the war broke out, and like the rest of our countrymen and women, were made *détenus*. This was bad enough, but my wise brother made it far worse; for instead of giving his name, with his real rank and position, he would call himself a lieutenant-general, affect to have immense wealth, and great political influence. The consequence was, when others were exchanged and sent home, his name not being discoverable in any English list, was passed over; while his assumed fortune involved us in every expense and extravagance, and his mock importance made us the object of the secret police, who never ceased to watch and spy after us."

"Capital, excellent, by Jove!" cried Bubbleton, as he rolled forth a long curl of blue smoke from the angle of his mouth—"she's admirable!"

"I ought to have told you before," said the lady, not paying the least attention to his interruption, "that he was obliged to sell out of the Forty-fifth; a certain Mr. Montague Crofts, whom you may remember, having won every shilling he possessed, even to the sale of his commission. This was the cause of our coming abroad; so that at the very moment that he was giving himself these airs of pretended greatness, we were ruined."

"Upon my life, she believes all that," whispered Bubbleton, with a wink at me. "Poor old thing! I must get Larry to look at her."

"Happily, or unhappily—who shall say which?—there was a greater fool even than himself in the village, and he was the '*maire*.' This wise functionary became alarmed at the piles of papers and rolls of manuscripts that were seen about our rooms, and equally suspicious about the dark hints and mysterious innuendoes he threw out from time to time. The préfet was informed of it, and the result was, an order for our removal to Paris. Here then we are, with what destiny before us who shall tell? for, as he still persists in his atrocious nonsense, and calls himself major-general—"

"Lieutenant-general, my dear," said Bubbleton, mildly; "I never was major-general."

"Is it not too bad?" said she, "could any patience endure this?"

"Don't be violent—take care, Anna Maria," said he, rebukingly. "Potts said I should use restraint again, if you showed any return of the paroxysm. That's the way she takes it," said he, in a low whisper, "with a blinking about the eyes and a pattering of the feet. Bathe your temples, dear, and you'll be better presently."

Anna Maria sat still, not uttering a word; and actually fearing by a gesture to encourage a commentary on her manner.

"Sometimes she'll mope for hours," muttered he in my ear; "at others, she's furious—there's no saying how it will turn. You wouldn't like a pipe?—I forgot to ask you."

"And worst than all, sir," said the lady, as if no longer able to restrain her temper, "he is supposed to be a spy of the police. I heard it myself this morning."

"Eh — what!" exclaimed Bubbleton, jumping up in an ecstasy of delight. "A spy! By Jove! I knew it. Lord! what fellows they are, these French; not two days here yet, and they discovered I was no common man—eh, Burke? Maybe I hav'n't frightened them, my boy. It's not every one would create such a sensation, let me tell you—I knew I'd do it."

Miss Bubbleton looked at him for an instant with a sneer of the most withering contempt, and then rising abruptly, left the room; but the general little cared for such evidences of her censure: he danced about the room, snapping his fingers, and chuckling with self-satisfaction—the thought of being believed to be a police spy giving him the most intense and heartfelt pleasure.

"She has moments, Tom, when she's downright clear—you'd not think it, but sometimes she's actually shrewd; you saw how she hit upon that."

"Would that her brother was favored with some of these lucid intervals," was the thought that ran through my head at the moment; for I knew better than he did how needful a clearer brain and sharper faculties than his would be to escape the snares his folly and vanity were spreading around him.

"Shall we make a morning call at our friend the countess's, Tom?" said Bubbleton. "She told me she received every day about this hour."

I felt nowise disposed for the visit; and so, having engaged my friend to dine with me at the Luxembourg the next day, we parted.

As I sauntered homeward, I was surprised how difficult I found it to disabuse my mind of the absurd insinuations Bubbleton had thrown out against his sister's sanity; for, though well knowing his fondness for romance, and his taste for embellishment on every occasion, I yet could not get rid of the impression that her oddity of manner might only be another feature of eccentricity just as extravagant, but differing in its tendencies from his own.

To assist him, whose kindness to myself of old I never ceased to remember with gratitude, was my firm resolve; but to ascertain his exact position was all-essential for this purpose, and I could not help saying, half aloud, "If I had but Duchesne here now."

"Speak of the devil, *mon ami*," said he, drawing his arm within mine, while I was scarcely able to avoid a cry of astonishment. "Where do you dine to-day, Burke?" said he, in his quiet, easy tone.

"But where did you come from, Duchesne? Are you long here?"

"Answer my question first. Can you dine with me?"

"To be sure—with pleasure."

"Then meet me at the corner of the Rue des Trois Têtes, at six o'clock, and I'll be your guide afterward. This is *my* way now. *Au revoir*."

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE "NOISSON D'OR."

WHEN I arrived at the rendezvous, I found Duchesne already awaiting me with a carriage, into which we stepped and drove rapidly away.

"A man of your word, Burke; and,

what is scarcely less valuable in the times we live in, a man of prudence too."

"As how the latter, may I ask?"

"You have not come in uniform, which is all the better, where we are going; besides, it gives me the hope of presenting you to my respected aunt, the Duchesse de Montserrat, who will take your black coat as a compliment to the whole Bourbon dynasty. You must come with me there, if it only be for half an hour. And now tell me, have you ever dined at the 'Moisson d'Or?"

"Never—not even heard of the house."

"Well, then, you shall to-day; and meanwhile I may tell you, that although in a remote and little-visited quarter of Paris, it stands unrivaled for the excellence of its fare, and the rare delicacy of its wines—a reputation not of yesterday, but of some years' standing. Nor is that the only thing remarkable about it, as I shall explain hereafter. But come—how are your friends at the Hôtel Clichy? and how fares your suit with Mademoiselle?"

"My suit? it never was such. You know, to the full as well as I do, my pretensions aspired not half so high."

"So much the better, and so much the worse. I mean the former for me, as I hate to have a friend for a rival; the latter for you, who ought to have learned by this time that a handsome girl and a million of francs are more easily won than a cross of the Legion, or a colonel's epaulette."

"And are you serious, Duchesne? Have you really intentions in that quarter?"

"*Morbleu!* to be sure I have. It is for that I'm here in Paris in the dog-days—traveled one hundred and twenty leagues—ay, and more, too, have brought with me my most aristocratic aunt, who never remembers in her life to have seen full-grown leaves in the Tuileries gardens. I knew what an ally she would be in the negotiation, and so I managed, through some friends in the bureau of the minister, to give her a rare fright about an estate of hers, which by some accident escaped confiscation in the Revolution, and which nothing but the greatest efforts on her part could now rescue from the fangs of the crown. You may be sure she is not particularly in love with the present government on this score; but the trick secures her speaking more guardedly than she has the habit of doing, besides inducing her to make acquaintances nothing but such a threat would accomplish."

"You intend, then, she should know Madame de Lacostellerie?"

"Of course. I have already persuaded her that the Hôtel Clichy is the pivot of all Paris, and that nothing but consummate tact and management on her part will succeed there."

"But I scarcely thought you cared for mademoiselle, and never dreamed of your proposing to marry her."

"Nor I, till about a week ago. However, my plans require money, and would not be incumbered by my having a wife. I see nothing better at the moment, and so my mind is soon made up. But here we are; this is our resting-place."

The "Moisson d'Or," although not known to me, was then the most celebrated place for dining in Paris. The habits of the house, for there was no "table d'hôte," required that everything should be ordered beforehand, and the parties all dined separately. The expensive habits and extravagant prices secured its frequenters from meeting the class who usually dine at restaurants; and this gave it a vogue among the wealthy and titled, whose equipages now thronged the street, and filled the "porte cochère." I had but time to recognize the face of one of the marshals and a minister of state, as we pushed our way through the court, and entered a small pavilion beyond it.

"I'll join you in an instant," said Duchesne, as he left the room hastily after the waiter. In a couple of minutes he was back again. "Come along, it's all right," said he. "I wish to show you a corner of the old house that only the privileged ever see, and we are fortunate in finding it unoccupied."

We recrossed the court, and mounted a large oak stair to a corridor, which conducted us, by three sides of a quadrangle, to a smaller stair, nearly perpendicular. At the top of this, a strong door, barred and padlocked, stood, which, being opened, led into a large and lofty salon, opening by three spacious windows on a terrace that formed the roof of the building. Some citron and orange-trees were disposed tastefully along this, and filled the room with their fragrance.

"Here, Antoine, let us be served here," said Duchesne to the waiter; "I have already given orders about the dinner. And now, Burke, come out here. What think you of that view?"

Scarcely had I set foot on the terrace, when I started back in mingled admiration and amazement. Beneath us lay the great city, in the mellow light of an evening in September. Close, so close as actually to startle, was the large dome of the "Invalides," shining like a ball of molten gold,

the great court-yard in front dotted with figures; beyond, again, was the Seine, the surface flashing and flickering in the sunlight. I traced it along to the Pont Neuf, and then my eye rested on Notre-Dame, whose tall, dark towers stood out against the pinkish sky, while the deep-toned bell boomed through the still air. I turned toward the Tuileries, and could see the guard of honor in waiting for the Emperor's appearing. In the gardens hundreds were passing and repassing, or standing around the band, which played in front of the pavilion. A tide of population poured across the bridges and down the streets, along which equipages and horsemen dashed impetuously onward. There was all the life and stir of a mighty city, its sounds dulled by distance, but blended into one hoarse din, like the far-off sea at night.

"You don't know, Burke, that this was a favorite resort of the courtiers of the last reign. The gay young 'Gardes du Corps,' the gallant youths of the royal household, constantly dined here. The terrace we now stand on once held a party who came at the invitation of no less a personage than him whom men call Louis XVIII. It was a freak of the time to pronounce the Court dinners execrable; and they even go so far as to say that Marie Antoinette herself once planned a party here—but this I cannot vouch for."

At this moment Duchesne was interrupted by the entrance of the waiters, who came to serve the dinner. I had not a moment left to admire the beauty and richness of the antique silver dishes which covered the table, when a gentle tap at the door attracted my attention.

"Ha! Jacotot himself!" said Duchesne, as, rising hastily, he advanced to meet the new arrival. He was a tall, thin old man, much stooped by years, but with an air and carriage distinctly well bred; his white hair, brushed rigidly back, fastened into a queue behind, and his lace "jabot" and ruffles bespoke him as the remnant of a date long past. His coat was blue, of a shade somewhat lighter than is usually worn. He also wore large buckles on his shoes, whose brilliancy left no doubt of their real value. Bowing with great ceremony, he advanced slowly into the room.

"You are come to dine with us—is it not so, Jacotot?" said Duchesne, as he still held his hand.

"Excuse me, my dear chevalier—the Count de Chambord and Edouard de Courcelles are below—I have promised to join them."

"And is Courcelles here?"

"Yes," said the old man, with a timid glance toward where I sat, and a look as if imploring caution and reserve.

"Oh, fear nothing—and that reminds me I have not presented my friend and brother officer—Captain Burke, Monsieur Jacotot. You may feel assured, Jacotot, I make no mistake in the friends I introduce here."

The old man gave a smile of pleasure, while, turning to me, he said:

"He is discretion itself; and I am but too happy to make your acquaintance. And now, chevalier, one word with you."

He retreated toward the door, holding Duchesne's arm, and whispering as he went. Duchesne's face, however, expressed his impatience as he spoke, and at last he said:

"As you please, my worthy friend—I always submit to your wiser counsels; so farewell for the present."

He looked after the old man as he slowly descended the stairs, and then closing the door, and locking it, he exclaimed:

"*Parbleu!* I found it very hard to listen to his prosing with even a show of patience, and was half tempted to tell him that the Bourbons could wait, though the soup could not."

"Then Monsieur Jacotot is a royalist, I presume?"

"Ay, that he is; and so are all they who frequent this house. Don't start—the police know it well, and no one is more amused at their absurd plottings and conspirings than Fouché himself. Now and then, to be sure, some fool, more rash and brainless than the others, will come up from La Vendée, and try to knock his head against the walls of the Temple, like De Courcelles there, who has no other business in Paris except to be guillotined, if it were worth the trouble. Then the minister affects to stir himself, and be on the alert, just to terrify them; but he well knows that danger lurks not in this quarter. Believe me, Burke, the present rulers of France have no greater security than in the contemptible character of all their opponents. There is no course for a man of energy and courage to adopt. But I ask your pardon, my dear friend, for this treasonable talk. What think you of the dinner?—the royalists would never have fallen if they had understood government as well as *cuisine*. Taste that *supréme*, and say if you don't regret the Capets—a feeling you can indulge the more freely because you never knew them."

"I cannot comprehend, Duchesne, what

are the grievances you charge against the present government of France. Had you been an old courtier of the last reign—a hanger-on of Versailles or the Tuileries—the thing were intelligible; but you, a soldier, a man of daring and enterprise—"

"Let me interrupt you. I am so, only because it is the taste of the day; but I despise the parade of military glory we have got into the habit of. I prefer the period when a *mot* did as much and more than a discharge of *mitraille*, and men's *esprit* and talent succeeded better than a strong sword-arm or a seat on horseback. There were gentlemen in France once, my dear Burke—ay, *parbleu!* and ladies too. Not marchionesses of the drum-head, nor countesses of the bivouac; but women in whom birth heightened beauty—whose loveliness had the added charm of high descent beaming from their bright eyes, and sitting throned on their lofty brows—before whom our moustached marshals had stood trembling and ashamed—these men who lounge so much at ease in the salons of the Tuileries! Let me help you to this *salmi*, it is *à la Louis Quinze*, and worthy of the Regency itself. Well, then, a glass of Burgundy."

"Your friend Monsieur Jacotot seems somewhat of an original," said I, half desirous to change a topic which I always felt an unpleasant one.

"You are not wrong—he is so. Jacotot is a thorough Frenchman; at least, he has had the fortune to mix up in his destiny those extremes of elevated sentiment and absurdity which go very far to compose the life of my good countrymen. I must tell you a short anecdote—But shall we adjourn to the terrace? for, to prevent the interruption of servants, I have ordered our dessert there."

This was a most agreeable proposal; and so, having seated ourselves in a little arbor of orange-shrubs, with the view of the river and the palace gardens beneath us, Duchesne thus began:

"I am going somewhat far back in history, but have no fears on that head, Burke; my story is a very brief one. There was, once upon a time, in France, a monarch of some repute, called Louis the Fourteenth; a man, if fame be not unjust, who possessed the most kingly qualities of which we have any record in books. He was brave, munificent, high-minded, ardent, selfish, cruel, and ungrateful, beyond any other man in his own dominions; and, like people with such gifts, he had the good fortune to attach men to him just as firmly and devotedly as though he was not in his heart devoid of every principle of friendship and affection. I need not tell you what the ladies of his reign thought of him—my present business is with the ruder sex. Among the courtiers of the day was a certain Vicomte Arnoud de Gency, a young man who, at the age of eighteen, won his grade of colonel at the siege of Besançon by an act of coolness and courage worthy recording. He deliberately advanced into one of the breaches, and made a sketch of the interior works of the fortification, while the enemy's shot was tearing up the ground around him. When the deed was reported to the king, he interrupted the relation, saying:

"'Don't tell me who did this, for I have made De Gency a colonel for it.' So rapidly did Louis guess the author of so daring a feat.

"From that hour, the young colonel's fortune was made. He was appointed one of the gentlemen of the chamber to his majesty, and distinguished by almost daily marks of royal intimacy. His qualities eminently fitted him for the tone of the society he lived in—he was a most witty converser, a good musician, and had, moreover, a very handsome person—gifts not undervalued at Saint Germain.

"Such were his social qualities; and so thoroughly did he understand the king's humor, that even La Vallière herself saw the necessity of retaining him at the Court, and, in fact, made a confidant of him on several occasions of difficulty. Still, with all these favors of fortune—when the object of envy to almost all the rest of the household—Arnoud de Gency was suffering in his heart one of the most trying afflictions that can befall a proud man so placed—he was in actual poverty, in want so pressing, that all the efforts he could make, all the contrivances he could practice, were barely sufficient to prevent his misery being public. The taste for splendor in dress and equipage which characterized the period had greatly injured his private fortune, while the habit of high play, which Louis encouraged, and liked to see about him, completed his ruin. The salary of his appointments was merely enough to maintain his daily expenditure, and thus was he, with a breaking heart, obliged not only to mix in all the reckless gayety and frivolity of that voluptuous Court, but, still more, tax his talents and his energies for new themes of pleasure—fresh sources of amusement.

"Worn out at length by the long struggle between his secret sorrow and his pride, he resolved to appeal to the king, and, in a

few words, tell his majesty the straits to which he was reduced, and implore his protection. To this he was impelled not solely on his own account, but on that also of his only child, a boy of eight or nine years old, whose mother died in giving him birth.

"An occasion soon presented itself. The king had given orders for a hunting-party at St. Cloud, and, at an early hour of the morning, De Gency, in his hunting-dress, took up his position in one of the antechambers through which the king must pass—not alone, however—at his side there stood a lovely boy, also dressed in the costume of the chase. He wore a velvet doublet of green, slashed with gold, and ornamented by a broad belt, from which hung his *couteau de chasse;* even to the falcon feather in his cap, nothing was forgotten.

"He had not waited long when the folding-doors were thrown wide, and a moment after Louis appeared, accompanied by a single attendent, the Marquis de Verneuil, unhappily one of the very few enemies Arnoud possessed in the world.

"'Ah! De Gency, you here?' said the King, gayly. 'They told me "brelan" had been unfavorable lately, and that we should not see you.'

"'It is true, sire,' said he, with a sad effort at a smile; 'it is only on your majesty fortune always smiles.'

"'*Pardieu!* you must not say so—I lost a rouleau last night. But whom have we here?'

"'My son, so please you, sire, my only son, who desires, at an earlier age than even his father did, to serve your majesty.'

"'How like his mother!' said the King, pushing back the fair ringlets from the boy's forehead, and gazing almost fondly on his handsome features—'how like her! She was a Courcelles?'

"'She was, sire,' said Arnoud, as the tears fell on his cheek and coursed slowly along his face.

"'And you want something for him?' said the King, resuming his wonted tone, while he busied himself with his sword-knot; 'is it not so?'

"'If I might dare to ask—'

"'Assuredly you may. The thing is, what can we do? Eh, Verneuil, what say you? He is but an infant.'

"'True, sire,' replied the Marquis, with a look of respect, in which the most subtle could not discover a trait of his sarcastic nature; 'but there is a place vacant.'

"'Ah, indeed,' said the King, quickly. 'What is it? He shall have it.'

"'Monsieur Jacotot, your majesty's head cook, stands in need of a turnspit,' said he, in a low whisper, only audible to the king.

"'A turnspit?' said the King; and scarcely was the word uttered when, as if the irony was his own, he burst into a most immoderate fit of laughter, an emotion that seemed to increase as he endeavored to repress it, when at the instant the *cor de chasse,* then heard without, gave a new turn to his thoughts; and he hurried forward with De Verneuil, leaving De Gency and his son rooted to the spot—indignant passion in that heart which despair and sorrow had almost rendered callous.

"His majesty was still laughing as he mounted his barb in the court-yard; and the courtiers, like well-bred gentlemen, laughed as became them, with that low, quiet laugh which is the meet chorus of a sovereign's mirth, when suddenly two loud reports, so rapidly following on each other as almost to seem one, startled the glittering cortége, and even made the Arab courser of the king plunge madly in the air.

"'*Par St. Denis!* messieurs,' said Louis, passionately, 'this pleasantry of yours is ill thought of. Who has dared to do this?'

"But none spoke. A terrified look around the circle was the only reply to the king's question, when a page rushed forward, his dress spotted and blood-stained, his face pale with horror:

"'Your majesty—ah, sire?' said he, kneeling—but sobs choked him, and he could not utter more.

"'What is this?—will no one tell?' cried the King, as a frown of dark omen shadowed his angry features.

"'Your majesty has lost a brave, an honest, and a faithful follower, sire,' said Monsieur de Coulanges. 'Arnoud de Gency is no more.'

"'Why, I saw him this instant,' said the King. 'He asked me some favor for his boy.'

"'True, sire,' replied De Coulanges, mournfully; but he checked himself in time, for already the well-known and dreaded expression of passion had mounted to the king's face.

"'Dismiss the "chasse" gentlemen,' said he, in a low, thick voice; 'and do you, Monsieur de Verneuil, attend me.'

"The cortége was soon scattered; and the Marquis de Verneuil followed the king, with an expression where fear and dread were not to be mistaken.

"Monsieur de Verneuil did indeed seem an altered man when he appeared among his friends that evening. Whatever the king had said to him assuredly had worked

its due effect; for all his raillery was gone; and even the veriest trifler of the party might have dared an encounter with wits, which then were subdued and broken. Next morning, however, the sun shone out brilliantly. The king was in high spirits, the game abounded; and his majesty with his own hand brought down eight pheasants. The Marquis de Verneuil could hit nothing: for, although the best marksman of the day, his hand shook, and his sight failed him; and the king won fifty louis from him before they reached Saint Germain.

"Never was there a happier day, nor followed by a pleasanter evening. The king supped in Madame de la Vallière's apartment; the private band played the most delicious airs during the repast; and when at length the party retired to rest, not one bright dream was clouded by the memory of Arnoud de Gency.

"Here, now, were I merely recounting an anecdote, I should stop," said the Chevalier, "but must continue a little longer, though all the romance of my story is over. The Marquis de Verneuil was a good hater; even poor De Gency's fate did not move him; and he actually did do what he had only threatened in mockery—he sent the orphan child to be a turnspit in the royal kitchen. Of course he changed his name. The title of an old and honored family would soon have betrayed the foul deed; and the boy was called Jacotot, after the *chef* himself. The king inquired no further on the subject. Arnoud's name recalled too unpleasant a topic for the lips of a courtier ever to mention; and the whole circumstance was soon entirely forgotten.

"This same Jacotot was the grandfather of my old friend, whom you saw a few minutes since. Fate, that seems to jest with men's destinies, made them as successful at the fire of the kitchen as ever their ancestors were at that of a battery; and Monsieur Jacotot, our present host, has not his equal in Paris. Here for years the younger members of the royal family used to sup. This room was their favorite apartment; and one evening when, at a later sitting than usual, the ruler of the feast was carried beyond himself in the praise of an admirable plat, he sent for Jacotot, and told him whatever favor he should ask he himself would seek for him at the hands of the king.

"This was the long-wished-for moment of the poor fellow's life. He drew from his bosom the title deeds of his ancient name and fortune, and placed them in the prince's hand without uttering a word.

"'What! and are you a De Gency?' said the Prince.

"'Alas! I shame to say it, I am.'

"'Come, gentlemen,' said the gay young prince, 'a bumper to our worthy friend, whom, with God's blessing, I shall see restored right soon to his fitting rank and station. Yes, De Gency, my word upon it, the next evening I sup here I shall bring with me his majesty's own signature to these title-deeds. Make place, gentlemen, and let him sit down.'

"But poor Jacotot was too much excited by his feelings of joy and gratitude, and he rushed from the room in a torrent of tears.

"The evening the prince spoke of never came. Soon after that commenced the troubles to the royal family—the dreadful events of Versailles—the flight to Varennes—the 10th of August—a horrible catalogue I cannot bear to trace. There, yonder, where now the groups are loitering, or sitting around in happy knots—there died Louis XVI. The prince I spoke of is an exile. They call him Louis XVIII.; but he is a king without a kingdom.

"But Jacotot lives on in hope; he has waded through all the terrors of the Revolution; he has seen the guillotine erected almost before his door, and beheld his former friends led one by one to the slaughter. Twice was he himself brought forth, and twice was his life spared by some admirer of his 'cuisine.' But, perhaps, all his trials were inferior to the heart-burning with which he saw the places once occupied by the blood of St. Louis now occupied by the 'canaille' of the Revolution. Marat and Robespierre frequented his house; and Barras seldom passed a week without dining there. This, I verily believe, was a heavier affliction than any of his personal sufferings; and I have often heard him recount, with no feigned horror, the scenes which took place among the 'incroyables,' as they called themselves, whose orgies he contrasted so unfavorably with the more polished excesses of his regal visitors. Through all the anarchy of that fearful period—through the scarce less sanguinary time of the Directory—through the long, dreary oppression of the Consulate—and now, in the more grinding tyranny of the Empire, he hopes, ay, still hopes on, that the day will come, when, from the hands of the king himself, he shall receive his long-buried rank, and stand forth a De Gency. Poor fellow, there is something noble and manly in the long struggle with fortune—in that long-sustained contest, in which he would never admit defeat.

"Such are the followers of the Bourbons

—their best traits, their highest daring, their most long-suffering endurance, only elicited in the pursuit of some paltry object of personal ambition. They have tasted the cup of adversity, ay, drained it to the very dregs; they have seen carnage and bloodshed such as no war ever surpassed; and all they have learned by experience is, to wish for the long-past days of royal tyranny and frivolity back again, to see a glittering swarm of debauchees fluttering around a sensualist king, and to watch the famished faces of the multitude without a thought that the tiger is only waiting for his spring. As to a thought of true liberty, one single high or noble aspiration after freedom, they never dreamed of it. You see, my friend, I have no desire to win you over to the Bourbon cause. Neither, if I could, would I make you a Jacobin. But how is this?—can it really be so late? Come, we have no time to lose—it is not accounted good breeding to be late in a visit at the 'Faubourg.'"

CHAPTER LXIV.

THE TWO SOIREES.

DUCHESNE'S story had unfortunately driven all memory of Bubbleton out of my head; and it was only as we entered the street where the Duchesse de Montserrat lived, that I remembered my friend, and thought of asking the chevalier's advice about him.

In a few words I explained so much of his character and situation as was necessary, and was going on to express my fears lest a temperament so unstable and uncertain should involve its possessor in much trouble, when Duchesne interrupted me by saying:

"Be of courage on that head; your friend, if the man you describe him, is the very person to baffle the police. They can see to any depth, if the water be only clear. Muddy it, and it matters little how shallow it be. This Bubbleton might be of the greatest service just now. You must present me to him, Burke."

"Most willingly. But first promise that you will not involve my poor friend in the snares of any plot. Heaven knows, his own faculties are quite sufficient for his mystification."

"Plot! snares! Why, what are you thinking of? But come, this is our halting place; and here we are, without my even having a moment to give you any account of my good aunt."

As he spoke he turned the handle of a large door, which led into a gloomy *porte cochère*, dimly illuminated by a single old-fashioned lantern. A fat, unwieldy-looking porter peeped at us from his den in the conciergerie, and then, having announced our approach by ringing a bell, he closed the shutter, and left us to find the way ourselves.

Ascending the great spacious stair, the wall alongside which was covered with family portraits—grim-looking heroes in mail, or prim dames, with bouquets in their jeweled hands—we reached a species of gallery, from which several doors led off; here a servant, dressed in deep black, was standing to announce the visitors.

As the servant preceded us along the corridor, I could not help feeling the contrast of this gloomy mansion, where every footstep had its own sad echo, with the gorgeous splendor of the Hôtel Clichy. Here, all was dark, cold, and dreary; there, everything was lightsome, cheerful, and elegant. What an emblem, to my thinking, were they both of the dynasties they represented. But the reflection was only made as one half of the folding-door was thrown open—the double-door was the prerogative of the blood-royal—and we were announced.

The apartment, a large somber-looking one, was empty, however, and we traversed this, and a second similar to it, our names being repeated as before, when, at length, the low tones of voices indicated our approach to the salon where the visitors were assembled.

Dimly lighted by a few lamps, far apart from each other, the apartment, as we entered, seemed even larger than it really was. At one end, around a huge antique fireplace, sat a group of ladies, whom, in a glance, I recognized as of the class so distinctively called dowager. They were seated in deep-cushioned fauteuils, and were mostly employed in some embroidery work, which they laid down each time they spoke, and resumed, less to prosecute the labor, than as it were from mere habit.

With all the insinuating gracefulness of a well-bred Frenchman, Duchesne approached the seat next the chimney, and respectfully kissed the hand extended toward him.

"Permit me, my dear aunt, to present a very intimate friend—Captain Burke," said he, as he led me forward.

At the mention of the word "Captain," I could perceive that every hand dropped its embroidery-frame, while the group stared at me with no feigned astonishment. But already the duchess had vouchsafed a very

polite speech, and motioned me to a seat beside her, while the chevalier insinuated himself among the rest, evidently bent on relieving the stiff and constrained reserve which pervaded the party. Not even his tact and worldly cleverness was equal to the task. The conversation, if such it could be called, was conducted almost in monosyllables; some stray question for an absent "Marquise," or a muttered reply concerning a late "Countess," was the burden—not an allusion even being made to any topic of the day, nor any phrase dropped which could show that the speakers were aware of the year, or the nation in which they lived and breathed.

It was an inexpressible relief to me when, gradually, some three or four other persons dropped in, some of them men, who, by their manner, seemed favorites of the party; and soon after the entrance of the servant with refreshments permitted a movement in the group, when I took the opportunity to stand up and approach Duchesne, as he bent over a table, listlessly turning over the leaves of a volume.

"Just think of the contradictions of human nature, Burke," said he, in a low whisper. "These are the receptions for which the new noblesse would give half their wealth—these melancholy visits of worn-out acquaintances—these sapless twigs of humanity are the envy of such houses as the 'Hôtel Clichy;' and to be admitted to these gloomy, motheaten salons, is a greater honor than an invitation to the Tuileries. So long as this exists, depend upon it, there is rottenness in the core of society. But come, let us take our leave; I see you are well wearied of all this: and now for an hour at Madame de Lacostellerie's—'en revanche.'"

As we came forward to make our adieux to the duchess, she rose from her seat, and, in so doing, her sleeve brushed against a small marble statue of Louis XVI., which, had I not opportunely caught it, would have fallen to the ground.

"Thank you, sir," said she, graciously. "You have prevented what I should have deemed a sad accident."

"Nay, more, aunt," said Duchesne, smiling; "he has shown his readiness to restore the Bourbon."

This speech, evidently spoken in jest, was repeated from lip to lip in the circle; and certainly I never felt my awkwardness more oppressive than when bowing to the party, whose elated looks and pleased countenances now were turned toward me.

"My poor, bashful friend," said Duchesne, as we descended the stair, "get rid of the habit of blushing with all convenient dispatch; it has marred more fortunes than pharo or bouillotte."

"This, assuredly, is well done!" said the Chevalier, as he looked around him, while we slowly ascended the stairs of the Hôtel Clichy. The brilliant light, almost rivaling day—the servants in gorgeous liveries—the air of wealth around on every side, so different from the sad-colored mansion of the Faubourg—while, as the opening doors permitted it to be heard, the sound of delicious music came wafted to the ear.

"I say, Burke," said he, stopping suddenly, and laying his hand on my arm, "this might content a man who has seen as much as I have; and the game is well worth the playing—so here goes!"

The first person I saw as we entered the ante-chamber was Bubbleton. He was the center of a knot of foreigners, who, whatever the topic, seemed highly amused at his discourse.

"That is your friend, yonder," said Duchesne. "He has the true type of 'John Bull' about him. Introduce me at once."

Duchesne scarcely permitted me to finish the introduction, when he extended his hand, and saluted Bubbleton with great cordiality, while the "General" did not suffer the ceremony to interrupt the flow of his eloquence, but continued to explain, in the most minute and circumstantial manner, the conditions of the new peace secretly concluded between France and England. The incredulity of the listeners was, I could perceive, considerably lessened by observing the deferential attention with which Duchesne listened, only interrupting the speaker by an occasional assent, or a passing question as to the political relations of some of the great powers.

"As to Prussia," said Bubbleton, pompously—"as to Prussia—"

"Well, what of Prussia, general?"

"We have our doubts on that subject," replied he, looking thoughtfully around him on the group, who, completely deceived by Duchesne's manner, now paid him marked attention.

"You'll not deprive her of Genoa, I trust," said the Chevalier, with a gravity almost inconceivable.

"That is done already," said Bubbleton. "For my own part, I told Lauderdale we were nothing without the Bosphorus—'the key of our house,' as your Emperor called it."

"He spoke of Russia, if I don't err," said Duchesne, with an insinuating air of correction.

"Pardon me, you are wrong. I know

Russia well. I traveled through the steppes of Metchezaromizce with Prince Drudeszitsch. We journeyed three hundred versts over his own estates, drawn on sledges by his serfs. You are aware they are always harnessed by the beard, which they wear long and plaited on purpose."

"That is toward the Crimea," interrupted the Chevalier.

"Precisely. I remember a curious incident which occurred one night as we approached 'Chitepsk;' you know Chitepsk? it is where they confine the state prisoners —a miserable, dreary tract, where the snow never melts, and the frost is so intense, you often see a drove of wolves glued fast to the snow by the feet, and howling fearfully—a strange sight, to be sure! Well, the night was falling, and a thin, cutting snowdrift beginning to drop, when Dru—I always call him so—short—said to me:

"'Bub'—he did the same to me—'Bub,' said he, 'do you remark that off-side leader?'

"'I see him,' said I.

"'Well, I have been watching the fellow since the last stage, and confound me if he has ever tightened a trace; and you see he is a right active one, notwithstanding. He capers along gayly enough. I'll touch him up a bit. And with that he gave a flourish of his knouted whip, and came down on him with a smarting cut. Lord, how he jumped!—five feet off the ground at one spring! and hang me if he didn't tear off his beard! There it was, hanging to the pole—a very shocking sight, I must confess, through Dru didn't seem to mind it. However, we were obliged to pull up, and get out the team. Well, you would not believe what we saw when we got down. You'd never guess who was the off leader —it was the Princess Odoznovskoi. Poor thing! the last time I saw her, before that, she was dancing in the Amber Palace with Prince Alexander. She and her husband had been banished to Chitepsk, and, as he was ill, she had put on a false beard, and was taking a short stage in his place."

I did not venture to wait for more, but, leaving Duchesne to make the most of the general, passed onward toward the salon, which already was rapidly filling with visitors.

The countess received me with more than wonted kindness of manner, and mademoiselle assumed a tone of actual cordiality I had never perceived before, while, as she exchanged greetings with me, she said, in a low voice:

"Let me speak with you, in the picture-gallery, in half an hour."

Before I could utter my assent she had passed on, and was speaking to another.

Somewhat curious to conceive what Mademoiselle de Lacostellerie might mean by her appointment in the gallery, I avoided the groups where I perceived my acquaintances were, and strolled negligently on toward the place of meeting. The gallery was but half lighted, as was customary on mere nights of visiting, and I found it quite deserted. I was sauntering slowly along, musing on the strange effects of the half-seen pictures, where all, save the most forcible and striking tints, were sombered down to blackness, when I heard a step behind me. I turned my head, and saw mademoiselle herself. She was alone, and, though she evidently had seen me, continued to walk onward, without speaking, toward a small boudoir, which occupied one angle of the gallery. I followed, and we entered it together.

There was something in the secret interview which, while it excited my curiosity, served at once to convince me that, had I indulged in any hope of succeeding to her affections, nothing could be less promising —this very proof of her confidence was the strongest earnest of her indifference. But, indeed, I had never any such expectation. My pride might have been flattered by such a supposition—my heart could never have sympathized in the emotion.

"We are alone here," said she, hurriedly, "and we may be missed; so let me be brief. It will seem strange that I should ask you to meet me here, but I could not help it. You alone, of all who frequent this, have never paid me the least attention, nor seemed disposed to flatter me. This leads me to trust you. I have no other reason but that, and because I am friendless." There was a tremulous sadness in the last word which went to my heart, and I could mark that her breathing was hurried and irregular for some few seconds after. "Will you promise me your friendship in what I ask, or, if that be too much, will you pledge yourself at least to secrecy? Enough, I am quite satisfied. Now, tell me, who is this Chevalier Duchesne?—what is he?"

I ran over in a few words all I knew of him, dwelling on whatever might most redound to his credit—his distinguished military career—his undoubted talent—and, lastly, alluding to his family, to which I conceived the question might most probably apply.

"Oh, it is not that," said she vehemently, "I wish to know. I care not for his bravery, nor his birth either. Tell me,

what are the sources of his power—how is he admitted everywhere—intimate with every one, with influence over all? Why does Fouché fear, and Talleyrand admit him? I know they do this—and can you give me no clue, however faint, to guide me? The Count de Lacostellerie was refused the Spanish contract—Duchesne interferes, and it is given him. There is a difficulty about a card for a private concert at St. Cloud—Duchesne sends it. Nor does it end here. *You* know," here her voice assumed a forced distinctness, as though it cost her an effort to speak calmly, "of his duel with the Prince Dobretski; but perhaps you may not know how he has obtained an imperial order for his recall to St. Petersburg?"

"Of that I never heard. Can it be possible?"

"Have you, then, never tasted of his arbitrary power," said she, smiling half superciliously, "that these things seem strange to you? or does he work so secretly that even those most intimate with him are in ignorance? But this must be so." She paused for a second or two, and then went on: "And now, brief as our acquaintance with him has been, see what influence he already possesses over my mother. Even to her I dare not whisper my suspicions; while to you, a stranger," added she with emotion, "I must speak my fears."

"But are they not groundless?" said I, endeavoring to calm the agitation she suffered from. "In all that you have mentioned, I can but trace the devotion of one seeking to serve, not injure—to be loved, not dreaded."

Scarce had I said these words, when I heard a noise behind me, and, before I could turn round, Duchesne stood beside us.

"I implore your pardon, mademoiselle," said he, in a voice of well-affected timidity, "nor should I venture to interrupt so interesting a conference, but that the Countess de Lacostellerie had sent me to look for you."

"You could scarcely have come more *à propos*, sir; the conversation was entirely of yourself," said she, haughtily, as if in defiance of him.

"How could I possibly have merited so great an honor, mademoiselle," replied he, bowing with the deepest respect; "or is it to the kindness of a *friend* I am indebted for such interest."

There was an evident sneer in the way he uttered the word "friend," while a side-long glance he gave beneath his deep eyelashes was still more decisive of his feeling.

"Few probably owe more to their friends than the Chevalier Duchesne," said Mademoiselle, tauntingly, as she took my arm to return to the salon.

"True, most true," replied he, with a low and deferential bow, "and I hope I am not the man to forget my debts to either friends or enemies."

I turned round rapidly as he said this; our eyes met, and we exchanged a short, brief glance of open defiance. His, however, as quickly changed, and an easy smile of careless indifference succeeded, as he lounged after us toward the salon, where now a considerable number of persons were assembled, and a more than usual excitement prevailed. Some generals of the imperial staff were also there, and the rumor ran that the negotiations with England had been suddenly interrupted, and that the negotiators had demanded their passports.

"That is not all, madame," said an old officer to the countess; "the accounts from Mayence are threatening. Large bodies of Prussian troops are reported on the march from the eastward. The telegraph has been actively at work since noon, and several couriers have been sent off from the War Office.

"What is to come next?" said the Countess, sighing, as she thought of Paris once more deserted by its gay court and brilliant crowd of officers, the only society of the period.

"What next, madame?" said Duchesne, taking up the word. "*Parbleu!* the thing is easily told: a conscription, a march, a bivouac, and a battle will form act the first; then, a victory, and a bulletin, and an imperial edict, showing that Prussia, both by her language and geographical position, was intended by Providence to belong to France—that Prussians have no dearer wish than to be thrashed and taxed—the honor of becoming a portion of the Grande Nation being an ample recompense for any misfortune."

"And so it is, monsieur," broke in a bluff, hard-featured veteran, whose coarse and weather-beaten traits bespoke one risen from the ranks. "He is no Frenchman who says otherwise."

"To your good health, colonel," said Duchesne, as he lifted a glass of champagne to his lips. "Such patriotism is really refreshing in our degenerate days. I wish you every success in your campaign; though what is to reward your valor in that miserable land of beer and Protestantism I cannot possibly conceive."

"To-morrow, let me see you to-morrow,

in the afternoon," said Mademoiselle, in a whisper, as she passed close to me.

As I nodded in acknowledgment, Duchesne turned slightly around, and I saw in his eyes he had overheard the words, though uttered in a mere whisper. Still he went on:

"As for us who remain ingloriously behind you, we have nothing to do but to read your exploits in the *Moniteur*, and would to Heaven the worthy editor would print his battles in better fashion! The whole page usually looks more like a beaten than a conquering army; wounded vowels and broken consonants at every step, and the capital letters awkward, hard-featured fellows, as though risen from the ranks."

"*Tonnerre de Dieu*, sir! do you mean an insult to me?" said the old colonel, in a voice which, though intended for a whisper, was heard over the whole circle.

"An insult, my dear colonel? nothing within a thousand leagues of such. I was only speaking of the 'type' of our army, which may be very efficient, but is scarcely too good-looking."

No words can convey the sarcastic tone in which the speech was delivered, nor the mortification of the indignant colonel, who felt, but knew not how to reply to, such a taunt. Happily, Madame de Lacostellerie interposed, and, by skillfully changing the topic of conversation, averted further unpleasantness.

My desire to learn something accurately as to the state of events, made me anxious to reach my quarters, and I took the first opportunity of quitting the salon. As I passed through the outer room, Duchesne was standing against a sideboard, holding a glass in his hand. It was necessary that I should pass him closely, and I was preparing to salute him with the distant courtesy of our present acquaintance, when he said, in his former tone of easy raillery,

"Going so early? Won't you have a glass of wine before you leave?"

"No, I thank you," said I, coldly, and going on toward the door.

"Nor wait for the concert—Grassini will be here in half an hour?"

I shook my head in negation, and as I passed out I heard him humming, with an emphasis which there was no mistaking, the couplet of a popular song of the day, which concluded thus:

"To-day for me,
To-morrow for thee,
But will that to-morrow ever be?"

That Duchesne intended to challenge me seemed now almost certain, and I ran over in my mind the few names of those I could ask to be my friends on such an occasion, but without being able to satisfy myself on the subject. A moment's recollection might have taught me that it was a maxim with the chevalier never to send a message, but, in every case, to make the adversary the aggressor; he had told me so over and over himself. That, however, did not occur to me at the moment, and I walked onward, thinking of our meeting. Could I have known what was passing in *his* mind, I should have spared many serious and some sad thoughts to my own.

CHAPTER LXV.

A SUDDEN DEPARTURE.

So firmly had I persuaded myself, on my way homeward, that Duchesne intended a duel with me, that I dreamed of it all night, and awoke in the morning perfectly convinced that the event was prearranged between us. Now, although the habits of the service I lived in had, in a great measure, blunted the feelings I once entertained toward dueling, still enough of detestation of the practice remained to make my anticipations far from satisfactory; besides, I knew that Duchesne had in reality no cause of quarrel with me, but from misapprehension alone could demand a meeting, which our military code of honor always decided should be accepted first, and inquired into afterward. I regretted also, and deeply too, that I should appear to his eyes in an unworthy part, as though betraying the interests he had confided to me. There were, as I have said, many things I liked not in the chevalier: the insatiable desire he felt for revenge where he had once been injured; the spirit of intrigue he cherished; and, perhaps more than either, I shunned the scoffing habit he had of depreciating what every one around him loved or respected—of stripping off every illusion which made life valuable, and reducing to the miserable standard of mere selfish gratification all that was great, or noble, or venerable. Already had his evil influence done me injury in this way; even now I felt, that, of the few day-dreams I once indulged in, he had robbed me of the best, and reduced me to the sad reflection which haunted me throughout my whole career, and embittered every passing enjoyment of my life: I mean, the sorrowful thought of being an alien—of having but the hireling's part in

that career of glory which others followed—that I alone could have no thrill of patriotism, when all around me were exulting in its display—that I had neither home nor country! Oh, if they who feel, or fancy that they feel, the wrongs and oppressions of misgovernment at home—who, with high aspirations after liberty, and holy thoughts for the happiness of their fellow-men, war against the despotism which would repress the one, or the cruelty which would despise the other—if they could only foresee that, in changing allegiance, they did but shift the burden, not rid themselves of the load; that the service of a foreign land is no requital for the loss of every feeling which ties a man to kindred and to friends; which links his manhood with his youth, his age with both; which gives him, in the language of his forefathers, a sympathy with the land that bore them—if they could know and feel these things; if they could learn how, in surrendering them, they have made themselves such mere waifs and strays upon life's ocean, that objects of purely selfish and personal advancement must be to them for evermore in place of the higher and more enobling thoughts which mix with other men's ambitions—they might hesitate ere they left home and country to fight for the cause of the stranger.

If such thoughts found entrance into *my* heart, how must they have dwelt in many another's? I, who had neither family nor kindred—who, from earliest childhood, had never tasted the sweets of affection, nor known the blessings of a father's love—and yet, scarce a day crept by without some thought of the far-away land of my birth, some memory of its hills and valleys—of its green banks and changeful skies; and in my dreams, some long-forgotten air would bring me back in memory to the cottier's fireside, where around the red blazing turf were seated the poor but happy peasantry, beguiling the time with song or story—now telling of the ancient greatness of their country—now breathing a hope of its one day prosperity.

"Captain Burke's quarters?" said a voice without. At the same instant, the jingling of spurs and the clank of a sabre bespoke the questioner as a soldier. My door opened, and an officer in the full dress of the staff entered. As I requested him to be seated, I already anticipated the object of his visit, which he seemed determined to open in most diplomatic fashion; for, the first salutations over, he began coolly to ransack his sabretasche, and search among a heap of papers which crowded it.

"Ah! here it is," said he, at length. "I ask your pardon for all this delay. But, of course, you guess the reason of my being here?"

"I must confess I suspect it," said I, with a smile.

"Oh, that I am certain of. These things never are secrets very long; nor, for my part, do I think there is any need there should be. I conclude you are quite prepared?"

"You shall find me so."

"So the minister said," replied he; while, once more, his eyes were buried in the recesses of the sabretasche, leaving me in the most intense astonishment at the last few words. That the minister, whoever he might be, should know of, and, as it seemed, acquiesce in my fighting a duel, was a puzzle I could make nothing of.

"Here is the note I looked for," said he, as he took forth a small slip of paper, written on both sides. "May I beg you will take down the details; they are brief, but important."

"You may trust my memory with them," said I, rather surprised at the circumstantial style of his conduct.

"As you please; so pay attention for one moment, while I read: 'Captain Burke, of the Eighth, will proceed by extra post to Mayence, visiting the following garrisons *en route*'—here come the names, which you can copy—'where his attention will be specially directed to the points marked A., B. and—'

"Forgive my interrupting you, but really I am unaware of what you are alluding to. You are not here on the part of the Chevalier Duchesne?"

"The Chevalier Duchesne? Duchesne?—No. This is a war dispatch, from the minister. You must set out in two hours, I thought you said you were prepared."

"Hem! there has been a mistake here," said I, endeavoring to remember how far I might committed myself by any unguarded expression.

"All my fault, Captain Burke," said he, frankly. "I should have been more explicit at first. But I really thought from something—I forget precisely what now—that you knew of the movement on the frontier, and were, in fact, prepared for your orders. Heaven knows how far our mystification might have gone on; for when you spoke of Duchesne—the ex-captain of the Imperial Guard, I suppose—"

"Yes, what of him?"

"Why, it so chanced that he was closeted with the minister this morning, and only minutes before your orders were

made out. But, come, neither of us can well spare more time. This is your dispatch for the commandant of the troops at Mayence, to whom you will report verbally on the equipment of the smaller bodies of men visited *en route*. I shall give you my note, which, though hurriedly written, will assist your memory. Above all things, get speedily on the road, and reach Mayence by Wednesday. Half an hour's speed in times like these is worth a whole year in one's way to promotion; and so, now, good-by!"

I stood for several minutes after he left the room so confused and astonished, that had not the huge envelope, with its great seal of office, confirmed the fact, I could have believed the whole a mere trick of my imagination.

The jingle of the postilion's equipment in the court beneath now informed me that a government *calèche* stood awaiting me, and I speedily began my preparations for the road.

One thought filled my mind to the exclusion of all others. It was Duchesne's influence on which my fortune now rested. The last few words he uttered as I left the salon were ringing in my ears, and here was their explanation. This rapid journey was planned by him to remove me from Paris, where, possibly, he supposed my knowledge of him might be inconvenient, and where, in my absence, his designs might be prosecuted with more success. Happy as I felt to think that a personal rencontre was not to occur between us, my self-love was deeply wounded at the thought of how much I was in this man's power, and how arbitrarily he decided on the whole question of my destiny. If my pride were gratified on the one hand by my having excited the chevalier's vengeance, it was offended on the other by feeling how feeble would my efforts prove to oppose the will of an antagonist who worked with such secret and such powerful means.

The same philosophy which so often stood my part in life, here came to my aid—to act well my own part, and leave the result to time; and so, with this patient resolve, I mentally bid defiance to my adversary, and set out from Paris.

The ardent feeling which filled my heart on the approach of my first campaign, was now changed into a soldierly sense of duty, which, if less enthusiastic, was a steadier and more sustaining motive. I felt whatever distinctions it should be my lot to win must be gained in the camp, not in the court—that my place was rather where squadrons were charging, and squares were kneeling, than among the intrigues of the capital, its wiles and its plottings. In the one, I might win an honorable name—in the other, I should be but the dupe of more designing heads, and less scrupulous hearts, than my own.

Early on the third morning, from the time of my leaving Paris, I reached Mayence. The garrisons which I visited on the road seldom detained me above half an hour. The few questions which I had to ask respecting the troops were soon and easily answered; and, in most instances, the officers in command had been apprised that their reports would be required, and came ready at once to afford the information.

The disposable force at that time was not above eighty thousand new levies, the conscripts of the past year, who, although well drilled and equipped, had never undergone the fatigues of a campaign, nor met an enemy in the field. But beyond the frontier were the veteran legions of the Austrian campaign, who, while advancing on their return to France, were suddenly halted, and now only awaited the Emperor's orders whither they should carry their victorious standards.

As at the outbreak of all Napoleon's wars, the greatest uncertainty prevailed regarding the direction of the army, and in what place, and against what enemy, the first blow was to be struck.

The Russian army, defeated and routed at Austerlitz, was said to be once more in the field, reorganized and strengthened. Austria, it was rumored, was faltering in her fealty. But the military preparations of Prussia were no longer a secret; and to many it seemed as if, as in the days of the Republic, France was about to contend, single-handed, against the whole of Europe. In Prussia, the warlike enthusiasm of the people was carried to the very highest pitch. The Court, the aristocracy, but, more powerful than either, the press, stimulated national courage, by recalling to their minds the famous deeds of the Great Frederick, and bidding them remember that "Rossbach" was won against an army of Frenchmen. The students—a powerful and an organized class—stood foremost in this patriotic movement. Their excited imaginations warmed by the spirit-stirring songs of Körner and Uhland, and glowing with the instincts of that chivalry which is a German's birthright, they spread over the country, calling upon their fellow-subjects to arise and defend the "Vaterland" against the aggression of the tyrant. So unequivocally was this feeling expressed, that even before the negotiations had lost their pacific character,

the youthful aristocracy of Berlin used to go and sharpen their swords at the door-sill of the French ambassador at Berlin.

To the exalted tone of patriotic enthusiasm the beautiful Queen of Prussia most powerfully contributed. The crooked and tortuous windings of diplomatic intrigue found no sympathy in her frank and generous nature. Relying on the native energy of German character, she bade an open and a bold defiance to her country's enemy, and was content to stake all on the chances of a battle.

The colder and less confident mind of the king was rather impelled by the current of popular opinion than induced by conviction to the adoption of this daring policy. But once engaged in it, he exhibited the rarest fortitude and the most unyielding courage.

Such, in brief, was the condition of that people, such the warlike spirit they breathed, when, in the autumn of 1806, the cry of war resounded from the shores of the Baltic to the frontiers of Bohemia.

Never was the effective strength of the Prussian army more conspicuous. Their cavalry; in number and equipment, was confessedly among the first, if not the very first, in Europe; while the artillery maintained a reputation which, since the days of Frederick, had proclaimed it the most perfect arm of the service. The Emperor knew these things well, and did not undervalue them; and it was with a very different impression of his present enemy from that which filled his mind in the Austrian campaign, that he remarked to Soult: "We shall want the mattock in this war." Thereby implying that, against such an adversary, field-works and intrenchments would be needed, as well as the dense array of squadrons, and the bristling walls of infantry.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE SUMMIT OF THE LANDGRAFENBERG.

After a brief delay at Mayence, it was with sincere pleasure I received my orders to push forward to the advanced posts at Wetzlar, where General d'Auvergue was with his division. Already the battalions were crossing the Rhine, and directing their steps to different rendezvous along the Prussian frontier; some, pressing on eastward, where the Saxon territory joins the Prussian; others, directly to the north, and taking up positions distant by a short day's march from each other. The same urgent haste which characterized the opening of the Austrian campaign a year before, was here conspicuous; many of the corps being obliged to march seven and eight leagues in the day, and frequently whole companies being forwarded in wagons drawn by six or eight horses, in order to come up with the main body of their regiments. Every road eastward was covered with some fragment of the army. Now an infantry corps of young conscripts, glowing with enthusiasm, and eager for the fray, would cheer the *calèche* in which I traveled, and which, as indicating a staff officer, was surmounted by a small flag with an eagle. Now, it was the hoarse challenge of an outpost, some veteran of Bernadotte's army, which occupied the whole line of country from Dusseldorf to Nuremberg. Pickets of dragoons, with troops of led horses for remounts, hurried on, and long lines of wagons crammed the road.

At last I joined General d'Auvergne, who, with all the ardor of the youngest soldier, was preparing for the march. The hardy veteran, disdaining the use of a carriage, rode each day at the head of his column, and went through the most minute detail of regimental duty with the colonels under his command.

From whatever cause proceeding I knew not, but it struck me as strange that he never alluded to my visit to Paris, nor once spoke to me of the countess; and while this reserve on his part slightly wounded me, I felt relieved from the embarrassment the mere mention of her name would cause me, and was glad when our conversation turned on the events of the war. Nor was he, save in this respect, less cordial than ever—manifesting the greatest pleasure at the prospect the war would open to my advancement, and kindly presaging for me a success I scarcely dared to hope for.

"Nor is the hour distant," said he to me one morning in the latter end of September, as we rode side by side; "the grand movement is begun."

Augereau, with his powerful *corps d'armée* of twenty thousand, pressed on from Frankfort and Mayence; Bernadotte moved up on his flank from Nuremberg and Bamberg; Davoust hastened, by forced marches, from the Danube; while Soult and Ney, with a strong force, remained in the south, and in observation on the Austrian frontier. Further to the north again were the new levies and the whole Imperial Guard, strengthened by four thousand additional men, which, together with Murat's cavalry, formed a vast line embracing the Prussian frontier on the west and south,

and converging with giant strides toward the very heart of the kingdom. Still—mid all the thunders of marching squadrons, and the din of advancing legions—diplomatists interchanged their respective assurances of a peaceful issue to their differences, and politely conveyed the most satisfactory sentiments of mutual esteem.

On the 1st of September the Emperor left Paris; but, even then, covering his designs by an affected hope of peace, he was accompanied by the Empress and her suite to Mayence, where all the splendor of a court was suddenly displayed amid the pomp and preparation of war. On the 6th, he started by daybreak; relays of horses were in waiting along the road to Wetzlar, and with all speed he hastened forward to Bamberg, where he issued his grand proclamation to the army.

With all his accustomed eloquence he represented to the army the insulting demands of Prussia, and called on them, as at Austerlitz, to reply to such a menace by one tremendous blow of victory, which should close the campaign.

"Soldiers!" said he, "you were about to return to France, to enjoy the well-won repose after all your victories, but an enemy is in the field. The road to Paris is no longer open to you—neither you nor I can tread it, save under an arch of triumph."

The day which succeeded the issue of this proclamation, a cavalry affair occurred at the advance posts, in which the Prussians were somewhat the victors. Two days later, a courier arrived at the Imperial head-quarters with the account of another and more important action, between the grenadiers of Lannes and a part of Suchet's corps, against the advanced guard of Prince Hohenlohe, commanded by the most daring general in the Prussian service, Prince Louis. A cavalry combat, which lasted for near an hour, closed this brief but bloody encounter with the death of the brave prince, who, refusing to surrender, was run through the body by the sabre of a quartermaster of the 10th Hussars.

General d'Auvergne's brigade had no share in this memorable action, for on the 9th we were marched to Rudolstadt, some miles to the left of the scene of the encounter: but having made a demonstration in that quarter, were speedily recalled, and ordered with all haste to cross the Saale, and move on to the eastward. It was now that Napoleon's maneuvers became apparent. The same intrigue which succeeded at Ulm was again to be employed here: the enemy's flank was to be turned, the communication with his reinforcements cut off, and a battle engaged, in which defeat must prove annihilation. Such, then, was the complete success of the Emperor's movements, that on the 12th the French army was posted with the rear upon the Elbe, while the Prussians occupied a line between them and the Rhine. This masterly movement at once compelled the enemy to fall back and concentrate his troops around Jena and Weimar, which, from that instant, Napoleon pronounced must be the scene of a great battle.

All this detail I have been obliged to force on my reader, and now again return to my story.

On the morning of the 13th, Murat appeared for the first time at our head-quarters, below Jena, and, after a short consultation with the staff, our squadrons were formed and ordered to push on with haste toward Jena.

Everything now showed that the decisive hour could not be distant: couriers passed and repassed; messengers and orderlies met us at every step; while, as is ever the case, the most contradictory rumors were circulated about the number and position of the enemy. As we neared Lausnitz, however, we learned that the whole Prussian army occupied the "plateau" of Jena, save a corps of twenty thousand men which were stationed at Auerstädt. From the elevated spot we occupied, the columns of Marshal Bernadotte's division could be seen marching to the eastward. A halt was now commanded, and the troops prepared their bivouacs, when, as night was falling, a staff officer rode up, with orders from the Emperor himself to push on without delay for Jena.

The road was much cut by the passage of cavalry and wagons, and, as the night was dark, our pace was occasionally impeded. I was riding with one of the leading squadrons, when General d'Auvergne directed me to take an orderly with me, and proceed in advance to make arrangements for the quarters of the men at Jena. Selecting a German soldier as my guide, I dashed forward, and soon left the squadron out of hearing. We had not gone far, when I remarked, from the tramp of the horses, that we were upon an earthen road, and not on the pavement. I questioned my orderly, but he was positive there had been no turning since we started. I paid no more attention to the circumstance, but rode on, hard as ever. At last the clay became deeper and heavier, the sides of the way closer, and all the appearance, as well as the gloom would allow us to guess, rath-

er those of a by-road than the regular "*chaussée.*" To return would have been hopeless; the darkness gave no prospect of detecting at what precise spot we had left the main road, and so I determined to make my way straight onward, at all hazards.

After about an hour's fast trotting, the orderly, who rode some paces in advance, called out, "A light!" and then, the moment after, he cried, "There are several lights yonder!" I reined in my horse at once, for the thought struck me that we had come down upon the Prussian lines. Giving my horse to the soldier, with orders to follow me noiselessly at a little distance, I walked on for above a mile, my eyes steadily fixed upon the lights, which moved from place to place, and showed, by their taper glare, that they were not watch-fires. At length, I gained a little ridge of the ground, and could distinctly see that it was a line of guns and artillery wagons, endeavoring to force their way through a narrow ravine; a few minutes after, I heard the sounds of French, and, relieved of all apprehensions, I mounted my horse, and soon came up with them.

They were four troops of Lannes's artillery, which, by a mistake similar to my own, had left the high-road, and entered one of the field-tracks, which thus led them astray; and here they were, jammed up in a narrow gorge, unable to get back or forward. The officer in command was a young colonel, who was completely overwhelmed by his misfortune; for he informed me that the whole artillery of the division was following him, and would inevitably be involved in the same mishap. The poor fellow, who doubtless would have faced the enemy without a particle of fear, was now so horrified by the event, that he ran wildly from place to place, ordering and counter-ordering every instant, and actually increasing the confusion by his own excitement. Some of the leading trains were unharnessed, and efforts made to withdraw the guns from their position; but the axles were, on both sides, imbedded in the rock, and seemed to defy every effort to disengage them.

At this moment, when the confusion had reached its height, and the horses were unharnessed from the guns, the men standing in groups around, or shouting wildly to each other, a sullen silence spread itself over the whole, and a loud, stern voice called out,

"Who commands this division?"

"General Latour," was the answer.

"Where is he?" said the first speaker, so close to my ear that I started round, and saw the short, square figure of a man in a great-coat, holding a heavy whip in his hand.

"With the main body at the rear."

"Cannoneers, dismount!" said the other. "Bring the torches to the front."

Scarcely was the order obeyed, when the light of the firewood fell upon his features, and I saw it was the Emperor himself. In an instant the whole scene was changed. The park tools were taken out, working parties formed, and the ravine began to echo to the strong blows of the brawny arms; while Napoleon, with a blazing torch in his hand, stood by to light their labors.

Giving directions to the under-officers and the men, he never deigned a word to the officers, who now stood trembling around him, and were gradually joined by several more, who came up with the remainder of the train.

I think I can still see that pale, unmoved face, which, as the light flickered upon it, gazed steadfastly at the working party. Not a syllable escaped him, save once, when he muttered half to himself:

"And this was the first battery to open its fire to-morrow!"

General Savary stood at his side, but never dared to address him. Too well he knew that his deepest anger showed itself by silence. By degrees the granite wall gave way, the axles once more became free, and the horses were again harnessed. The gun-carriages moved slowly through the ravine, nor did the Emperor quit the spot before the greater part of the train passed. Then mounting his horse, he turned toward Jena; and, notwithstanding the utter darkness of the night, he rode at full speed. Following the clatter of the horse's hoofs, I rode on, and in less than an hour reached a small cluster of houses, where a cavalry picket was placed, and several large fires were lighted, beside which, at small tables, sat above a dozen staff officers busily writing dispatches. The Emperor halted but for a second or two, and then dashed forward again; and I soon perceived we were ascending a steep hill, covered with ferns and brushwood. We had not gone far, when a single aide-de-camp who accompanied him turned his horse's head and rode rapidly down the mountain again.

Napoleon was now alone, some fifty paces in front. I could see the faint outline through the darkness, my sight guided by my hearing to the spot. His pace, wherever the ground permitted, was rapid; but constantly he was obliged to hold in, and pick his steps among the stones and dwarf wood

that covered the mountain. Never shall I cease to remember the strange sensations I felt as I followed him up that steep ascent. There was he, the greatest monarch of the universe, alone, wending his solitary way in darkness, his thoughts bent on the great event before him—the tremendous conflict in which thousands must fall. There was a sense of awe in the thought of being so near to one on whose slightest word the destiny of nations seemed to hang; and I could not look on the dark object before me without a superstitious feeling, deeper than fear itself, for that mightiest of men.

My thoughts permitted my taking no note of time, and I know not how long it was before we reached the crest of the hill, over whose bleak surface a cold, cutting wind was blowing. It seemed as if a great table-land extended now for some distance on every side, over which the Emperor took his way as though accustomed to the ground. While I was wondering at the certainty with which he appeared to determine on his road, I remarked the feeble flickering of a light far away toward the horizon, and by which it was evident he guided his steps. As we rode on, several watch-fires could be seen toward the north-west, stretching away to a great distance, and throwing a yellowish glare in the dark sky above them. Suddenly I perceived the Emperor halt and dismount, and as speedily again he was in the saddle; but now his path took a different direction, and diverged considerably to the southward. Curious to learn what might have caused his change of direction, I rode up to the spot, and got off. It was the embers of a watch-fire; they were almost extinguished, but still, as the horse's hoof struck the wood, a few sparks were emitted. It was this, then, which altered his course; and once more he pressed his horse to speed. A steep ascent of some hundred yards lay before us now, but, on gaining the top, a brilliant spectacle of a thousand watch-fires met the eye—so close did they seem, it looked like one great volcanic crater blazing on the mountain-top; while above, the lurid glow reddened the black sky, and melted away into the darkness in clouds of faint yellowish hue. Far, very far away, and to the north, stretched another much longer line of fires, but at great intervals apart, and occupying, as well as I might guess, about two leagues in extent. Several smaller fires dotted the plain, marking the outpost positions; and it was not difficult to trace the different lines of either army even by these indications.

While I yet looked, the Emperor had gained a short distance in advance of me, and suddenly I heard the hoarse challenge of a sentry, calling out, "*Qui vive?*" Buried in his own thoughts—perhaps far too deeply lost in meditation to hear the cry—Napoleon never replied, nor slackened his speed. "*Qui vive?*" shouted the voice again; and, before I could advance, the sharp bang of a musket-shot rang out; another and another followed, and then a roll of fire swept along the plain, happily not in the direction of the Emperor: but already he had thrown himself from his horse, and lay flat upon the ground. Not a moment was now to be lost. I dashed my spurs into my jaded horse, and rode forward, calling aloud, at the top of my voice—"The Emperor—the Emperor!" Still, the panic overbore my words, and another discharge was given; with one bullet I was struck in the shoulder, another killed my horse; but, springing to my legs in an instant, I rushed on, repeating my cry; before I could do more than point to the spot, Napoleon came forward, leading his horse by the bridle. His step was slow and measured, and his face—for many a torchlight was now gathered to the place—was calm and tranquil.

"Ye are well upon the alert, *mes enfants*," said he, with a smile; "see that ye be as ready with your fire to-morrow!" A wild cheer answered these words, while he continued: "These are the new levies, lieutenant—the Guards would have had more patience. Where is the officer who followed me?"

"Here, sire," said I, endeavoring to conceal the appearance of being wounded.

"Mount, sir, and accompany me to head-quarters."

"My horse is killed, sire."

"Yes, *parbleu!*" said a young soldier, who had not learned much respect before his superiors; "and he has a ball in his neck himself."

"Are you wounded?" said the Emperor, with a quickness in his manner.

"A mere flesh-wound in the arm—of no consequence, sire."

"Let the surgeon of the detachment see to this at once, lieutenant," said he to the officer of the party; "and, do you come to head-quarters when you are able." With this, the Emperor mounted again, and, in a few seconds more, was lost to our sight.

"*Ventrebleu!*" said the old Lieutenant, who had served without promotion from the first battles of the Republic, "you'll be a colonel for that scratch on your epaulette, if we only beat the Prussians to-morrow; and here am I, with eight wounds

from lead and steel, and the Petit Caporal never bade me visit him at his bivouac. Come, come, I don't wish to be unfriendly —it's not *your* fault, it's only *my* bad fortune. And here comes the surgeon."

The lieutenant was right—the epaulette had the worst of the adventure—and, in half an hour, I proceeded on my way to head-quarters.

CHAPTER LXVII.

L'HOMME ROUGE.

On my way to the Imperial quarters, I fell in with some squadrons of our dragoons, from whom I learned that General d'Auvergne had just received orders to repair to the Emperor's bivouac, to which several officers in command were also summoned. As I saw, therefore, that I could have no prospect of meeting the Emperor, I resolved merely to hold myself in readiness, should he—which seemed little likely —think of me; and accordingly I took up my post with some young under-officers of our brigade, at a huge fire, where a species of canteen had been established, and coffee and corn-brandy were served out to all comers.

The recent escape of Napoleon at the outposts was already known far and near, and formed the great topic of conversation, in which, I felt hurt to remark, no mention of the part I took was ever made, although there were at least a dozen different versions of the accident. In one, his majesty was represented to have rode down upon, and sabred the advanced picket; in another, it was the Prussians who fired, he having penetrated within their lines to reconnoiter—each agreeing in the one great fact, that the feat was something which no one, save himself, could have done or thought of. As for me, I felt it was not my part to speak of the incident at all, until his majesty should first do so. I listened, therefore, with due patience, and some amusement, to the various narratives about me, which served to show me, by one slight instance, the measure of that exaggeration with which the Emperor's name was ever treated, and convinced me that it required not time nor distance to color every incident of his life with the strongest hues of romance. The topic was a fruitful and favorite one, and certainly few subjects could with more propriety season the hours around a bivouac fire than the exploits of the Emperor Napoleon.

Among those whose reminiscences went furthest back, was an old sergeant-major of infantry—a seared, and seamed, and weather-beaten little fellow—who, from fatigues and privations, was dried up to a mass of tendons and fibres. This little man presented one of those strange mixtures with which the army abounded—the shrewdest common sense on all ordinary topics, with a most credulous faith in any story where Napoleon's name occurred. It seemed, indeed, as though that one element, occurring in any tale, dispensed at once with the rules which should govern belief in common cases.

The invulnerability of the Emperor was, with him, a fruitful theme; and he teemed with anecdotes of the Egyptian and Italian campaigns, in which it was incontestably shown that neither shot nor shell had any effect upon him. But of all the superstitions regarding Napoleon, none had such complete hold on his imagination, nor was more implicitly believed by him, than the story of that little "Red Man," who, it was asserted, visited the Emperor the night before each great battle, and arranged with him the maneuvers of the succeeding day.

"L'Homme Rouge," as he was called, was an article of faith in the French army that few of the soldiers ever thought of disputing. Some, from pure credulity—some, from the force of example—and some, again, from indolence, believed in this famed personage; but even the veriest scoffer on more solemn subjects would have hesitated ere he ventured to assail the almost universal belief in this supernatural agency. The Emperor's well-known habit of going out alone, to visit pickets and outposts on the eve of a battle, was a circumstance too favorable to this superstition not to be employed in its defense. Besides, it was well known that he spent hours by himself, when none even of the marshals had access to him; and on these occasions it was said "L'Homme Rouge" was with him. Sentinels had been heard to declare that they could overhear angry words passing between the Emperor and his guest—that threats had been interchanged between them; and, on one occasion, it was said that the "Red Man" went so far as to declare that, if his advice were neglected, Napoleon should lose the battle, see his artillery fall into the hands of the enemy, and behold the "Guard" capitulate.

"*Mille tonnerres!* what are you saying?" broke in the little man, to the grim old soldier who was relating this. "You know nothing of 'L'Homme Rouge'—not a word—how should you? But *I* served in the Twenty-second of the Line—old Mon-

goton's corps—the 'Faubourg Devils,' as they were called. *He* knew him well. It was 'L'Homme Rouge' had him shot for treason at Cairo. I was one of the company drawn for his execution; and when he knelt down on the grass, he held up his hand this way, and cried out:

"'Voltigeurs of the Line, hear me! You have all known me many years: you have seen whether I could face the enemy like a man; and you can tell whether I cared for the heaviest charge that ever shook a square. You know, also, whether I was true to our general. Well, it is "L'Homme Rouge" who has brought me to this. And now—carry arms!—all together—come, *mes enfants*, try it again—carry arms!—ay, that's better—present arms!—fire!'

"*Morbleu!* the word was not well out when he was dead, and there, through the smoke—as plain as I see you now—I saw the figure of a little fellow, dressed in scarlet—feather and boots all the same!—he was standing over the corpse, and threatening it with his hands; and that," said he, in a solemn voice, "that was 'L'Homme Rouge.'"

This anecdote was conclusive. There was no gainsaying the assertions of a man who had, with his own eyes, seen the celebrated "Red Man;" and from that instant he enjoyed a decided monopoly of everything that concerned his private history.

According to the sergeant-major's version—and who could venture to contradict him?—"L'Homme Rouge" was not the confidential adviser and friendly counselor of the Emperor, but, on the contrary, his evil genius—perpetually employed in thwarting his plans and opposing his views. Each seemed to have his hour of triumph alternately. Now it was the Red Man, now Napoleon, who stood in the ascendant. Fortune for a long period had been constant to the Emperor, and victory crowned every battle. This had, it seemed, greatly chagrined "L'Homme Rouge," who, for years past, had not been seen nor heard of. The last tradition of him was a story told by one of the sentinels on guard at the general's quarters at Mount Tabor.

It was midnight—all was still and silent in the camp. The soldiers slept as men sleep before a battle—when the old grenadier who walked his short post before General Bonaparte's tent heard a quick tread approaching him. "*Qui vive?*" cried he; but there was no reply.—"*Qui vive?*" called the sentry once more; but as he did so he leaped backward and brought his musket to the charge, for just then something brushed close by him and entered the tent.

For a moment or two he doubted what should be done. Should he turn out the guard? It was only to be laughed at—that would never do. But what if it really were somebody who had penetrated to the general's quarters? As this thought struck him, he kept up close to the tent, and there, true enough, he heard the voices of two persons speaking.

"Ah! thou here?" said Bonaparte. "I scarce expected to see thee so far from France!"

"Alas!" said the other with a deep sigh, "what land is now open to me—or whither shall I fly to? I took refuge in Brussels—well, what should I see one morning, but the tall shakos of your grenadiers coming up the steep street. I fled to Holland—you were there the day after. 'Come,' thought I, 'he's moving northward, I'll try the other extreme;' so I started for the Swiss. *Sacrebleu!* the roll of your confounded drums resounded through every valley. I reached the banks of the Po—your troops were there the same evening. I pushed for Rome—they were preparing your quarters, which you occupied that night. Away, then, I start once more; I cross mountains, and rivers, and seas, and gain the desert at last. I thank my fortune that there are a thousand leagures between us—and here you are now. For pity's sake, show me, on that map of the world, one little spot you don't want to conquer, and let me live there in peace, and be sure never to meet you more."

Bonaparte did not speak for some minutes, and it seemed as though he were intently considering the request of "L'Homme Rouge."

"There," said he at length, "there; you see that island in the great sea, with nothing near it, thou mayest go there."

"How is it called?" said "L'Homme Rouge."

"St. Helena," said the General. "It is not very large; but I promise thee to be undisturbed there."

"You'll never come there, then? Is that a pledge?"

"Never; I promise it. At least, if I do, thou shalt be the master, and I the slave."

"Enough! I go now. Adieu!" said the little man; and the same instant the sentinel felt his arm brushed by some one passing close beside him; and then all was silent in the tent once more.

"Thus, you see," said the sergeant-major, "from that hour it was agreed on the

Emperor should conquer the whole world and leave that one little spot for 'L'Homme Rouge.' *Parbleu!* he might well spare him that much."

"How big might it be, that island?" said an old grenadier, who listened with the deepest attention to the tale.

"Nothing to speak of; about the size of one battalion drawn up in square."

"*Pardieu!* a small kingdom too!"

"Ah! it would not do for the Emperor," said the sergeant-major, laughing; an emotion the others joined in at once; and many a jest went round at the absurdity of such a thought.

I sat beside the watch-fire, listening to the old campaigning stories, till, one by one, the speakers dropped off to sleep. The bronzed veteran and the boy conscript, the old soldier of the Sambre and the beardless youth, lay side by side; to some of these it was the last time they should slumber on earth. As the night wore on, the sounds became hushed in the camp, and through the thin frosty air I could hear from a long distance off the tramp of the patrols and the challenge of the reliefs as the outposts were visited. The Prussian sentries were quite close to our advanced posts, and when the wind came from that quarter, I often heard the voices as they exchanged their signals.

Through the entire night, officers came and went to and from the tent of the Emperor. To him, at least, it seemed no season of repose. At length, when nigh morning, wearied with watching, and tired out with expectancy, I leaned my head on my knees, and dropped into a half-sleep. Some vague sense of disappointment at being forgotten by the Emperor was the last thought I had as I fell off, and in its sadness it colored all my dreams. I remembered, with all the freshness of a recent event, the curse of the old hag on the morning I had quitted my home forever; her prayer that bad luck should track me every step through life; and in the shadowy uncertainty of my sleeping thoughts I believed I was predestined to misfortune.

Almost every man has experienced the fact, that there are times in life when impressions, the slightest in their origin, will have an undue weight on the mind; when, as it were, the clay of our natures becomes softened, and we take the impress of passing events more easily. Some vague and shadowy conception, a doubt, a dream, is enough, at moments like these, to attain the whole force of a conviction; and it is wonderful with what ingenuity we wind to our purpose every circumstance around us, and what pains we take to increase the toils of our self-deception. It would be a curious thing to trace out how much of our good or evil fortune in life had its source in these superstitions; how far the frame of mind fashioned the events before it; and to what extent our hopes and fears were but the forerunners of destiny. My sleeping thoughts were of the saddest, and when I awoke, I could not shake them off. A heavy, dense fog clothed every object round, through which only the watch-fires were visible, as they flared with a yellow, hazy light of unnatural size. The position of these signals was only to mark the inequality of the ground; and I now could perceive that we occupied the crest of a long and steep hill, down the sides and at the bottom of which fires were also burning; while in front another mountain arose, whose summit, for a great distance, was marked out by watch-fires. This I conjectured, from its extent and position, to be the Prussian line. At the front of the Emperor's quarters several led horses were standing, whose caparison bespoke them as belonging to the staff; and although not yet five o'clock, there was an appearance of movement which indicated preparation.

The troops, however, were motionless; the dense columns covered the ground like a garment, and stirred not. As I stood, uncertain what course to take, I heard the noise of voices and the heavy tramp of many feet near; and on turning, perceived it was the Emperor, who came forth from his tent, followed by several of his staff. A large fire blazed in front of his bivouac, which threw its strong light on the group, where, even in a fleeting glance, I recognized General Gazan, and Nansouty, the commander of the Cuirassiers of the Guard.

"What hour is it?" said the Emperor to Duroc, who stood near him.

"Almost five o'clock, sire."

"It is darker than it was an hour ago. Maison, where is Bernadotte by this? — at Domberg, think you?"

"Not yet, sire; he is no laggard if he reach it in three hours hence."

"Ney would have been there now," was the quick reply of Napoleon. "Come, gentlemen, into the saddle, and let us move toward the front. Gazan, put your division under arms."

The general waited not a second bidding, but wheeled his horse suddenly round, and, followed by his aide-de-camp, rode at full speed down the mountain.

"There is the first streak of day," said the Emperor, pointing to a faint gray light

above the distant forest. "It breaks like Austerlitz."

"May it set as gloriously," said old Nansouty, in his deep, low voice.

"And it will," said Napoleon. "What sayest thou, *grognard?*" continued he, turning with an affected severity of manner to the grenadier who stood sentinel on the spot, and who, with a French soldier's easy indifference, leaned on the cross of his musket to listen to the conversation—"what sayest thou? art eager to be made corporal?"

"*Parbleu!*" growled out the rough soldier, "the grade is little to boast of; were I even a general of division, there might be something to hope for."

"What then?" said Napoleon, sharply,—"what then?"

"King of Prussia, to be sure; thou'lt give away the title before this hour to-morrow."

The Emperor laughed aloud at the conceit. Its flattery had a charm for him no courtier's well-turned compliment could vie with; and I could hear him still continuing to enjoy it as he rode slowly forward and disappeared in the gloom.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

JENA AND AUERSTÄDT.

"He has forgotten me!" said I, half aloud, as I watched the retiring figures of the Emperor and his staff till they were concealed by the mist—"he has forgotten me! Now to find out my brigade. A great battle is before us, and there may still be a way to refresh his memory." With such thoughts I set forward in the direction of the picket-fires, full sure that I should meet some skirmishers of our cavalry there.

As I went the drums were beating toward the distant left, and gradually the sounds crept nearer and nearer, as the infantry battalions began to form and collect their stragglers. A dense fog seemed to shut out the dawn, and, with a thin and misty rain, the heavy vapor settled down upon the earth, wrapping all things in a darkness deep as night itself.

From none could I learn any intelligence of the cavalry quarter, nor had any of those I questioned seen horsemen pass near them.

"The voltigeurs in the valley yonder may perhaps tell you something," said an officer to me, pointing to some fires in a deep glen beneath us; and thither I now bent my steps.

The dull rolling of the drums gradually swelled into one continued roar, through which the clank of steel and the tremulous tramp of marching columns could be heard. Spirit-stirring echoes were they, these awakening sounds of coming conflict! and how they nerved my heart, and set it bounding again with a soldier's ardor! As I descended the hill, the noise became gradually fainter, till at length I found myself in a narrow ravine, still and silent as the grave itself. The transition was so sudden and unexpected, that for a moment I felt a sense of loneliness and depression; and the thought struck me—"What if I have pushed on too far? Can it be that I have passed our lines? But the officer spoke of the voltigeurs in front. I had seen the fires myself—there could be no doubt about it." I now increased my speed, and, in less than half an hour, gained a spot where the ground became more open and extended in front, and not more than a few hundred paces in advance were the watch-fires; and, as I looked, I heard the swell of a number of voices singing in chorus on different sides of me. The effect was most singular, for the sounds came from various quarters at the same instant, and, as they all chanted the same air, the *refrain* rang out and filled the valley. Beating time with their feet, they stepped to the tune, and formed themselves to the melody as though it were the band of the regiment. I had often heard that this was a voltigeur habit, but never was witness to it before. The air was one well known in that suburb of Paris whence the wildest and most reckless of our soldiers came, and which they all joined in celebrating in this rude verse.

Picardy first, and then Champagne—
France to the battle, on, boys, on.
Anjou, Brittany, and Maine—
Hurrah for the Faubourg of St. Antoine!

How pleasant the life of a voltigeur:
In the van of the fight he must ever be.
Of roughing and rations he's always sure—
With a comrade's share he may well make free.

Picardy first, and then Champagne—
France to the battle—on, boys, on.
Anjou, Brittany, and Maine—
Hurrah for the Faubourg of St. Antoine.

The great guns thunder on yonder hill,
Closer than that they durst not go:
But the voltigeur comes nearer still—
With his bayonet fixed he meets the foe.

The hussar's coat is slashed with gold,
He rides an Arab courser fleet:
But is the voltigeur less bold
Who meets his enemy on his feet?

The cuirassier is clad in steel,
His massive sword is straight and strong;
But the voltigeur can charge and wheel
With a step—his bayonet is just as long.

The artillery-driver must halt his team
If the current be fast or the water deep:
But the voltigeur can swim the stream,
And climb the bank, be it e'er so steep.

The voltigeur needs no trumpet sound—
No bugle has he to cheer him on:
Where the fire is hottest, that's his ground—
Hurrah for the Faubourg of St. Antoine!

As they came to the conclusion of this song, they kept up the air without words, imitating by their voices the roll of the drum in marching-time. Joining the first party I came up with, I asked the officer in what direction of the field I should find the cuirassier brigade.

"That I can't tell you, comrade," said he; "No cavalry have appeared in our neighborhood, nor are they likely; for all the ground is cut up and intersected so much they could not act. But our *maître d'armes* is the fellow to tell you. Holloa, François! come up here for a moment."

Before I could ask whether this was not my old antagonist at Elchingen, the individual himself appeared.

"Eh—what?" cried he, as he lifted a piece of firewood from the ground, and stared me in the face by its light. "Not my friend Burke—eh? By Jove! so it is."

Our cordial greetings being over, I asked Maître François if he could give me any intelligence of D'Auvergne's division, or put me in the way to reach them.

"They're some miles off by this time," said he, coolly. "When I was below the Plateau de Jena last night, that brigade you speak of got their orders to push forward to Auerstädt, to support Davoust's infantry. I mind it well, for they were sorely tired, and had just picketed their horses, when the orderly came down with the dispatch."

"And where does Auerstädt lie?"

"About four leagues to the other side of that tall mountain yonder."

"What, then, shall I do? I am dismounted, to begin with."

"And if you were not—if you had the best horse in the whole brigade—what would it serve you now, except to pass the day riding between two battle-fields, and see nothing of either, for we shall have hot work here, depend upon it? No, no; stay with us; be a voltigeur for to-day, and we'll show you something you'll not see from your bearskin saddle."

"But I shall be in a sad scrape on account of my absence."

"Never mind that; the man that takes his turn with the voltigeurs of the Twenty-second won't be suspected of skulking. And here comes the major—report yourself to him at once."

Without waiting for any reply, Maître François accosted the officer in question, and, in a very few words, explained my position.

"Nothing could come better timed," said the Major. "One of ours has been sent with dispatches to the rear, and we may not see him for some hours. Again, a light cavalry man must know how to skirmish, and we'll try your skill that way. Come along with me."

"To our next meeting, then," cried François, as I hurried on after the major, whilst once more the voltigeur ranks burst forth in full chorus, and the merry sounds filled the valley.

I followed the major down a somewhat steep and rugged path, at the foot of which, and concealed by a low copsewood, was a party consisting of two companies of the regiment, who formed the most advanced pickets, and were destined to exchange the first shots with the enemy.

Before us lay a defile, partly overgrown with trees on either side, which ascended by a gradual slope to the foot of the hill on which the Prussian infantry was stationed, and whose lines were tracked out by a long train of watch-fires. A farm-house and its out-buildings occupied the side of the hill about half-way up, and this was garrisoned by the enemy, and defended by two guns in position in the defile. To surprise the post, and hold it until the main columns came up, was the object of the voltigeur attack; and for this purpose small bodies of men were assembling secretly and stealthily under cover of the brushwood, to burst forth on the word being given.

There was something which surprised me not a little in the way all these movements were effected. Officers and men were mixed up, as it seemed, in perfect confusion; not approaching in regular order, or taking up a position like disciplined troops, they came in twos and threes, crouching and creeping, and suddenly concealing themselves at every opportunity of cover the ground afforded.

Their noiseless and cautious gestures brought to my mind all that I had ever

read of Indian warfare, and in their eager faces, and quick, piercing looks, I thought I could recognize the very traits of the red men. The commands were given by signals, and so rapidly interchanged were they from party to party, that the different groups seemed to move forward by one impulse, though the officer who led them was full a mile distant from where we were.

"Can you use a firelock, comrade?" said the Major, as he placed in my hand a short musket, such as the voltigeurs carried. "Sling it at your back—you may find it useful up yonder. And now I must leave you; keep to this party. But what is this?—you mustn't wear that shako—you'd soon be picked off with that tower of black fur on your head. Corporal, have you no spare foraging-cap in your kit? Ah! that's something more becoming a 'tirailleur,' and, by Jove! I think it improves you wonderfully." The circumstance of becomingness was not exactly uppermost in my mind at the moment, but certainly I felt no small gratification at being provided with the equipment both of cap and firearms, which placed me on an equality with those about me.

Scarcely had the major left us, when the corporal crept closely to my side, and with that mingled respect and familiarity a French *sous-officier* assumes so naturally, said: "You wished to see something of a skirmish, captain, I suppose? Well, you're like enough to be gratified—we're closing up rapidly now."

"What may be the strength of your battalion, corporal?"

"Twelve hundred men, sir, and they're every one at this instant in the valley, though I'll wager you don't see a bough move, nor a leaf stirring, to show where they lie hid. You see that low copse yonder—well, there's a company of ours beneath its shelter. But there goes the word to move on." A motion with his sword, the only command he gave, communicated the order, and the men, creeping stealthily on, obeyed the mandate, till, at another signal, they were halted.

From the little copse of brushwood where we now lay, to the farm-house, the ground was completely open, not a shrub nor a bush grew; a slight ascent of the road led up to the gate, which could not be more than three hundred paces in front of us. We were stationed at some distance to the right of the road, but the field presented no obstacle or impediment to our attack, and thither now were our looks turned—the short road which would lead to victory or the grave.

From my ambush I could see the two field-pieces which commanded the road, and beside which the artillerymen stood in patient attention. With what a strange thrill I watched one of the party, as from time to time he stooped down to blow the fuse beside the gun, and then seemed endeavoring to peer into the valley, where all was still and noiseless. As well as I could judge, our little party was nearest to the front, and although a small clump to the left of the road offered a safe shelter still nearer the enemy, I could not ascertain if it were occupied. Not a word was now spoken; all save the corporal looked eagerly toward the enemy; he was watching for the signal, and knelt down with his drawn sword at his side. The deathlike stillness of the moment, so unlike the prelude to every movement in cavalry combat; the painful expectation which made minutes like years themselves; the small number of the party, so dissimilar to the closely crowded squadrons I was used to; but, more than all, the want of a horse—that most stirring of all the excitements to heroism and daring—unnerved me; and if my heart were to have been interrogated, I sadly fear it would have brought little corroboration to the song of the voltigeurs, which attributed so many features of superiority to their arm of the service above the rest of the army.

A thousand and a thousand times did I wish to be at the head of a cavalry charge up that narrow road in face of those guns; ay, though the mitraille should sweep the earth, there was that in the onward torrent of the horseman's course that left no room for fear. But this cold and stealthy approach, this weary watching, I could not bear.

"See, see," whispered the corporal, as he pointed with his finger toward the clump to the left of the road, "how beautifully done; there goes another."

As he spoke, I could perceive the dark shadow of something moving close to the ground, and finally concealing itself in the brushwood, beneath which now above twenty men lay hid; at the same instant a deep, rolling sound like far-off thunder was heard, and then louder still, but less deep in volume, the rattling crash of musketry. At first the discharges were more prolonged, and succeeded each other more rapidly, but, gradually, the firing became less regular; then after an interval swelled more fully again, and once more relaxed.

"Listen," said the corporal, "can't you hear the cheering? There again; the skirmishers are falling back, the fire is too heavy for them."

"Which, the Prussians?"

"To be sure, the Prussians. Hark? there was a volley—that was no tirailleur discharge—the columns are advancing; down, men, down!" whispered he, as, excited by the sounds of musketry, some three or four popped up their heads to listen. At the same instant a noise in front drew our attention to that quarter, and we now saw that a party of horse artillerymen were descending the road with a light eight-pounder gun, which they were proceeding to place in position on a small knoll of ground about eighty yards from the coppice I have mentioned.

"How I could pick off that fellow on the gray horse," whispered a soldier beside me to his comrade.

"And bring the whole fire on us afterward," said the other.

"What can we be waiting for?" said the corporal, impatiently. "They are making that place as strong as a fortress, and there, see if that is not a reinforcement." While he spoke, the heavy tramp of men marching announced the approach of fresh troops, and by the bustle and noise within the farm-house it was clear the preparations for its defense were making with all the activity the exigency demanded.

It was past seven o'clock, but as the day broke more out, the heavy fog increased, and soon grew so dense as to shut out from our view the Prussian picket, and the guns upon the road; meanwhile the firing continued at a distance, but, as it seemed, fainter than before.

"Ha! there it comes now," said the corporal, as a shrill whistle was heard to our left. "Look to your pieces, men—steady." There was a pause, every ear was bent to listen, every breath drawn short, when again he spoke. "That's it; 'en avant,' lads! 'en avant!'" With the word he sprang forward, but, still crouching, he went as if the thick mist were not enough to conceal him.

The men followed their leader with cautious steps, their carbines in hand and bayonets fixed. For some minutes we ascended the hill, gradually nearing the road, along which a low bank offered a slight protection against fire.

The corporal halted here for a second or two, when another whistle, so faint as to be scarcely audible, was borne on the air. With a motion of his hand forward he gave the order to advance, and led the way along the roadside.

As we followed in single file, I found myself next the corporal, whose every motion I watched with an intensity of interest I cannot convey. At last he stopped and wheeled round; then, kneeling down, he leveled his piece upon the low bank—a movement quickly followed by all the rest, who in silence obeyed his signal.

Directly in front of us now, and, as it seemed, not above a dozen yards distant, the yellow glare of the artillery fuse could be dimly discerned through the mist; thither every eye was bent and every musket pointed. Thus we knelt with beating hearts, when suddenly several shots rang out from the valley and the opposite side of the road, as quickly replied to by the enemy, and a smart but irregular clattering of musketry followed. "Now," cried the corporal, aloud—"now, and all together!" And then, with one long, stunning report, every gun was discharged, and a wild cry of the wounded blended with the sounds as we cleared the fence and dashed at the guns. "Down, men, down!" called our leader, as we jumped into the road. The word was scarce uttered when a bright flash gleamed forth, a loud bang succeeded, and we heard the grape-shot crushing down the valley and tearing its way through the leaves and branches of the brushwood.

"*En avant*, lads, now's your time!" cried the corporal, as he sprang to his feet and led toward the gun. With one vigorous dash we pushed up the height, just as the cannoneers were preparing to load. The gunners fell back, and a party of infantry as quickly presented themselves.

The mist happily concealed the smallness of our force, otherwise the Prussians might have crushed us at once. For a second there was a pause, then both sides fired, an irregular volley was discharged, and the muskets were lowered to the charge. What must have been the fate of our little party now there could be no doubt, when suddenly, through the blue smoke which yet lingered near the guns, the bright gleaming of bayonets was seen to flash, while the loud "vivas" of our own soldiers rent the air. So rapid was the rush, and so thronging did they come, it seemed as if the very ground had given them up. With a cry of "Forward!" on we went; the enemy retired and fell back behind the cover of the road, where they kept up a tremendous fire upon the gun, to which now all our efforts were directed, to turn against the walls of the farm-house.

The mist by this was cleared away, and we were exposed to the shattering fire which was maintained not only along the road, but from every window and crevice in the walls of the farm-house; our men fell fast—several badly wounded—for the distance was

less than half musket-range, even to the furthest.

"The bayonet, men!—the bayonet! Leave the gun, and sweep the road of those fellows yonder," said the Major, as, vaulting over the fence, he led the way himself. We were now reinforced, and numbered fully four companies, so that our attack soon drove in the enemy, who retreated, still firing within the court-yard around the farm-house.

"Bring up the gun, lads, and we'll soon breach them!" said the Major; but, unhappily, the party to whom it was committed being annoyed at the service which kept them back when their companions were advancing, had hurled the piece off its carriage, and rolled it down the mountain.

With a muttered *sacré* on their stupidity, the officer cried out to scale the walls. If honor, and rank, and wealth had lain on the opposite side, and not death and agony, they could not have obeyed with more alacrity; raised on each other's shoulders, the brave fellows mounted the wall, but it was only to fall back again into their comrades' arms, dead or mortally wounded: still they pressed on. A reckless defiance of danger had shut out every other thought, and their cheers grew wilder and fiercer as the fire told upon them, while the shouts of triumph from those within stimulated them to the verge of madness.

"Stand back, men—stand back!" called the Major; "down I say." As he spoke, a dead silence followed, the men retreated behind the cover of the fence, and lay down flat with their faces to the ground; a low, hissing noise was then heard, and then, with a clap like thunder, the strong gate was rent into fragments and scattered in blazing pieces about the field. The crash of the petard was answered by a cheer wild as a war-whoop, and onward the infuriated soldiers poured through the still burning timbers; and now began a scene of carnage which only a hand-to-hand encounter can ever produce. From every door and window the Prussians maintained a deadly fire, but the onward tide of victory was with us, and we poured down upon them with the bayonet; and as none gave, none asked for quarter, the work of death was speedy. To the wild shouts of battle, the crash, the din, the tumult of the fight, a dropping irregular fire succeeded, and then came the low, wailing cries of the wounded, the groans of the dying, and all was over. We were the victors—but what a victory! The garden was strewn with our dead, the hall, the stairs, every room was covered with bodies of our brave fellows, their rugged faces even sterner than in life.

For some minutes it seemed as though our emotions had unnerved us all, as we stood speechless, gazing on the fearful scene of bloodshed, when the low rolling of drums, heard from the mountain side, startled every listener.

"The Prussians! the Prussians!" called out three or four voices together.

"No, no," shouted François. "I was too long a 'tambour' not to know that beat. They're our fellows."

The drums rolled fuller and louder, and soon the head of a column appeared peering over the ascent of the road. The sun shone brightly on their gay uniforms and glancing arms, and the tall and showily-dressed "tambour-major" stepped in advance with the proud bearing of a conqueror.

"Form, men, and to the front," said the Major of the voltigeurs, who knew that his place was in the advance, and felt a noble pride that he had won it bravely.

As the column came up the road, the voltigeurs, scattered along the fields at either side, advanced at a run; but no longer was there any obstacle to their course, no enemy presented themselves in sight, and we mounted the ascent without a single shot being fired.

As I stopped for time to recover breath, I could not help turning to behold the valley, which, now filled with armed men, was a grand and a gorgeous sight. In long columns of attack they came, the artillery filling the interspaces between them. A brilliant sunlight shone out, and I could distinguish the different brigades, with whose colors I was now familiar. Still my eye ranged over the field in search of cavalry, the arm I loved above all others—that which, more than all the rest, revived the heroic spirit of the chivalrous ages, and made the horseman feel the ancient ardor of the belted knight; but none were within sight. Indeed the very nature of the ground offered an obstacle to their movement, and I saw that here, as at Austerlitz, the day was for the infantry.

Meanwhile we toiled up the height, and at length reached the crest of the ridge, and then burst forth a sight, such as all the grandeur I had ever beheld of war had never presented the equal to. On a vast table-land, slightly undulating on the surface, was drawn up the whole Prussian army, in battle array—a splendid force of nigh thirty thousand infantry, flanked by ten thousand sabres, the finest cavalry in Europe. By some inconceivable error of tactics they had offered no other resistance to the French

ascent of the mountain than the skirmishing troops, which fell back as we came on; and even now they seemed to wait patiently for the enemy to form before the conflict should begin. As our columns crowned the hill they instantly deployed, to cover the advance of those who followed; but the precaution seemed needless, for, except at the extreme left, where we heard the firing before, the Prussian army never moved a man, nor showed any disposition to attack.

It was now nine o'clock; the sky clear and cloudless and a bright autumnal day permitted the eye to range for miles on every side. The Prussian army, but forty thousand strong, was drawn up in the form of an arch, presenting the convexity to our front, while our troops, ninety thousand in number, overlapped them on either flank, and extended far beyond them.

The battle began by the advance of the French columns and the retreat of the enemy, both movements being accomplished without a shot being fired, and the whole seeming the maneuvers of a field-day.

At length, as the Prussians took up the position they intended to hold, their guns were seen moving to the front, squadrons of calvary disengaged themselves from behind the infantry masses, and then a tremendous fire opened from the whole line. Our troops advanced *en tirailleurs*, that is, whole regiments thrown out in skirmishing order, which, when pressed, fell back, and permitted the columns to appear.

The division to which I found myself attached received orders to move obliquely across the plain, in the direction of some cottages, which I soon heard was the village of Vierzehn Heiligen, and the center of the Prussian position. A galling fire of artillery played upon the column as it went; and before we accomplished half the distance our loss was considerable. More than once, too, the cry of "Cavalry!" was heard, and, quick as the warning itself, we were thrown into square, to receive the impetuous horsemen, who came madly on to the charge. Ney himself stood in the squares, animating the men by his presence, and cheering them at every volley they poured in.

"Yonder, men, yonder is the center of their position," said he, pointing to the village, which now bristled with armed men, several guns upon a height beyond it commanding the approach, and a cloud of cavalry hovering near, to pounce down upon those who might be daring enough to assail it. A wild cheer answered his words: both general and soldiers understood each other well.

In two columns of attack the division was formed, and then the word "Forward!" was given. "Orderly time, men!" said General Dorsenne, who commanded that with which I was; and, obedient to the order, the ranks moved as if on parade. And now let me mention a circumstance, which, though trivial in itself, presents a feature of the peculiar character of courage which distinguished the French officer in battle.

As the line advanced, the fire of the Prussian battery, which by this had found out our range most accurately, opened severely on us, but more particularly on the left; and, as the men fell fast, and the grape-shot tore through the ranks, a wavering of the line took place, and in several places a broken front was presented. Dorsenne saw it at once, and placing himself in front of the advance, with his back toward the enemy, he called out, as if on parade, "Close order—close order! Move up there—left, right—left, right!" and so did he retire step by step, marking the time with his sword, while the shot flew past and about him, and the earth was scattered by the torrent of the grape-shot. Courage like this would seem to give a charmed life, for, while death was dealing fast around him, he never received a wound.

The village was attacked at the bayonet point, and at the charge the enemy received us. So long as their artillery could continue its fire, our loss was fearful; but, once within shelter of the walls and close in with the Prussian ranks, the firing ceased, and the struggle was hand to hand. Twice did we win our way up the ascent, twice were we beaten back; strong reinforcements were coming up to the enemy's aid, when a loud rolling of the drums and a hoarse cheer from behind revived our spirits—it was Lannes's division advancing at a run. They opened to permit our retiring masses to re-form behind them, and then rushed on. A crash of musketry rang out, and through the smoke the glancing bayonets flashed and the red flame danced wildly.

"*En avant! en avant!*" burst from every man, as, maddened with excitement, we plunged into the fray. Like a vast torrent tumbling from some mountain gorge, the column poured on, overwhelming all before it, now struggling for a moment, as some obstacle delayed, but could not arrest, its march; now rushing headlong, it swept along. The village was won, the Prussians fell back, their guns opened fiercely on us, and cavalry tore past, sabring all who sought not shelter within the walls. But the post was ours, the key of their position was in

our hands, and Ney sent three messengers one after the other to the Emperor to let him know the result, and enable him to push forward and attack the Prussian center. Suddenly a wild cry was heard from the little street of the village: the houses were in flames. The Prussians had thrown in heated shells, and the wooden roofs of the cottages caught up the fire. For an instant all became, as it were, panic-struck, and a confused movement of retreat was begun; but the next moment order was restored—the sappers scaled the walls of the burning houses, and with their axes severed the timbers, and suffered the blazing mass to fall within the buildings. But by this time the Prussians had re-formed their columns, and once more advanced to the attack. The moment was in their favor: the disorder of our ranks, and the sudden fear inspired by an unlooked-for danger still continued, when they came on.

Then, indeed, began a scene of bloodshed the most horrible to witness: through the narrow streets, within the gardens, the houses themselves, the combatants fought hand to hand—neither would give way, neither knew on which side lay their supporting columns—it was the terrible carnage of deadly animosity on both sides.

Meanwhile the flames burst forth anew, and amid the crackling of the burning timbers and the dense smoke of the lighted thatch, the fight went on. "Vandamme! Vandamme!" cried several voices, in ecstasy; "here come the grenadiers!" And, true enough, the tall shakos peered through the blue cloud.

"Hurrah for the Faubourg!" shouted a wild voltigeur, as he waved his cap and sprang forward. "Let us not lose the glory now, boys!"

The appeal was not made in vain. From every window and doorway the men leaped down into the street, and rushed at the Prussian column, which was advancing at the charge. Suddenly the column opened, a rushing sound was heard, and down with the speed of lightning rode a squadron of cuirassiers. Over us they tore, sabring as they went, nor halted till the head of Vandamme's column poured in a volley. Then wheeling, they galloped back, trampling on our wounded, and dealing death with their broad-swords. As for me, a sabre-cut in the head had stunned me; and while I leaned for support against the wall of a house, a horseman tore past, and with one vigorous cut he cleft open my shoulder. I staggered back and fell, covered with blood, upon the door-sill. I saw our column pass on, cheering, and heard the wild cry, "*En avant! en avant!*" swelling from a thousand voices; and then, faint and exhausted, my senses reeled, and the rest was like an indistinct dream.

CHAPTER LXIX.

A FRAGMENT OF A MAITRE D'ARMES' EXPERIENCES.

STUNNED, and like one but half awake, I followed the tide of marching men which swept past like a mighty river, the roar of the artillery and the crash of battle increasing the confusion of my brain. All distinct memory of the remainder of the day is lost to me. I can recollect the explosion of several wagons of the ammunition-train, and how the splinters wounded several of those around me. I also have a vague, dreamy sense of being hurried along at intervals, and then seeing masses of cavalry dash past; but the great prevailing thought above all others is, of leaning over the edge of a "charrette," where I lay with some wounded soldiers, to watch the retreat of the Prussians, as they were pursued by Murat's cavalry. François was at my side, and described to me the great events of the battle; but though I seemed to listen, the sounds fell unregarded on my ear. Even now, it seems to me like a dream, and the only palpable idea before me is, the heated air, the dark and lowering sky, and the deafening thunder of the guns.

It is well known how the victory of Jena was crowned by the glorious issue of the battle of Auerstädt, where the main body of the Prussians, under the command of the king himself, was completely beaten by Davoust with a force not half their number. The two routed armies crossed in their flight, while the headlong fury of the French cavalry pressed down on them, nor did the terrible slaughter cease till night gave respite to the beaten.

The victors and the vanquished entered Weimar together, a distance of full six leagues from the field of battle. All struggle had long ceased; an unresisting massacre it was; and such was the disappointment and anger of the people of the country, that the Prussian officers were frequently attacked and slain by the peasantry, whose passionate indignation made them suspect treachery in the result of the battle.

All whose wounds were but slight, and whose health promised speedy restoration, were mounted into wagons taken from the enemy, and sent forward with the army. Among this number I found myself, and

that same night slept soundly and peacefully in the straw of the "charrette" in which I traveled from Jena.

The Emperor's head-quarters were established at Weimar, and thither all the "ambulances" were conveyed; while the marshals, with their several divisions, were sent in pursuit of the enemy. As for myself, before the week elapsed, I was sufficiently recovered to move about; for, happily, the stunning effects which immediately followed the injury were its worst consequences, and my wound in the shoulder proved but trifling.

"And so you are determined to join the cavalry again," said François, as he sat by my side under a tree, where a cheerful fire of blazing wood had drawn several to enjoy its comfort. "That is what I cannot comprehend by any stretch of ingenuity, how a man who has once seen something of voltigeur life can go back to the dull routine of dragoon service."

"Perhaps I have had enough of skirmishing, François," said I, smiling.

"Is it of that knock on the pate you speak?" said he, contemptuously. "Bah! the heavy shako you wear would give a worse headache. Come, come, think better on't. I can tell you"—here he lowered his voice to a whisper—"I can tell you, Burke, the major noticed the manner you held your ground in the old farm-house. I heard him refuse to send a reinforcement, when the Prussians made their second attack. 'No, no,' said he, 'that hussar fellow yonder does his work so well, he wants no help from us.' When he said that, my friend, be assured your promotion is safe enough. You were made for a voltigeur."

"Come, François, it's no use; all your flattery won't make me desert. I'll try and join my brigade to-morrow; that is, if I can find them."

"You never told me in what way you first became separated from your corps. How was it?"

"There's something of a secret there, François; you mustn't ask me."

"Ah, I understand," said he, with a knowing look, and a gesture of his hand, as if making a pass with his sword. "Did you kill him?"

"No, not exactly," said I, laughing.

"Merely gave him that pretty lunge *'en tierce'* you favored me with," said he, putting his hand on his side.

"Nor even that."

"*Diable!* then how was it?"

"I have told you it was a secret."

"Secret! Confound it, man, there are no secrets in a campaign, except when the military chest is empty, or the commissary falls short of grub. These are the only things one ever thinks of hushing up. Come, out with it."

"Well, if it must be, I may as well have the benefit of your advice. So draw closer, for I don't wish the rest to hear it."

In as few words as I was able, I explained to François the circumstances of the night march, and the manner of my meeting with the Emperor at the ravine, where the artillery-train was stopped; but when I came to the incident of the picket, and mentioned how, in rescuing the Emperor, my horse had been killed under me, he could no longer restrain himself, but turned to the rest, who, to the number of fifteen or sixteen, sat around the fire, and burst forth,

"*Mille tonnerres!* but the boy is a fool!" And then, before I could interpose a word, blurted out the whole adventure to the company.

There was no use now to attempt any concealment at all; neither was there to feel anger at his conduct—one would have been as absurd as the other; and so I had to endure, as best I could, the various comments that were passed on my behavior, on the prudence of which certainly no second opinion existed.

"You must be right certain of promotion, captain," said an old sergeant, with a gray beard and moustache, "or you wouldn't refuse such a chance as that."

"*Diable!*" cried François, "don't you see he wouldn't accept of it—he is too proud to wait on the Petit Caporal, though he asked him to do so."

"He'd have given you the cross of the Legion anyhow," said another.

"Ay, by Jove!" exclaimed the riding-master of a dragoon regiment, "and sent him a remount from his own stud."

"And you think that modesty!" said François, whose indignation at my folly knew no bounds. "*Par St. Joseph!* if I'd been as modest, it's not *maître d'armes* of a voltigeur battalion I'd be to-day; though I may say, without boasting, I'm not afraid to cross a rapier with any man in the army. No, no; that's not the way I managed."

"How was that, Maître François?" said a young officer, who felt curious to learn the circumstance to which he seemed to attach a story.

"If the honorable society cares to hear it," said François, uncovering, and bowing courteously to all around, "I shall have great pleasure in recounting a little incident of my life."

A general cry of acclamation and bravo

met the polite proposal, while François, accepting a "goutte" from a canteen presented to him, began thus:

"I began my soldier's life at the first step of the ladder. I was a drummer-boy at Jemappes; and, when I grew old enough to exchange the drumstick for the sword, I was attached to the *chasseurs à cheval*, and went with them to Egypt. I could tell you some strange stories of our doings there—I don't mean with the Turks, mark you, but amongst ourselves—for we had little affairs with the sword almost every day; and I soon showed them I was their master— But that is not to the purpose; what I am about to speak of happened in this wise:

"At break of day, one morning, the picket to which I was joined received orders to mount, and accompany the general along the bank of the Nile to the village of Chebrheis, where we heard that a Mameluke force were assembling, whose strength and equipment it was important to ascertain. Our horses were far from fresh when we started; the day previous had been spent in a fatiguing march from Rhemanieh, crossing a dreary desert, with hot sands and no water. But General Bonaparte always expected us to turn out, as if we had got a general remount; and so we made the best of it, and set out in as good style as we could. We had not gone above a league and a half, however, when we found that the slapping pace of the general had left the greater part of the escort out of sight; and of a force of four squadrons, not above twenty horsemen were present.

"The Emperor—you know he was only general then, but it's all the same—laughed heartily when he found he had outridden the rest; indeed, for that matter, he laughed at our poor blown beasts, that shook on every limb, and seemed like to push their spare, gaunt bones through the trappings with which, for shame's sake, we endeavored to cover them; but his joke was but short-lived, for just then, from behind the wall of an old ruined temple—whiz!—there came a shattering volley of musketry in the midst of us—the only miracle is how one escaped: the next moment there was a wild hurrah, and we beheld some fifty Mameluke fellows, all glittering with gold, coming down full speed on us, on their Arab chargers. *Mille cadavres*, what was to be done?—nothing, you'd say, but run for it; and so we should have done, if the beasts were able; but not a bit of it, they couldn't have raised a gallop if Mourad Bey had been there with his whole army, and so we put a good face on it, and drew up across the way, and looked as if going to charge. Egad! the Turks were amazed; they halted up short, and stared about them to see what infantry or artillery there might be coming up to our assistance, so boldly did we hold our ground.

"'We'll keep them in check, general,' said the officer of the picket. 'Lose no time now, but make a dash for it, and you'll get away.' And so, without more ado, Bonaparte turned his horse's head round, and, driving his spurs into him, set out at top speed.

"This was the signal for the Mameluke charge, and down they came. *Sacristi!* how the infidels rode us down! over and over our fellows rolled, men and horses together, while they slashed with their keen scimitars on every side—few needed a second cut, I warrant you.

"By some good fortune, my beast kept his legs in the *mêlée*, and, with even better luck, got so frightened, that he started off, and struck out in full gallop after the general, who, about two hundred paces in front of me, was dashing along, pursued by a Mameluke, with a scimitar held over his head. The Turk's horse, however, was wounded, and could not gain even on the tired animal before him, while mine was at every stride overtaking him.

"The Mameluke, hearing the clatter behind, turned his head; I seized the moment, and discharged my only remaining pistol at him, alas! without effect. With a wild war-cry the fellow swerved round and came down upon me, intending to take my horse in flank, and hurl me over; but the good beast plunged forward, and my enemy passed behind, and only grazed the haunches as he went; the moment after he was at my side. *Parbleu!* I didn't like the companionship; I knew every turn of a broadsword or a rapier well, but a curved scimitar, keen as a razor, of Damascus steel, glittering and glistening over my head, was a different thing—the great dark eyes of the fellow, too, glared like balls of fire, and his white teeth were clenched. With a swing of his blade over his head, so loosely done I thought he had almost flung the weapon from his hand, he aimed a cut at my neck, but, quick as lightning, I dropped upon the mane, and the sharp blade shaved the red feather from my shako, and sent it floating in the air, while, with a straight point, I ran him through the body, and heard his death-shout as he fell bathed in blood upon the sands. The general saw him fall, and cried out something, but I could not hear the words, nor, to say truth, did I care much at the time;

my happiest thought just then was to see the remainder of the escort, which we had left behind, coming up at a smart canter. The Turks no sooner perceived them than they wheeled and fled, and so we returned to the camp, with a loss of some twenty brave fellows, and none the wiser for all our trouble.

"'What shall I do for you, friend?' said the General to me, as I stood by his orders at the door of his tent—'what shall I do for you?'

"'*Ma foi*,' said I, with a shrug of my shoulders, 'I can't well say at a moment; perhaps the best thing would be to promise you'd never take me as one of your escort when you make such an expedition as this morning's.'

"'No, no, I'll not say that; who are you? what's your grade?'

"'François, maître d'armes of the 4th Chasseurs of the Guard,' said I, proudly; and, indeed, I thought he might have known me without the question.

"'Ah, indeed!' replied he gravely; 'promotion is then of no use here—a maître d'armes, like a general of division, is at the top of the tree. Come, I have it; a fellow of your sort is never out of scrapes, always dueling and quarreling, under arrest three days in every week—I know you well. Now, Maître François, I'll forgive you the first time you ask me for any offense within my power to pardon. Go; you are satisfied with that promise—is it not so?'

"'Yes, general, and I'll soon jog your memory about it,' said I, saluting and retiring from the tent.

"I see some old 'braves' of the Pyramids about me now," continued François, "and so I need not dwell on the events of the campaign. You all know how General Bonaparte left the army to Kléber and went back to France; and somehow we never had much luck after that; but so it was, I came back with the regiment, and was at the battle of Marengo, when our brigade captured four guns of Skal's battery, and carried off eleven of their officers our prisoners. You'd wonder now, comrades, how that piece of good fortune should turn out so ill for me, but such was the case. After the battle was gained, General Bonaparte retired to Gerofola with his staff, and I was ordered to proceed after him, with the Hauptmann Klingenswert of the Austrian army, one of our prisoners who had served on Melas's staff, and knew everything about the effective strength of the army and all their plans.

"We set off at daybreak—it was in June, and a lovely morning too—and as my prisoner was an officer and a man of honor, I took no escort, but rode along at his side. We halted at noon to dine in a little grove of cedars, where I opened my canteen and spread the contents on the grass, and after regaling ourselves pleasantly, we lighted our meerschaums and chatted away like old comrades over the war and its chances. A more agreeable fellow than the Austrian I never met; he told me his whole history, and I told him mine, and we drank Brüderschaft together, and swore I don't know how many eternal friendships. The devil was just amusing himself with us all this time though, as you'll see presently, for we soon got into an argument about the charge in which our brigade captured the guns. He said that if the ammunition had not failed we never would have dared the attack, and I swore that the discharges were pouring in while we rode down on the battery.

"We grew warm with the dispute, and drank deeper to cool us; and, what between the wine and our own passion, we became downright angry, and went so far as to interchange something not like 'Brüderschaft.'

"'Ah, how unfortunate I always am,' said I, sighing. 'If I had only the good luck to be the prisoner now, and you the escort—'

"'What then?' said he.

"'How easily, and how pleasantly too, could we settle this little affair. The ground is smooth as velvet—there is no sun—all still, and quiet, and peaceful.'

"'No, no,' said the Austrian, 'I couldn't do what you propose—I should be dishonored forever if I took such an advantage of you. You must know, François,' for he called me so, recurring at once to his tone of kindliness, 'I am the first swordsman of my brigade.'

"I could scarcely avoid throwing myself into his arms as he spoke—never was there such a piece of fortune. 'And I,' cried I, in ecstasy, 'I the first of the whole French army!' You know, comrades, I only said that *en gascon*, and to afford him the greater pleasure in our rencontre.

"We soon measured our swords and threw off our jackets. 'François,' said he, 'I ought to mention to you that my lunge *en tierce* is my famous stroke—I rarely miss running my adversary through the chest with it.'

"'I know the trick well,' said I; 'take care of my "pass" outside the guard.'

"'Oh! if that's your game,' said he, laughing, 'I'll make short work of it. Now, to begin.'

"'All ready,' said I, '*en garde!*' And we crossed our weapons. For a German he was a capital swordsman, and had a very pretty trick of putting in his point over the hilt, and wounding the sword arm; but if it had not been for all the wine I drank the affair would have been over in a second or two. As it was, we both fenced loose, and without any judgment whatever.

"'Ah! you got that,' said I, 'at last,' as I pierced him in the back, outside the guard.

"'No, no,' cried he, passionately; for his temper was up, and he would not confess a touch.

"'Well, then, that's home,' said I, thrusting beneath his hilt, till the blood spurted out along my blade and even in my eyes.

"'Yes, that's home,' said he, staggering back, while one of his legs crossed over the other, and he fell heavily on the grass. I stooped down to feel his heart, and as I did so, my senses failed—my limbs tottered—and I rolled headlong over him. Truth was, I was badly wounded, though I never knew when—for his sword had entered my chest, beneath a rib, and cut some large vessels in the lungs.

"The end of it all was, the Austrian was buried, and I was broke the service, without pay or pension, my wound being declared by the doctors an incapacity to serve in future.

"Comrades, we often hear men talk of the happy day before them, when they shall leave the army, and throw off the knapsack, and give up the musket for the mattock. Well, trust me, it's no such pleasure as they deem it, after all. There was I, turned loose upon the world, with nothing but a suit of ragged clothes my comrades made up amongst them, my old rapier, and a bad asthma. Such was my stock in trade, to begin life anew, at the age of forty-seven. And so, I set out on my weary way back to Paris."

"Didn't you try your chance with the Petit Caporal first?" asked one of the listeners.

"To be sure I did. I sent him a long petition, setting forth the whole circumstance, and detailing every minute particular of the duel, but I received it back, unopened—with Duroc's name, and the word 'Rejected,' on the back.

"It is strange how unfit we old soldiers are for any occupation in a civil way, when we've spent half a lifetime campaigning. When I reached Paris, I could almost have wedged myself into the scabbard of my sword. Long marches and short rations had told heavily on me, and the custom-house officer at the barrier told me to pass on, without ever stopping to see that I carried no contraband goods about me.

"I had a miserable time enough of it for twelve or fourteen months. The only way of support I could find was teaching recruits the sword exercise—and you know they couldn't be very liberal in their rewards for the service; but even this poor trade was soon interdicted, as the police reported that I encouraged the young soldiers to fight duels—a great offense, truly!—but you see everything went unluckily with me at that time.

"What was to become of me now I couldn't tell; when an old comrade, pensioned off from Moreau's army, had interest to get me appointed supernumerary, as they call it, in the Grand Opera, where I used to perform as a Roman soldier, or a friar, or a peasant, or some such thing, for five francs a week—not a sous more had I, and the duty was heavier than on active service.

"After two years, the 'big drum' died of a rheumatic fever, from beating a great solo in a new German opera, and I was promoted to his place; for, by this time, I was quite recovered from the effects of my wound, and could use my arms as well as ever. Some of the honorable company may remember the first night that Napoleon visited the Grand Opera, after he was named Emperor. It was a glorious sight, and one can never forget it—the whole house was filled with generals and field-marshals—it was a grand field-day, by the glare of ten thousand wax-lights; and the Empress was there, and her whole suite, and all the prettiest women in France. Little time had I to look at them, though; for there was I, in the corner of the orchestra, with my big drum before me, on which I was to play the confounded thing that killed the other fellow. It was a strange performance, sure enough—for in the midst of a great din and crash, came a dead pause, and then, I was to strike three solemn bangs on the drum, to be followed by a succession of blows, fast as lightning, for five minutes. This was the composer's notion of a battle—distant firing—Heaven bless his heart! I was wishing he'd seen some of it.

"This was to come on in the second act, up to which time I had nothing to do. Why do I say nothing? I had to gaze at the Petit Caporal, who sat there in the box over my head, looking as stern and as thoughtful as ever, and not minding much what the Empress said, though she kept prattling into his ear all the time, and trying to attract his attention. *Parbleu!*

he was not thinking of all the nonsense before him—his mind was on real battles—he had seen real smoke—that he had! He was fatter and paler than he used to be, and I thought, too, his frown was darker than when I saw him last; but, to be sure, that was at Marengo, and he ever looked pleased on the field of battle. I couldn't take my eyes from him—his fine thoughtful face, so full of determination and energy, reminded me of my old days of campaigning. I thought of Arcola and Rivoli, of Cairo and the Pyramids, and the great charge at Marengo, when Desaix's division came up, and my heart was nigh bursting when I remembered that I wore the epaulette no longer. I forgot, too, where I was—and expected every instant to hear him call for one of the marshals, or see him stretch out his hand to point to a distant part of the field; and so absorbed was I in my reveries, that I had neither eyes nor ears for anything around me; when, suddenly, all the din of the orchestra ceased—not a sound was heard—and a hand rudely shook me by the arm, while a voice whispered "Now, now." Mechanically I seized the drumsticks, but my eyes still were riveted on the Emperor—my whole heart and soul were centered in him. Again, the voice called to me to begin, and a low murmur of angry meaning ran through the orchestra. I sprang to my legs, and in the excitement of the moment, losing all memory of time and place, I rolled out the '*pas de charge*.' Scarce had the first *roulade* of the well-known sounds reverberated through the house, when one cry of '*Vive l'Empereur!*' burst forth. It was not a cheer—it was the heart-given outbreak of ten thousand devoted followers. Marshals, generals, colonels, ambassadors, ministers, all joined—and the vast assembly rocked to and fro, like the sea in a storm, while Napoleon himself, slowly rising, bent his proud head in acknowledgment, and then sat down again, amid the thundering shouts of acclamation. It was full twenty minutes before the piece could proceed, and even then momentary outbreaks of enthusiasm would occur to interrupt it, and continued to burst forth till the curtain fell. Just then, an aide-de-camp appeared beside the orchestra, and ordered me to the Emperor's box.

"*Sacristi*, how I trembled! I didn't know what might come of it.

"'Ah, *coquin!*' said he, as I stood ready to drop with fear at the door of the box, 'this has been one of thy doings, eh?'

"'Yes, sire,' muttered I, in a half whisper.

"'And how hast thou dared to spoil an opera in this fashion?' said he, frowning fiercely. 'Answer me, sirrah.'

"'It was your majesty's fault,' said I, becoming reckless of all consequences. 'You didn't seem to care much for all their scraping and blowing, and so I thought the old "*roulade*" might rouse you a bit. You used to like it once, and might still, if the times be not altered.'

"'And they are not,' said he sternly. 'Who art thou, that seem'st to know me thus well?'

"'Old François, that was *maître d'armes* of the Fourth, in Egypt, and who saved you from the stroke of a Mameluke sabre at Chebrheis.'

"'What! the fellow who killed an Austrian prisoner after Marengo? Why, I thought thee dead.'

"'Better for me I had been," said I. 'You wouldn't read my petition. Yes, you may frown away, general,' said I to Duroc, who kept glowering at me like a tiger. 'I began life at the tambour—I have come down to it again—you can't bring me lower, *parbleu!*'

"The Emperor whispered something to the Empress, who turned round toward me and laughed, and then he made a sign for me to withdraw. Before I had got a dozen paces from the box, an aide-de-camp overtook me.

"'François,' said he, 'you are to appear before the medical commission to-morrow, and if their report be favorable, you are to have your old grade of *maître d'armes*.'

"And so it was. Not only was I restored, but they even placed me in the same regiment I served in during the campaigns of Egypt and Italy. The corps, however, was greatly changed since I knew it before; and so I asked the Emperor to appoint me to a voltigeur battalion, where discipline is not so rigid, and pleasant comrades are somewhat more plentiful. I had my wish, gentlemen; and now, with your permission, we'll drink the 'Faubourg St. Antoine,' the cradle of our arm of the service."

In repeating "Maître François's" tale, I could only wish it might have one-half the success with my reader it met with from his comrades of the bivouac; this, however, I cannot look for, and must leave it and him to their fortunes, and now turn to follow the course of my own.

François was not the only one who felt surprised at my being able to resist the pleasures of a voltigeur's life; and my companion the corporal looked upon my determination to join the hussar brigade as one of those extraordinary instances of duty

predominating over inclination. "Not," said he, "but there may be brave fellows and good soldiers among the dragoons; though having a horse to ride is a sore drawback on a man's courage; and when one has felt the confidence of standing face to face, and foot to foot with the enemy, I cannot see how he can ever bring himself to fight in any other fashion."

"A man can accustom himself to anything, corporal," said an old, hardy-looking soldier, who sat smoking with the most profound air of thoughtful reflection. "I remember being in the 'dromedary brigade' at Cairo; few of us could keep our seats at first; and when we fell off, it was often hard enough to resist the Mamelukes and hold the beasts besides; but even that we learned with time."

This explanation, little flattering as it was to the cavalry, seemed to convince the listeners that time, which smooths so many difficulties, will even make a man content to be a dragoon.

"Well, since you will not be 'of ours,'" said François, "let us drink a parting cup, and say good-by, for I hear the bugles sounding the call."

"A health to the 'Faubourg St. Antoine,' boys," cried I, and a hearty cheer re-echoed the toast; and with many a shake-hands, and many a promise of welcome, whenever I saw the error of my ways sufficiently to doff the dolman for the voltigeur's jacket, I took leave of the gallant Twenty-second, and set out toward Weimar.

CHAPTER LXX.

BERLIN AFTER "JENA."

As the battle of Austerlitz was the death-blow to the empire of Austria, so with the defeat at Jena did Prussia fall, and that great kingdom became a prey to the conquering Napoleon. Were this a fitting place, it might be curious to inquire into the causes which involved a ruin so sudden and so complete; and how a vast and highly organized army seemed at one fell stroke annihilated and destroyed.

The victories of Jena and Auerstädt, great and decisive as they were, were nevertheless inadequate to such results; and if the genius of the Emperor had not been as prompt to follow up as to gain a battle, they never would have occurred. But scarcely had the terrible contest ceased, when he sent for the Saxon officers who were taken prisoners, and addressing them in a tone of kindness, declared at once that they were at liberty and might return to their homes, first pledging their words not to carry arms against France or her allies. One hundred and twenty officers of different grades, from lieutenant-general downward, gave this promise, and retired to their own country, extolling the generosity of Napoleon. This first step was soon followed up by another and more important one; negotiations were opened with the Elector of Saxony, and the title of king offered to him, on condition of his joining the Confederacy of the Rhine; and thus once more the artful policy already pursued with regard to Bavaria in the south, was here renewed in the north of Germany, and with equal success.

This deep-laid scheme deprived the Prussian army of eighteen thousand men, and that on the very moment when defeat and disaster had spread their demoralizing influences through the entire army; several of their greatest generals were killed, many more dreadfully or fatally wounded: Prince Louis, Rüchel, Schmettau, among the former; the Duke of Brunswick and Prince Henry both severely wounded; the duke survived but a few days, and these in the greatest suffering; Marshal Möllendorf, the veteran of nigh eighty years, had his chest pierced by a lance. Here was misfortune enough to cause dismay and despair, for, unhappily, the nation itself was but an army in feeling and organization, and with defeat every hope died out, and every arm was paralyzed. The patriotism of the people had taken its place beneath a standard, which, when once lowered before a conqueror, nothing more remained. Such is the destiny of a military monarchy; its only vitality is victory—the hour of disaster is its death-blow.

The system of a whole corps capitulating, which the Prussians had not scrupled to sneer at when occurring in Austria, now took place here with even greater rapidity. Scarcely a day passed that some regiment did not lay down their arms, and surrender *sur parole*. A panic spread through the whole length and breadth of the land; places of undoubted strength were surrendered as insecure and untenable. No rest nor respite was allowed the vanquished: the gay plumes of the lancers fluttered over the vast plains in pursuit; columns of infantry poured in every direction through the kingdom; and the eagles glittered in every town and every village of conquered Prussia. Never did the spirit of Napoleon display itself more pitiless than in this campaign, for, while in his every act he

evinced a determination to break down and destroy the nation, the *Moniteur* at Paris teemed with articles in derision of the army whose bravery he should never have questioned. Even the gallant leaders themselves —old and scarred warriors—were contemptuously described as blind and infatuated fanatics, undeserving of clemency or consideration. Not thus should he have spoken of the noble Prince Louis and the brave Duke of Brunswick. They fought in a good cause, and they met the death of gallant soldiers. "I will make their nobles beg their bread upon the highways," was the dreadful sentence he uttered at Weimar, and the words were never forgotten.

The conduct and bearing of the Emperor was the more insulting from its contrast with that of his marshals and generals, many of whom could not help acknowledging in their acts the devotion and patriotism of their vanquished foes. Murat lost no occasion to evince this feeling, and sent eight colonels of his own division to carry the pall at General Schmettau's funeral, who was interred with all the honors due to one who had been the companion of the Great Frederick himself.

Soult, Bernadotte, Augereau, Ney, and Davoust, with the several corps under their command, pursued the routed forces with untiring hostility. In vain did the King of Prussia address a supplicating letter asking for a suspension of arms. Napoleon scarcely deigned a reply, and ordered the advanced guard to march on Berlin.

But a year before and he had issued his royal mandates from the palace of the Cæsars, and he burned now to date his bulletins from the palace of the Great Frederick; and on the tenth day after the battle of Jena the troops of Lannes's division bivouacked in the plain around Potsdam.

I had joined my brigade the day previous, and entered Berlin with them on the morning of the 23d of October.

The preparations for a triumphal entry were made on the day before, and by noon the troops approached the capital, in all the splendor of full equipment. First came the grenadiers of Oudinot's brigade, one of the finest corps in the French army; their bright yellow facings and shoulder-knots had given them the *sobriquet* of the '*Grenadiers jaunes.*' They formed part of Davoust's force at Auerstädt, and were opposed to the Prussian guard in the greatest shock of the entire day. After them came two battalions of the *Chasseurs à pied* —a splendid body of infantry—the remnant of four thousand who went into battle on the morning of the fifteenth. Then followed a brigade of artillery, each gun-carriage surmounted by a Prussian standard. These again were succeeded by the red lancers of Berg, with Murat himself at their head; for they were his own regiment, and he felt justly proud of such followers. The grand duke was in all the splendor of his full dress, and wore a Spanish hat, looped up, with an immense brilliant in front, and a plume of ostrich feathers floated over his neck and shoulders. Two hundred and forty chosen men of the Imperial Guard marched two and two after these, each carrying a color taken from the enemy in battle. Nansouty's cuirassiers came next; they had suffered severely at Jena, and were obliged to muster several of their wounded men to fill up the gaps in their squadrons. Then there were the horse artillery brigade, whose uniforms and equipments, notwithstanding every effort to conceal it, showed the terrible effects of the great battle. General d'Auvergne's division, with the hussars and the light cavalry attached, followed; these were succeeded by the voltigeurs, and eight battalions of the Imperial Guard, whose ranks were closed up with the *Grenadiers à cheval*, and more artillery—in all, a force of eighteen thousand—the *élite* of the French army. Advancing in orderly time, they came—no sound heard save the dull reverberation of the earth as it trembled beneath the columns, when the hoarse challenge to "halt" was called from rank to rank, as often as those in the rear pressed on the leading files—but, as they reached the Brandenburg gate, the band of each regiment burst forth, and the wide Platz resounded with the clang of martial music.

In front of the palace stood the Emperor, surrounded by his staff, which was joined in succession by each general of brigade as his corps moved by. A simple acknowledgment of the military salute was all Napoleon gave as each battalion passed, until the small party of the Imperial Guard appeared, bearing the captured colors; then his proud features relaxed, his eye flashed and sparkled, and he lifted his chapeau straight above his head, and remained uncovered the whole time they were marching past. This was the moment when enthusiasm could no longer be restrained, and a cry of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" burst forth, that, caught up by those behind, rose in ten thousand echoes along the distant suburbs of Berlin.

To look upon that glorious and glittering band, bronzed with battle, their proud faces lit up with all the pride of victory,

was indeed a triumph; and one instinctively turned to see the looks of wondering and admiration such a sight must have inspired. But with what sense of sadness came the sudden thought—this is the proud exultation of the conqueror over the conquered—here come no happy faces and bright looks to welcome those who have rescued them from slavery—here are no voices calling welcome to the deliverer. No: it was a people crushed and trodden down—their hard-won laurels tarnished and dishonored—their country enslaved—their monarch a wanderer, no one knew where.

Little thought they who raised the statue of brass to the memory of the Great Frederick, that the clank of French musketry would be heard around it. Rossbach was, indeed, avenged—and cruelly avenged.

Never did a people behave with more dignity under misfortune than the Prussians on the entrance of the French into their capital. The streets were deserted—the houses closed—the city was in mourning, and none stooped to the slavish adulation which might win favor with the conqueror. It was a triumph—but there were none to witness it. Of the nobles, scarce one remained in Berlin. They had fallen in battle, or followed the fortunes of their beaten army, now scattered and dispersed through the kingdom.

Their wives and daughters, in deepest mourning, bewailed their ruined country as they would the death of a dearest friend. They cut off their blonde locks, and sorrowed like those without a hope. Their great country was to be reduced to the rank of a mere German province—their army disbanded—their king dethroned. Such was the contrast to our hour of triumph—such the sad reverse to the gorgeous display of our armed squadrons.

Scarcely had the Emperor established his head-quarters at Potsdam, than the whole administration of the kingdom was begun to be placed under French rule. Prefects were appointed to different departments of the kingdom, a heavy contribution was imposed upon the nation, and all the offices of the State were subjected to the control of persons named by the Emperor. Among these, the first in importance was the post-office; for, while every precaution was taken that no interruption should occur in the transmission of the mails as usual, a "Cabinet Noir" was established here, as at Paris, whose function it was to open the letters of suspected persons, and make copies of them; the latter, indeed, were often so skillfully executed as to be forwarded to the address, while the originals were preserved as "proofs" against parties, if it were found necessary to accuse them afterward. And here I might mention, that the art of depositing metals in a mold by galvanic process was known and used in imitating and fabricating the seals of various writers, many years before the discovery became generally known in Europe.

The invasion of private right involved in this breach of trust, gave, as might be supposed, the greatest offense throughout the kingdom; but the severity with which every case of suspicious meaning was followed up and punished, converted the feelings of indignation and anger into those of fear and trepidation—for this was ever part of Napoleon's policy. The penalty of any offense was made to exclude the sense of ridicule its own littleness might have created, and men felt indisposed to jest where their mirth might end in melancholy.

The most remarkable case, and that which, more than any other, impressed the public mind of the period, was that of the Prince de Hatzfeld, whose letter to the King of Prussia was opened at the post-office, and made the subject of a capital charge against him. Its contents were, as might be imagined from the channel of transmission, not such as could substantiate any treasonable intention on his part. A respectful homage to his dethroned sovereign—a detail of the mournful feeling experienced throughout his capital—and some few particulars of the localities occupied by the French troops, was the entire; and for this he was tried and condemned to death—a sentence which the Emperor commanded to be executed before sunset that same day. Happily for the fate of the noble prince, as for the fair fame of Napoleon, both Duroc and Rapp were ardently attached to him, and, at their earnest entreaties, his life was spared; but the impression which the circumstances made upon the minds of the inhabitants was deep and lasting, and there was a day to come when all these insults were to be remembered and avenged. If I advert to the occurrence here, it is because I have but too good reason to bear memory of it, influencing, as it did, my own future fortunes.

It chanced that one evening, when sitting in a café with some of my brother officers, the subject of the Prince de Hatzfeld's offense was mooted; and, in the unguarded freedom with which one talks to his comrades, I expressed myself delighted at the clemency of the Emperor, and conceived that he could have no part in the breach of confidence which led to the ac-

cusation, nor countenance in any way his prosecution. My companions, who had little sympathy for Prussians, and none for aristocracy whatever, took a different view of the matter, and scrupled not to regret that the sentence of the court-martial had not been executed. The discussion grew warm between us, the more, as I was alone in my opinion, and assailed by several, who overbore me with loud speaking. Once or twice, too, an obscure taunt was thrown out against aliens and foreigners, who, it was alleged, never could at heart forgive the ascendancy of France and Frenchmen.

To this I replied hotly, for, while not taking to myself an insult which my conduct in the service palpably refuted, I was hurt and offended. Alas! I knew too well in my heart what sacrifices I had made in changing my country—how I had bartered all the hopes which attach to one's fatherland for a career of mere selfish ambition. Long since had I seen that the cause I fought in was not that of liberty, but despotism. Napoleon's glory was the dazzling light which blinded my true vision; and my following had something of infatuation, against which reason was powerless. I say, that I answered these taunts with hasty temper; and, carried away by a momentary excitement, I told them, that they it was, not I, who would detract from the fair renown of the Emperor.

"The traits you would attribute to him," said I, "are not those of strength, but weakness. Is it the conqueror of Egypt, of Austria, and now of Prussia, who need stoop to this? We cannot be judges of his policy, or the great events which agitate Europe. We would pronounce most ignorantly on the greatness of his plans regarding the destinies of nations; but, on a mere question of high and honorable feeling, of manly honesty, why should we not speak? And here I say this act was never his."

A smile of sardonic meaning was the only reply this speech met with, and one by one the officers rose and dropped off, leaving me to ponder over the discussion, in which I now remembered I had been betrayed into a warmth beyond discretion.

This took place early in November, and, as it was not referred to in any way afterward by my comrades, I soon forgot it. My duties occupied me from morning till night; for General d'Auvergne being in attendance on the Emperor, had handed me over for the time to the department of the adjutant-general of the army, where my knowledge of German was found useful.

On the 17th of the month a general order was issued, containing the names of the various officers selected for promotion, as well as of those on whom the cross of the "Legion" was to be conferred. Need I say with what a thrill of exultation I read my own name among the latter, nor my delight at finding it followed by the words, "By order of his Majesty the Emperor, for a special service on the 13th October, 1806." This was the night before the battle, and now I saw that I had not been forgotten, as I feared—here was proof of the Emperor's remembrance of me. Perhaps the delay was intended to test my prudence as to secrecy, and perhaps it was deemed fitting that my name should not appear except in the general list; in any case, the long-wished reward was mine—the proud distinction I had desired for so many a day and night.

The distribution of the "cordons" was always made the occasion of a grand military spectacle, and the Emperor determined that the present one should convey a powerful impression of the effective strength of his army, as well as of its perfect equipment; and accordingly orders were dispatched to the different generals of division within twelve or fifteen leagues of Berlin, to march their corps to the capital. The 28th of November was the day fixed for this grand display, and all was bustle and preparation for the event.

On the morning of the 22d, I received an official note from the bureau of the adjutant-general, desiring me to wait on him before noon that same day. Concluding it referred to my promised promotion to the "Legion," it was with somewhat of a fluttered and excited feeling I found myself, at some few minutes after eleven o'clock, in the ante-chamber, which already was crowded with officers, some seeking, some summoned to an interview.

In the midst of the buzz of conversation, which, despite the reserve of the place, still prevailed, I heard my name called, and followed an aide-de-camp along a passage into a large room, which opened into a smaller apartment, where, standing with his back to the fire, I perceived Marshal Berthier, his only companion being an officer in a staff uniform, busily engaged writing at a table.

"You are Captain Burke, of the Eighth Hussars, I believe, sir?" said the Marshal, reading slowly from a slip of paper he held twisted round one finger.

"Yes, sir."

"By birth an Irishman," continued the Marshal; "entered at the Polytechnique in

August, 1801. Am I correct?" I bowed. "Subsequently accused of being concerned in the conspiracy of Georges and Pichegru," resumed he, as he raised his eyes slightly from the paper, and fixed them searchingly upon me.

"Falsely so, sir," was my only reply.

"You were acquitted — that's enough: a reprimand for imprudence, and a slight punishment of arrest, was all. Since that time, you have conducted yourself, as the report of your commanding officer attests, with zeal and steadiness."

He paused here, and seemed as if he expected me to say something; but as I thought the whole a most strange commencement to the ceremony of investing me with a cross of the Legion, I remained silent.

"At Paris, when attached to the *élite*, you appear to have visited the Duchess of Montserrat, and frequented her *soirées*."

"Once, sir, but once, I was in the house of the duchess; my visit could scarcely have occupied as many minutes as I have spent here this morning."

"Dined occasionally at the Moisson d'Or," continued the Marshal, not noticing in any way my reply. "Well, as I believe you are now aware that there are no secrets with his majesty's government, perhaps you will inform me what are your relations with the Chevalier Duchesne?"

For some minutes previous my mind was dwelling on that personage, and I answered the question in a few words, by stating the origin of our acquaintance, and briefly adverting to its course.

"You correspond with the chevalier?" said he, interrupting.

"I have never done so, nor is it likely, from the manner in which we parted last, that I ever shall."

"This scarcely confirms that impression, sir," said the Marshal, taking an open letter from the table and holding it up before me. "You know his handwriting—is that it?"

"Yes; I have no doubt it is."

"Well, sir, that letter belongs to you; you may take and read it. There is enough there, sir, to make your conduct the matter of a court-martial; but I am satisfied that a warning will be sufficient. Let this be such then. Learn, sir, that the plottings of a poor and mischievous party harmonize ill with the duties of a brave soldier, and that a captain of the Guards might choose more suitable associates than the dupes and double-dealers of the Faubourg St. Germain. There is your brevet to the Legion, signed by the Emperor; I shall return it to his majesty. Mayhap at some future period your conduct may merit differently. I need hardly say that a gentleman so very little particular in the choice of his friends would be a most misplaced subject for the honor of the 'Legion.'"

He waved his hand in sign for me to withdraw, and, overwhelmed with confusion, I bowed and left the room; nor was it till the door closed behind me that I felt how cruelly and unjustly I had been treated; then suddenly the blood rushed to my face and temples, my head seemed as if it would burst at either side, and forgetting every circumstance of place and condition, I seized the handle of the door and wrenched it open.

"Marshal," said I, with the fearlessness of one resolved at any risk to vindicate his character, "I know nothing of this letter —I have not read one line of it. I have no further intimacy with the writer than an officer has with his comrade; but if I am to be the subject of 'espionage' to the police—if my chance acquaintances in the world are to be matter of charges against my fealty and honor—if I who have nothing but my sword and my epaulette—"

When I had got thus far I saw the marshal's face turn deadly pale, while the officer at the table made a hurried sign to me with his finger to be silent. The door closed nearly at the same instant, and I turned my head round, and there stood the Emperor. The figure is still before me—he was standing still, his hands behind his back, and his low chapeau deeply pressed upon his brows. His gray frock was open, and looked as if disordered from haste.

"What is this?" said he, in that hissing tone he always assumed when in moments of passion—"what is this? Are we in the bureau of a minister, or is this the *salle de police?* Who are you, sir?"

It was not until the question had been repeated that I found courage to reply. But he waited not for my answer, as, snatching the open letter from my fingers, he resumed:

"It is not thus, sir, you should come here. Your petition or memorial—Ha? *parbleu!* what is this?"

At the instant his eyes fell upon the writing, and as suddenly his face grew almost livid. With the rapidity of lightning he seemed to peruse the lines. Then, waving his hand, he motioned toward the door, and muttered, "Wait without."

Like one awaking from a dreadful dream, I stood, endeavoring to recall my faculties, and assure myself how much there might be of reality in my wandering fancies, when

I perceived that a portion of the letter remained between my fingers as the Emperor snatched it from my hand.

A half-finished sentence was all I could make out; but its tone made me tremble for what the rest of the epistle might contain:

"Surpassed themselves, of course, my dear Burke; and so has the Emperor too. It remained for the campaign in Prussia to prove that one hundred and eighty-five thousand prisoners can be taken from an army numbering one hundred and fifty-four thousand men. As to Davoust, who really had all the fighting, though he wrote no bulletin, all Paris feels—"

Such was the morsel I had saved—such a specimen of the insolence of the entire.

The dreadful fact then broke suddenly upon me, that this letter had been written by Duchesne to effect my ruin; and, as I stood stupefied with terror, the door was suddenly opened, and the Emperor passed out. His eyes were turned on me as he went, and I shrank back from their expression of withering anger.

"Captain Burke!" said a voice from within the room, for the door continued open.

I entered slowly, but with a firm step. My mind was made up; and, in the force of a resolute determination, I found strength for whatever might happen.

"It would appear, sir," said the Marshal, addressing me with a stern and severe expression of features—"it would appear that you permit yourself the widest liberty in canvassing the acts of his Majesty the Emperor; for I find you here mentioned"—he took a paper from the table as he spoke—"as declaiming, in a public *café*, on the subject of the Prince de Hatzfeld, and expressing in no measured terms your disapproval of his imprisonment."

"All that I said upon the subject, sir, so far as I can recollect, was in praise of the Emperor for clemency so well bestowed."

"There was no high-flown sentiment on the breach of honorable confidence effected in opening private letters," said the Marshal, sarcastically.

"Yes, sir, I do remember expressing myself strongly on that head."

"I am not surprised, sir," interrupted he, "at your indignation; your own conscience must have prompted you on the occasion. When a gentleman has such correspondents as the Chevalier Duchesne, he may well feel on a point like this. But enough of this. I have his majesty's orders regarding you, which are as follows—"

"Forgive me, I beg you, sir, the liberty of interrupting you for one moment. I am an alien, and, therefore, little versed in the habits and usages of the land for whose service I have shed my blood; but I am sure a Marshal of France will not refuse a kindness to an officer of the army, however humble his station. I merely ask the answer to one question."

"What is it?" said the Marshal, quickly.

"Am I, as an officer, at liberty to resign my grade, and quit the service?"

"Yes, *parbleu!*" said he, reddening—"yes, that you are."

"Then, here I do so," rejoined I, drawing my sword from its scabbard. "The career I can no longer follow honorably and independently, I shall follow no more."

"Your corps, sir?" said the Marshal.

"The Eighth Hussars of the Guard."

"Take a note of that, Gardanne. I shall spare you all unnecessary delay in tendering a written resignation of your rank. I accept it now. You leave Berlin in twenty-four hours."

I bowed, and was silent.

"Your passport shall be made out for Paris; you shall receive it to-morrow morning." He motioned with his hand toward the door as he concluded, and I left the room.

The moment I felt myself alone, the courage which had sustained me throughout at once gave way, and I leaned against the wall, and covered my face with my hands. Yes, I knew it in my heart, the whole dream of life was over. The path of glory was closed to me forever. All the hopes on which, in sanguine hours, I used to feed my heart, were scattered; and to the miseries of my exiled lot were now added the sorrows of an unfriended, companionless existence. The thought that no career was open to me came last—for at first I only remembered all I was leaving not the dark future before me—yet, when I called to mind the injustice with which I had been treated—the system of "espionage" to which, as an alien more particularly, I was exposed—I felt I had done right, and that to have remained in the service at such a sacrifice of my personal independence would have been base and unworthy.

With a half-broken heart and faltering step I regained my quarters, where again my grief burst forth with more violence than at first. Every object about recalled to me the career I was leaving forever; and wherever my eye rested, some emblem lay to open fresh stores of sorrow.

The pistols I carried at Elchingen, a gift from General d'Auvergne; an Austrian

sabre I had taken from its owner, still ornamented with a little knot of ribbon Minette had fastened to the hilt, hung above the chimney, and I could scarce look on them without tears. On the table still lay open the 'ordre du jour" which named me to the Legion of Honor; and now—the humblest soldier that carried his musket in the ranks was my superior. Not all the principle on which I founded my resolve was proof against this first outburst of my sorrow.

The chivalrous ardor of a soldier's life had long supplied to me the place of those appliances to happiness which other men possess. Each day I followed it the path grew dearer to me. Every bold and daring feat, every deed of enterprise or danger, seemed to bring me, in thought at least, nearer to him whose greatness was my idolatry; and now, all this was to be as a mere dream—a thing which had been, and was to be no more.

While I revolved such sad reflections, a single knock came to my door. I opened it, and saw a soldier of my own regiment. His dress was travel-stained and splashed, and he looked like one off a long journey. He knew me at once, and accosted me by name, as he presented a letter from General d'Auvergne.

"You've had a smart ride," said I, as I surveyed his flushed face and disordered uniform.

"Yes, captain, from the 'Oder.' Our division is full twelve leagues from this. I left on yesterday morning, for the general was particular that the charger should not suffer on the way; as if a beast like that would mind double the distance."

By this time I had opened the letter, which merely contained the following few lines:

"My Dear Burke,—Every new arrival here has brought me some fresh intelligence of you, and of your conduct at Jena; nor can I say with what pride I have heard that the Emperor has included you among the list of the 'décorés.' This is the day I often prophesied for you, and the true and only refutation against the calumnies of the false-hearted and the envious. I send you a Polish charger for your gala review. Accept him from me, and believe that you have no warmer friend, nor more affectionate than yours,

"D'Auvergne, Lieut.-Gen.

"Encampment on the Oder, Nov. 21, 1806."

Before I had finished reading the letter, my eyes grew so dimmed I could scarcely trace the letters. Each word of kindness, every token of praise, now cut me to the heart. How agonizing are the congratulations of friends on those events in life where our own conscience bears reproach against us—how poignant the self-accusation that is elicited by undeserved eulogy! How would *he* think of my conduct? By what means should I convince *him* that no alternative remained to me? I turned away lest the honest soldier should witness my trouble, and, as I approached the window, I beheld, in the court-yard beneath, the beautiful charger which, with the full trappings of a hussar saddle, stood proudly flapping his deep flanks with his long silken tail. With what a thrill I surveyed him! —how my heart leaped, as I fancied myself borne along on the full tide of battle, each plunge he gave responsive to the stroke of my sword-arm! For an instant I forgot all that had happened, and gazed on his magnificent crest and splendid shape with an ecstasy of delight.

"Ay," said the dragoon, whose eyes were riveted in the same quarter, "there's not a Marshal of France so well mounted; and he knows the trumpet-call like the oldest soldier of the troop."

"You will return to-morrow," said I, recovering myself suddenly, and endeavoring to appear composed and at ease. "Well, then, to-night, I shall give you an answer for the general. Be here at eight o'clock."

I saw that my troubled air and broken voice had not escaped the soldier's notice, and was glad when the door closed, and I was again alone.

My first care was to write to the general; nor was it till after many efforts I succeeded to my satisfaction in conveying, in a few and simple words, the reasons of that step which must embitter my future life. I explained how deeply continued mistrust had wounded me; how my spirit, as a soldier and a gentleman, revolted at the "espionage" established over my actions; that it was in weighing these insults against the wreck of all my hopes, I had chosen that path which had neither fame, nor rank, nor honor, but still left me an untrammeled spirit, and a mind at peace with itself.

"I have now," said I, "to begin the world anew, without one clue to guide me. Every illusion with which I had invested life has left me; I must choose both a career and a country, and bear with me from this nothing but the heartfelt gratitude I shall ever retain for one who befriended me through weal and woe, and whose memory I shall bless while I live."

I felt relieved and more at ease when I

finished this letter; the endeavor to set my conduct in its true light to another had also its effect upon my own convictions. I knew, besides, that I had sacrificed to my determination all my worldly prospects, and believed, that where self-interest warred with principle, the right course could scarcely be doubtful.

All this time, not one thought ever occurred to me how I was to meet the future. It was strange, but so perfectly had the present crisis filled my mind, there was not room for even a glance at what was to come.

My passport was made out for Paris, and thither I must go. So much was decided for me without intervention on my part; and now it only remained for me to dispose of the little trappings of my former estate, and take the road.

The Jews who always accompanied the army, offered a speedy resource in this emergency. My anxiety to leave Berlin by daybreak, and thus avoid a meeting of any acquaintances there, made me accept of the sums they offered. To them such negotiations were of daily occurrence, and they well knew how to profit by them. My whole worldly wealth consisted of two hundred Napoleons, and with this small pittance to begin life, I sat myself down to think whither I should turn, or what course adopt.

The night passed over thus, and when day dawned, I had not closed my eyes. About four o'clock, the diligence in which I had secured a place for Weimar drew up at my door. I hurried down, and mounting to a seat beside the conducteur, I buried my face in the folds of my cloak, nor dared to look up until we had passed beyond the precincts of the city, and were traveling along on the vast plain of sand which surrounds Berlin.

The conducteur was a Prussian, and divining my military capacity in my appearance, he maintained a cold and distant civility; never speaking, except when spoken to, and even then in as few words as possible. This was itself a relief to me; my heart was too full of its own sufferings to find pleasure in conversation, and I dreamed away the hours till nightfall.

CHAPTER LXXI.

A FOREST PATH.

When I reached Weimar, I quitted the diligence, resolved to make the remainder of the journey on foot, for thus I should both economize the little means I possessed, and escape many of the questionings and inquiries to which, as a traveler by public conveyance, I was exposed. Knapsack on shoulder then, and staff in hand, I plodded onward; and although frequently coming up with others on their way homeward, I avoided all companionship with those whom I could no longer think of as comrades.

The two tides of population which met upon that great highway told the whole history of war. Here came the young soldiers, fresh enrolled in the conscription, glowing with ardor, and bounding with life and buoyancy, and mingling their village songs with warlike chants. There, footsore and weary, with tattered uniform and weatherbeaten look, toiled along the tired veteran, turning, as he went, a glance of compassionate contempt on those whose wild "*vivas*" burst forth in greeting. As for me, I could neither partake of the high hopes of the one, nor sympathize with the war-worn nature of the other. Disappointment, bitter disappointment in every cherished expectation, had thrown a chill over me, and I wanted even the energy to become reckless. In this state, I did not dare to face the future, but in moody despondency reflected on the past. Was this the destiny Marie de Meudon predicted for me? was the ever-present thought of my mind. Is it thus I should appear before her?

A hundred times came the thought to join the new levies as a soldier, to carry a musket in the ranks; but then came back in all its force the memory of the distrust and suspicion my services had met with; the conviction hourly became clearer to me, that I fought not for liberty, but despotism—that it was not freedom, but slavery, in whose cause I shed my blood.

To avoid meeting with the detachments which each day occupied the road, I turned from the chaussée on passing Eisenach, and took a forest path that led through Murbach to Fulda. My path led through the Creutz Mountains, a wild and unfrequented tract of country, where few cottages were to be seen, and scarcely a village existed. Vast forests of dark pines, or bleak and barren mountains, stretched away on either side; a few patches of miserable tillage here and there met the view; but the scene was one of saddening influence, and harmonized but too nearly with my own despondency.

To reach a place of shelter for the night, I was more than once obliged to walk twelve leagues during the day, and had thus to set out before daylight. This exertion,

however, brought its own reward: the stimulant of labor, the necessity of a task, gradually allayed the mental irritation I suffered under; a healthier and more manly tone of thinking succeeded to my former regrets, and with a heart elevated, if not cheered, I continued my way.

The third day of my toilsome journey was drawing to a close—a mass of heavy and lowering clouds, dark and thunder-charged, slowly moved along the sky—and a low, moaning sound, that seemed to sigh along the ground, boded the approach of a storm. I was still three leagues from my halting-place, and began to deliberate within myself whether the dense pine wood, which came down to the side of the road, might not afford a safer refuge from the hurricane, than the chances of reaching a house before it broke forth.

The shepherds who frequented these dreary tracts often erected little huts of bark as a shelter against the cold and severity of the wintry days, and to find out one of these now was my great endeavor. Scarcely had I formed the resolve, when I perceived a small path opening into the wood, at the entrance to which a piece of board nailed against the trunk of a tree, gave tidings that such a place of security was not far distant. These signs of forest life I had learned in my wanderings, and now strode forward with renewed vigor.

The path led gradually upward, along the mountain side, which soon became so incumbered with brushwood that I had much difficulty in pushing my way; and at last began to doubt whether I might not have wandered from the track. The darkness was now complete—night had fallen, and a heavy crashing rain poured down upon the treetops, but could not penetrate through their tangled shelter. The wind, too, swept in loud gusts above, and the long-threatened storm began. A loud, deafening roar, like that of the sea itself, arose, as the leafy branches bent before the blast, or snapped with sudden shock beneath the hurricane; clap after clap of thunder resounded, and then the rain descended in torrents—the heavy drops, at last, trickling from leaf to leaf, reaching me as I stood. Once more I pushed forward, and had not gone many paces when the red glare of a fire caught my eye. Steadfastly fastening my gaze upon the flame, I hurried on, and at length perceived with ecstasy that the light issued from the window of a small hovel, such as I have already mentioned. To gain the entrance of the hut I was obliged to pass the window, and could not resist the temptation to give a glance at the interior, whose cheerful blaze betokened habitation.

It was not without surprise that, instead of the figure of a shepherd reposing beside his fire, I beheld that of an old man, whose dress bespoke the priest, kneeling in deep devotion at the foot of a small crucifix attached to the wall. Not all the wild sounds of the raging storm seemed to turn his attention from the object of his worship—his eyes were closed, but the head thrown backward showed his face upturned, when the lips moved rapidly in prayer. Never had I beheld so perfect a picture of intense devotional feeling—every line in his marked countenance indicated the tension of a mind filled with one engrossing thought, while his tremulous hands, clasped before him, shook with the tremor of strong emotion.

What a contrast to the loud warring of the elements that peaceful figure, raised above earth and its troubles, in the spirit of his holy communing—how deeply touching the calm serenity of his holy brow, with the rolling crash of falling branches, and the deep baying of the storm! I did not dare to interrupt him, and when I did approach the door it was with silent step and noiseless gesture. As I stood, the old priest—for now I saw that he was such—concluded his prayer, and detaching his crucifix from the wall, he kissed it reverently, and placed it in his bosom; then, rising slowly from his knees, he turned toward me. A slight start of surprise, as quickly followed by a smile of kindly greeting, escaped him, while he said in French,

"You are welcome, my son—come in and share with me the shelter, for it is a wild night."

"A wild night, indeed, father," said I, casting my eyes around the little hut, where nothing indicated the appearance of habitation. "I could have wished you a better home than this against the storms of winter."

"I am a traveler like yourself," said he, smiling at my mistake; "and a countryman, too, if I mistake not."

The accents in which these words were spoken pronounced him a Frenchman, and a very little sufficed to ratify the terms of our companionship; and having thrown a fresh billet on the fire, we both seated ourselves before it. My wallet was, fortunately, better stored than the good father's, and having produced its contents, we supped cheerfully, and like men who were not eating their first bivouac meal.

"I perceive, father," said I, as I remarked the manner in which he disposed of his viands—"I perceive you have campaigned

ere now—the habits of the service are not easily mistaken."

"I did not need that observation of yours," replied he, laughing slightly, "to convince me you were a soldier; for, as you truly say, the camp leaves its indelible traces behind it. You are hastening on to Berlin, I suppose?"

I blushed deeply at the question—the shame of my changed condition had been hitherto confined to my own heart, but now it was to be confessed before a stranger.

"I ask your pardon, my son, for a question I had no right to ask—and even there, again, I but showed my soldier education. I am returning to France, and in seeking a short path from Eisenach, found myself where you see, as night was falling, well content to be so well lodged—all the more, if I am to have your companionship."

Few and simple as these words were, there was a tone of frankness in them, not less than the evidence of a certain good breeding, by which he apologized for his own curiosity in speeking thus freely of himself, that satisfied me at once; and I hastened to inform him that circumstances had induced me to leave the service, in which I had been a captain, and that I was now, like himself, returning to France.

"You must not think, father," added I, with some eagerness—"You must not think that other reasons than my own free will have made me cease to be a soldier."

"It would ill become me to have borne such a suspicion," interrupted he, quickly. "When one so young and full of life as you are leaves the path where lie honor, and rank, and fame, he must have cause to make the sacrifice—for I can scarce think that, at your age, these things seem nought to your eyes."

"You are right, father, they are not so; they have been my guiding stars for many a day—alas! that they can be such no longer!"

"There are higher hopes to cherish than these," said he, solemnly; "higher than the loftiest longings of ambition, but we all of us cling to the things of life, till in their perishable nature they wean us off with disappointment and sorrow. From such a trial am I now suffering," added he, in a low voice, while the tears rose to his eyes and slowly coursed along his pale cheeks.

There was a pause neither of us felt inclined to break, when at length the priest said,

"What was your corps in the service?"

"The Eighth Hussars of the Guard," said I, trembling at every word.

"Ah, *he* was in the 'Guides,'" repeated he, mournfully, to himself; "you knew the regiment?"

"Yes, they belonged to the Guard also; they wore no epaulettes, but a small gold arrow on the collar."

"Like this," said he, unfastening the breast of his cassock, and taking out a small package, which, among other things, contained the designation of the *Corps des Guides* in an arrow of gold embroidery. "Had he not beautiful hair, long and silky as a girl's?" said he, as he produced a lock of light and sunny brown. "Poor Alphonse! thou wouldst have been twenty hadst thou lived till yesterday. If I shed tears, young man, it is because I have lost the great earthly solace of my solitary life; others have kindred and friends, have happy homes, which, even when bereavements come, with time will heal up the wound—I had but him!"

"He was your nephew, perhaps?" said I, half fearing to interfere with his sorrow.

The old man shook his head in token of dissent, while he muttered to himself,

"Auerstädt may be a proud memory to some, to me it is a word of sorrow and mourning. The story is but a short one—alas! it has but one color throughout:

"Count Louis de Meringues—of whom you have doubtless heard that he rode as postilion to the carriage of his sovereign in the celebrated flight to Varennes—fell by the guillotine the week after the king's trial; the countess was executed on the same scaffold as her husband. I was the priest who accompanied her at the moment, and in my arms she placed her only child, an infant boy of two years. There was a cry among the crowd to have the child executed also, and many called out that the spawn would be a serpent one day, and it were better to crush it while it was time; but the little fellow was so handsome, and looked so winningly around him on the armed ranks and the glancing weapons, that even *their* cruel hearts relented, and he was spared. It is to me like yesterday, as I remember every minute circumstance; I can recall even the very faces of that troubled and excited assemblage, that at one moment screamed aloud for blood, and at the next were convulsed with savage laughter. As I forced my way through the dense array, a rude arm was stretched out from the mass, and a finger dripping with the gore of the scaffold was drawn across the boy's face, while a ruffian voice exclaimed—'The Meringues were ever proud of their blood, let us see if it be redder than other people's.' The child laugh-

ed, and the mob, with horrid mockery, laughed too.

"I took him home with me to my presbytère at Sèvres—for that was my parish—and we lived together in peace until the terrible decree was issued which proclaimed all France atheist; then we wandered southward, toward that good land which, through every vicissitude, was true to its faith and its king, La Vendée. At Lyons we were met by a party of the revolutionary soldiers, who, with a 'commissaire' of the government, were engaged in raising young men for the conscription. Alphonse, who was twelve years old, felt all a boy's enthusiasm at the warlike display before him, and persuaded me to follow the crowd into the 'Place des Terreaux,' where the numbers were read out.

"'Paul Ducos,' cried a voice aloud, as we approached the stage on which the commissary and his staff were standing—'where is this Paul Ducos?'

"'I am here,' replied a fine, frank-looking youth, of some fifteen years; 'but my father is blind, and I cannot leave him.'

"'We shall soon see that,' called out the commissary. 'Clerk, read out his *signalement*.'

"'Paul Ducos, son of Eugène Ducos, formerly calling himself Count Ducos de la Brèche—'

"'Down with the royalists—*à bas* the tyrants!' screamed the mob, not suffering the remainder to be heard.

"'Approach, Paul Ducos,' said the Commissary.

"'Wait here, father,' whispered the youth; 'I will come back presently.' But the old man, a fine and venerable figure, the remnant of a noble race, held him fast, and, as his lips trembled, said, 'Do not leave me, Paul—my child, my comforter, stay near me.'

"The boy looked round him for one face of kindly pity in this emergency, when, turning toward me, he said, rapidly, 'Stand near him.' He broke from the old man's embrace, and, rushing through the crowd, mounted the scaffold.

"'You are drawn for the conscription, young man,' said the Commissary; 'but, in consideration of your father's infirmity, a substitute will be accepted—have you such?'

"The boy shook his head mournfully and in silence.

"'Have you any friend who would assist you here? Bethink you awhile,' rejoined the Commissary, who, for his station and duties, was a kind and benevolent man.

"'I have none; they have left us nothing, neither home nor friends,' said the youth bitterly; 'and, if it were not for his sake, I care not what they do with me.'

"'Down with the tyrants!' yelled the mob, as they heard these haughty words.

"'Then your fate is decreed,' resumed the Commissary.

"'No, not yet!' cried out Alphonse, as, breaking from my side, he gained the steps and mounted the platform—'I will be his substitute!'

"Oh! how shall I tell the bitter anguish of that moment, which at once dispelled the last remaining hope I cherished, and left me destitute forever. As I dashed the tears from my eyes and looked up, the two boys were locked in each other's arms. It was a sight to have melted any heart, save those around them; but bloodshed and crime had choked up every avenue of feeling, and left them, not men, but tigers.

"'Alphonse de Meringues,' cried out the boy, in answer to a question regarding his name.

"'There is no such designation in France,' said a grim-looking, hard-featured man, who, wearing the tricolored scarf, sat at the table beside the clerk.

"'I was never called by any other,' rejoined the youth, proudly.

"'Citizen Meringues,' interposed the Commissary, mildly, 'what is your age?'

"'I know not the years,' replied he; 'but I have heard that I was but an infant when they slew my father.'

"A fierce roar of passion broke from the mob below the scaffold as they heard this, and again the cry broke forth—'Down with the tyrants!'

"'Art thou, then, the son of that base sycophant who rode courier to the Capet to Varennes?' said the hard-featured man at the table.

"'Of the truest gentleman of France,' called out a loud voice from below the platform. '*Vive le roi!*' It was the blind man who spoke, and waved his cap above his head.

"'To the guillotine—to the guillotine!' screamed a hundred voices, in tones wilder than the cries of famished wolves, as, seizing the aged man, they tore his clothes to very rags. In an instant all attention was turned from the platform to the scene below it, where, with shouts and screams of fury, the terrible mob yelled aloud for blood. In vain the guards endeavored to keep back the people, who twice rescued their victim from the hands of the soldiery, and already a confused murmur rose that the commissary himself was a traitor to the

public, and favored the tyrants, when a dull, clanking sound rose above the tumult, and a cheer of triumph proclaimed the approach of the instrument of torture.

"In their impetuous torrent of vengeance they had dragged the guillotine from the distant end of the 'Place,' where it usually stood, and there now still knelt the figure of a condemned man, lashed with his arms behind him, on the platform, awaiting the moment of his doom. Oh! that terrible face, on which death had already set its seal. With glazed, lackluster eye, and cheek leaden and quivering, he gazed around on the fiendish countenances like one awakening from a dream, his lips parted as though to speak, but no sound came forth.

"'Place—place for Monsieur le Marquis!' shouted a ruffian, as he assisted to raise the figure of the blind man up the steps; and a ribald yell of fiendish laughter followed the brutal jest.

"'Thou art to make thy journey in most noble company,' said another to the culprit on the platform.

"'An he see not his way in the next world better than in this, thou must lend him a hand, friend,' said a third. And with many a ruffian joke they taunted their victims, who stood on the last threshold of life.

"Among the crowd upon the scaffold of the guillotine I could see the figure of the blind man as it leaned and fell on either side, as the movement of the mob bore it.

"'*Parbleu!* these royalists would rather kneel than stand,' said a voice, as they in vain essayed to make the old man place his feet under him; and ere the laughter which this rude jest excited ceased, a cry broke forth of—'He is dead—he is dead!' And, with a heavy sumph, the body fell from their hands, for, when their power of cruelty ended, they cared not for the corpse.

"It was true: life was extinct, none knew how—whether from the violence of the mob in its first outbreak, or that a long-suffering heart had burst at last—but the chord was snapped: and he whose proud soul lately defied the countless thousands around, now slept with the dead.

"In a few seconds it seemed as though they felt that a power stronger than their own had interposed between them and their vengeance, and they stood almost aghast before the corpse, where no trace of blood proclaimed it to be their own; then, rallying from this stupor, with one voice they demanded that the son should atone for the crimes of the father.

"'I am ready,' cried the youth, in a voice above the tumult. 'I did not deem I could be grateful to ye for aught, but I am for this.'

"To no purpose did the Commissary propose a delay in the sentence; he was unsupported by his colleagues—the passions of the mob rose higher and higher—the thirst for blood unslaked, became intense and maddening, and they danced in frantic glee around the guillotine, while they chanted one of the demoniac songs of the scaffold.

"In this moment, when the torrent ran in one direction, Alphonse might have escaped all notice, but that the condemned youth turned to embrace him once more before he descended from the platform.

"'They are so sorry to separate, it is a shame to part them,' cried a ruffian in the crowd.

"'You forget, citizen, that this boy is his substitute,' said the Commissary, mildly; 'the Republic must not be cheated of its defenders.'

"'*Vive la République!*' cried the soldiers, and the cry was re-echoed by thousands, while amid their cheers there rose the last faint sigh of an expiring victim.

"The scene was over, the crowd dispersed, and the soldiers marched back to quarters, accompanied by some hundred conscripts, among whom was Alphonse, a vague, troubled expression betokening that he scarce knew what had happened around him.

"The regiment to which he was appointed was at Toulon, and there I followed him. They were ordered to the north of Italy soon after, and thence to Egypt. Through the battle-fields of Mount Tabor and the Pyramids I was ever beside him; on the heights of Austerlitz I stanched his wounds, and I laid him beneath the earth on the field of Auerstädt."

The old man's voice trembled and became feeble as he finished speaking, and a settled expression of grief clothed his features, which were pale as death.

"I must see Sèvres once more," said he, after a pause; "I must look on the old houses of the village, and the little gardens, and the venerable church; they will be the only things to greet me there now, but I must gaze on them ere I close my eyes to this world and its cares."

"Come, come, father," said I, "to one who has acted so noble a part as yours, life is never without its own means of happiness."

"I spoke not of death," replied he, mildly; "but the holy calm of a convent will better suit my seared and worn heart than all that the world calls its joys and

pleasures. You, who are young and full of hope—"

"Alas! father, speak not thus; one can better endure the lowering skies of misfortune as the evening of life draws near, than when the morn of existence is breaking. To me, with youth and health, there is no future—no hope."

"I will not hear you speak thus," said the priest; "fatigue and weariness are on you now. Wait until to-morrow—we shall be fellow-travelers together—and then, if you will reveal to me your story, mayhap my long experience of the world may suggest comfort and consolation where you can see neither."

The storm by this time had abated much of its violence, and across the moon the large clouds were wafted speedily, disclosing bright patches of light at every moment.

"Such is our life here," said the father, "alternating with its days of happiness and sorrow. Let us learn, then, in the dark hour of our destiny, to bear the glare of our better fortunes, for, believe me, that when our joys are greatest, so are our trials also."

He ceased speaking, and I saw that soon afterward his lips moved as if in prayer. I now laid myself down in my cloak beside the fire, and was soon buried in a sleep too sound even for a dream.

CHAPTER LXXII.

A CHANCE MEETING.

With the good priest of Sèvres I journeyed along toward the frontier of France, ever selecting the least frequented paths, and such as were not likely to be taken by the troops of soldiery which daily moved toward Berlin. The frankness of my companion had made me soon at ease with him, and I told him, without reserve, the story of my life, down to the decisive moment of my leaving the army.

"You see, father," said I, "how completely my career has failed—how, with all the ardor of a soldier, with all the devotion of a follower, I have adhered to the Emperor's fortunes, and yet—"

"Your ambition, however great it was, could not stifle conscience. I can believe it well. They who go forth to the wars, with high hopes and bounding hearts—who picture to their minds the glorious rewards of great achievements—should blind their eyes to the horrors and injustice of the cause they bleed for. Any sympathy with misfortune would sap the very principle of that heroism whose essence is success. Men cannot play the double game, even in matters of worldly ambition. Had you not listened to the promptings of your heart, you had been greater; had you not followed the dazzling glare of your hopes, you had been happier—both you could scarcely be. Be assured of this, my son, the triumphs of a country can only be enjoyed by the child of the soil; the brave soldier, who lends his arm to the cause, feels he has little part in the glory."

"True, indeed—most true—I feel it."

"And were it otherwise, how unsatisfying is the thirst for that same glory, how endless the path that leads to it, how many regrets accompany it, how many ties broken, how many friendships forfeited! No, no; return to your own land—to the country of your birth; some honorable career will always present itself to him who seeks but independence, and the integrity of his own heart. Beneath the conquering eagles of the Emperor there are men of every shade of political opinion—for the conscription is pitiless. There are Royalists, who love their king, and hate the usurper; there are Jacobins, who worship freedom, and detest the tyrant; there are stern Republicans—Vendéans, and followers of Moreau—but yet all are Frenchmen. '*La belle France*' is the watchword that speaks to every heart—and patriotism is the bond between thousands. *You* have no share in this. The delusion of national glory can never throw its deception around you. Return, then, to your country, and be assured that, in *her* cause, your least efforts will be more ennobling to yourself than the boldest deeds the hand of a mercenary ever achieved."

The inborn desire to revisit my native land needed but the counsels of the priest to make it all powerful; and as, day by day, I plodded onward, my whole thoughts turned to the chances of my escape, and the means by which I could accomplish my freedom—for the war still continued between France and England, and the blockade of the French ports was strictly maintained by a powerful fleet. The difficulty of the step only increased my desire to effect it; and a hundred projects did I revolve in my mind, without ever being able to fix on one where success seemed likely. The very resolve, however, had cheered my spirits, and given new courage to my heart—and an object suggested a hope—and, with a hope, life was no longer burdensome.

Each morning now I set forward with a mind more at ease, and more open to receive pleasure from the varied objects which met me as I went. Not so my poor

companion; the fatigue of the journey, added to great mental suffering, began to prey upon his health, and brought back an ague he had contracted in Egypt, from the effect of which his constitution had never perfectly recovered.

At first the malady showed itself only in great depression of spirits, which made him silent for hours of the way—but soon it grew worse; he walked with much difficulty—took but little nourishment—and seemed impressed with a sad foreboding that the disease must be fatal.

"I wanted to reach my village—my own quiet churchyard should have been my resting-place," said he, as he sank wearied and exhausted on a little bank at the roadside. "But this was only a sick man's fancy. Poor Alphonse lies far away in the dreary plain of Auerstädt."

The sun was just setting of a clear day in December as we halted on a little eminence, which commanded a distant view on every side. Behind, lay the dark forests of Germany, the tree-tops presenting their massive wavy surface, over which the passing clouds threw momentary shadows; before, but still some miles away, we could trace the Rhine, its bright silver current sparkling in the sun; beyond, lay the great plains of France, and upon these the sick man's eyes rested with a steadfast gaze.

"Yes," said he, after a long silence on both sides, "the fields and the mountains, the sunshine and the shade, are like those of other lands; but the feeling which attaches the heart to country is an inborn sense—and the very word 'home' brings with it the whole history of our affections. Even to look thus at his native country is a blessing to an exile's heart."

I scarcely dared to interrupt the reverie which succeeded these few words; but when I perceived that he still remained seated, his head between his hands, and lost in meditation, I ventured to remind him that we were still above a league from Heimbach, the little village where we should pass the night, and that on a road so wild and unfrequented there was little hope of finding shelter any nearer.

"You must lean on me, father—the night air is fresh and bracing, and after a little it will revive you."

The old man rose without speaking, and, taking my arm, began the descent of the mountain. His steps, however, were tottering and uncertain, his breathing hurried and difficult, and his carriage indicated the very greatest debility.

"I cannot do it, my son," said he, sinking upon the grassy bench which skirted the way; "you must leave me. It matters little now where this frail body rests; a few hours more, and the rank grass will wave above it and the rain beat over it unfelt. Let us part here; an old man's blessing for all your kindness will follow you through life, and may cheer you to think on hereafter."

"Do you then suppose I could leave you thus?" said I, reproachfully; "is it so you think of me?"

"My minutes are few now, my child," replied he, more solemnly, "and I would pass the last moments of my life alone. Well, then, if you will not—leave me now for a little, and return to me; by that time my mind will be calmer, and mayhap, too, my strength greater, and I may be able to accompany you to the village."

I acceded to this proposal the more willingly, because it afforded me the hope of finding some means to convey him to Heimbach; and so, having wrapped him carefully in my cloak, I hastened down the mountain at the top of my speed.

The zig-zag path by which I went discovered to me from time to time the lights of the little hamlet, which twinkled star-like in the valley; and as I drew nearer the confused hum of voices reached me. I listened, and to my amazement heard the deep, hoarse bay of a trumpet. How well I knew that sound—it was the night-call to gather in the stragglers. I stopped to listen, and now, in the stillness, could mark the tramp of horsemen and the clank of their equipments; again the trumpet sounded, and was answered by another at some distance. The road lay straight below me at some hundred yards off, and, leaving the path, I dashed directly downward just as the leading horsemen of a small detachment came slowly up. To their loud "*Qui vive?*" I answered by giving an account of the sick man, and entreating the sergeant who commanded the party to lend assistance to convey him to the village.

"Yes, *parbleu*, that we will," said the honest soldier; "a priest who has made the campaign of Egypt and Austria is worthy of all our care. Where is he?"

"About a mile from this, but the road is not practicable for a horseman."

"Well, you shall have two of my men; they will soon bring him hither;" and, as he spoke, he ordered two troopers to dismount, who quickly disincumbered themselves of their sabres, prepared to follow me.

"We shall expect you at the bivouac," cried the sergeant, as he resumed his way; while I, eager to return, breasted the mountain with renewed energy.

"You belong to the Guard, my friends," said I, as I paused for breath at a turn of the path.

"The Fourth Cuirassiers of the Guard," replied the soldier I addressed; "Milhaud's brigade."

How my heart leaped as he said these words. They were part of the division General d'Auvergne once commanded—it was the regiment of poor Pioche, too, before the dreadful day of Austerlitz.

"You know the Fourth, then?" rejoined the man, as he witnessed the agitation of my manner.

"Know the Fourth?" echoed his comrade, in a voice of half indignant meaning; "*sacrebleu!* who does not know them?—does not all the world know them by this time?"

"It is the Fourth who wear the motto '*Dix contre un*' on their caps," said I, desirous to flatter the natural vanity of my companions.

"Yes, monsieur; I see you have served also."

I answered by a nod, for already every word, every gesture, recalled to me the career I had quitted; and my regrets, so late subdued by reason and reflection, came thronging back, and filled my heart to bursting.

Hurrying onward now, I mounted the steep path, and soon regained the spot I sought. The poor father was sleeping; overcome by fatigue and weariness, he had fallen on the mossy bank, and lay in a deep, soft slumber. Lifting him gently, the strong troopers crossed their hands beneath, and bore him along between them. For an instant he looked up; but seeing me at his side, he merely pressed my hand, and closed his eyes again.

"*Ma foi!*" said one of the dragoons, in a low voice, "I should not be surprised if this were the Père Arsène, who served with the army in Italy. We used to call him old 'Scapulaire.' He was the only priest I ever saw in the van of a brigade. You knew him too, Auguste."

"Yes, that I did," replied the other soldier; "I saw him at Elkankah, where one of ours was unhorsed by a Mameluke, spring forward, and, seizing a pistol at the holster, shoot the Turk through the head, and then kneel down beside the dying man he was with before, and go on with his prayers. *Ventrebleu!* that's what I call discipline."

"Where was that, comrade?"

"At Elkankah."

"At Quoreyn rather, my friend, two leagues to the southward," whispered a low voice.

"*Tonnerre de ciel!*" cried the two soldiers in a breath, "it is himself;" for the words were spoken by the priest, who was no other than the Père Arsène they spoke of. The effort of speech and memory was, however, a mere passing one; for to all their questions he was now deaf, and lay apparently unconscious between them. On me, therefore, they turned their inquiries, but with little more of success; and thus we descended the mountain, eager to reach some place of succor for the good father.

As we approached the village, I was soon made aware of the objects of the party who occupied it. The little street was crowded with cattle, bullocks, and sheep, fast wedged up amid huge wagons of forage and carts of corn, mounted dragoons urging on the jaded animals, regardless of the angry menaces or the impatient appeals incessantly making by the peasantry, who in great numbers had followed their stock from their farms.

The soldiers, who were detachments of different corps, were also quarreling among themselves for their share of the spoil; and these altercations, in which more than once I saw a sabre flash, added to the discord. It was, indeed, a scene of tumult and confusion almost inconceivable. Here were a party of cuirassiers, carbine in hand, protecting a drove of sheep, around which the country people were standing, seemingly irresolute whether they should essay an attack, a movement often prompted by the other soldiers, who hoped in the *mêlée* to seize a part of the prey. Many of the oxen were bestrode by hussars or lancers, whose gay trappings formed a strange contrast with the beasts they rode on; while more than one stately horseman held a sheep before him on the saddle, for whose protection a cocked pistol seemed no ineffectual guarantee.

The task of penetrating this dense and turbulent mob seemed to me almost impossible; and I expressed my fears to the soldiers; but they replied that there were too many "braves" of Egypt there not to remember the Père Arsène; saying which, one of the soldiers, whispering a word to his companion, laid the priest gently upon the ground, and then mounting rapidly on a forage-cart, he shouted, in a voice heard above the din, "Comrades of the Fourth, we have found an old companion—the Père Scapulaire is here. Place for the good father—place there!"

A hundred loud *vivas* welcomed this announcement, for the name was well known to many who never had seen the priest, and

cheer after cheer for the "*bon père*" now rang through this motley assemblage.

To the wild confusion of a moment before the regularity of discipline at once succeeded, and a lane was quickly formed for the soldiers to advance with the priest between them, each horseman saluting as he passed, as if to his general on parade.

"To the Trauben—the Trauben!" cried several voices, as we went along; and this I learned was the little inn of the village, where the non-commissioned officers in charge of the several parties were seated in council to arrange the subdivision of the booty.

Had not a feeling stronger than mere personal consideration occupied me, I would have now left the good priest among his old comrades, with whom he was certain to meet kindness and protection; but I could not so readily part with one whom, even in the few hours of our intercourse, I had learned to like; and, therefore, enduring as well as I was able the rugged insubordination of a soldiery free from the restraint of discipline, I followed on, and soon found myself at the door of the Trauben.

A dismounted dragoon, with drawn sword, guarded the entrance, around which a group of angry peasants were gathered, loudly protesting against the robbery of their flocks and farm-yards. It was with great difficulty I could persuade the sentry to suffer me to enter; and when I at last succeeded, I found none willing to pay any attention to my request regarding a billet for the priest; for, unhappily, his name and character were unknown to those to whom I addressed myself. In this dilemma I was deliberating what step to take, when one of the soldiers who with such zealous devotion had never left us, came up to say that his corporal had just given up his own quarters for the good father's use; and this, happily, was a small summer-house in the garden at the back of the inn.

"He cannot come with us himself," said the soldier, "for he is engaged with the forage rations, but I have got his leave to take the quarters."

A small wicket beside the inn led us into a large, wildly-grown orchard, through which a broad path led to the summer-house in question; at least such we guessed to be the little building from whose windows there gleamed the bright glare of a cheerful fire.

The door lay open into a little hall, from which two doors led into different chambers. Over one of these was marked in chalk "quartier-général," in imitation of the title assigned to a general's quarters, and this the soldiers pronounced must belong to the corporal. I opened it accordingly and entered. The room was small and neatly furnished, and with the blazing wood upon the hearth, looked most comfortable and inviting.

"Yes, we are all right here—I know his helmet, this is it," said the dragoon, "so here we must leave you. You'll tell the good father it was two troopers of the Fourth who carried him hither, won't ye? Ay, and say Auguste Prévot was one of them—he'll know the name; he nursed me in a fever I had in Italy."

"I wish he were able to give me his blessing again," said the other; "I had it before that affair at Brescia, and there were four of my comrades killed about me, and never a shot touched me. But good-night, comrade, good-night." And so saying, having left the father at his length upon a couch, they made their military salute and departed.

A rude-looking flagon of beer which stood on the table was the only thing I could discover in the chamber, save a canvas bag of tobacco and some pipes. I filled a goblet with the liquor and placed it to the priest's lips: he swallowed a little of it, and then opening his eyes, slowly looked around him, while he murmured to my question a faint sound of "Better—much better." I knew enough of such matters to be aware that perfect rest and repose were the greatest aids to his recovery, and so, replenishing the fire, I threw myself down on the large dragoon cloak which lay on the floor, and prepared to pass the night where I was.

The long-drawn breathings of the sleeping man, the perfect quiet and stillness of all around—for though not far distant from the village, the thick wood of trees intercepted every sound from that quarter—and my fatigue combined, soon brought on drowsiness.

I struggled, so long as I was able, against the tendency, but a humming sound filled my ears, the objects grew fainter before my vision, and I sank into that half-dreamy state when consciousness remains, but clouded and indistinct in all its perceptions. Twice the door was opened and some persons entered, but though they spoke loudly, I heard not their words, nor could I recognize their appearance; to this succeeded a deep, sound sleep, the recompense of great fatigue.

The falling of a piece of firewood on the hearth awoke me. I opened my eyes and looked about. The room had no other light than from the embers of the wood fire and the piece of blazing pine which had

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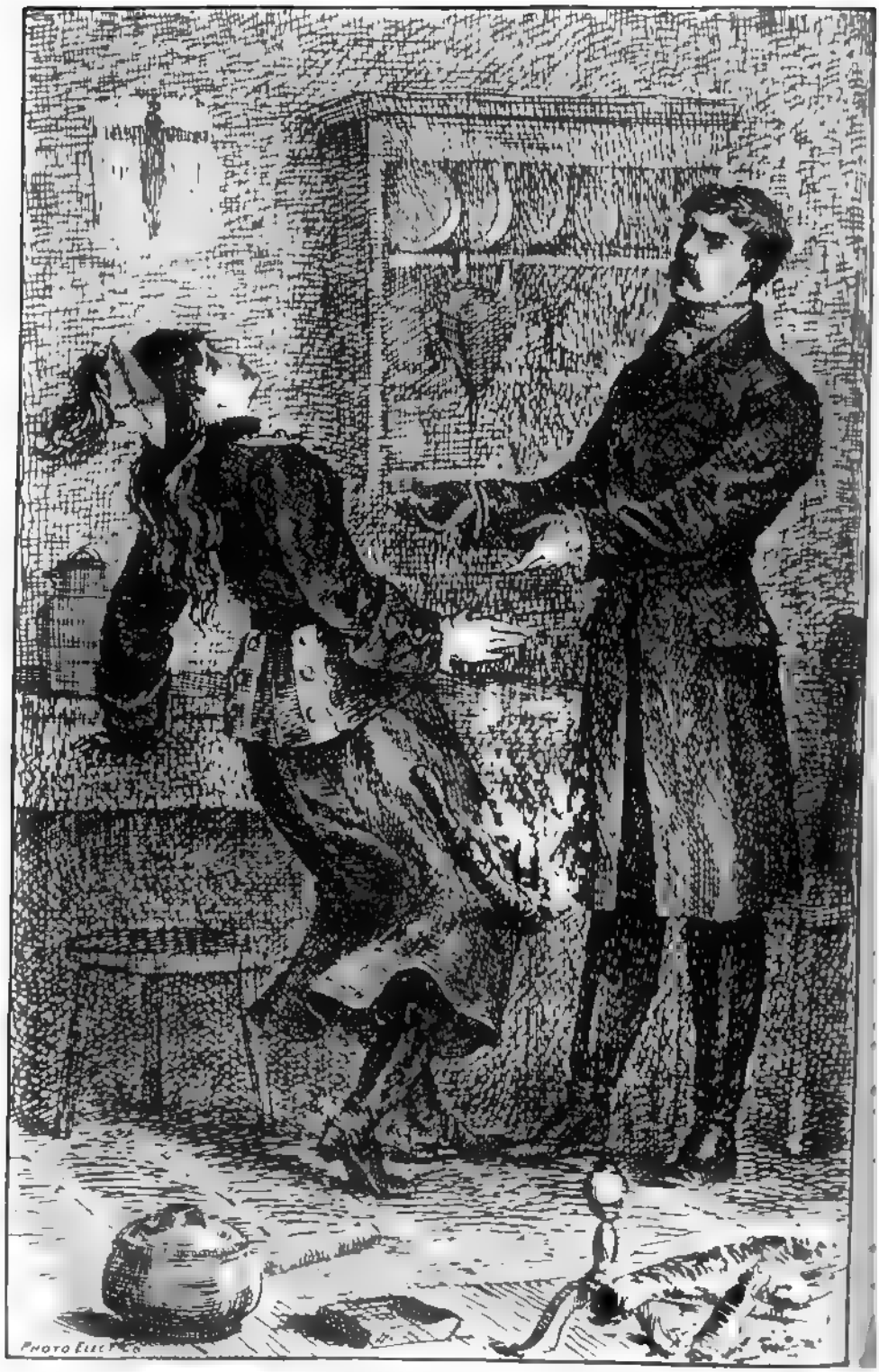

"MINETTE! MINETTE!" I EXCLAIMED; BUT WITH A WILD SHRIEK SHE LET FALL THE BURNING WOOD, AND FELL SENSELESS TO THE GROUND. (P. 357.)

just fallen, but even by that uncertain glare I could see enough to amaze and confuse me.

On the couch where I had left the priest sleeping, the old man was now seated, his head uncovered, and a scarf of light blue silk across his shoulders and falling to his feet; before him, and kneeling, was a figure, of which for some minutes I in vain endeavored to ascertain the traits, for while in the military air of the dress there was something to mark the soldier, a waving mass of hair loosely falling on the back bespoke another sex. While I yet doubted, the flickering flame burst forth and showed me the small and beautiful shaped foot which from beneath a loose trowser peeped forth, and in the neat boot and tastefully ornamented spur I recognized in an instant it was a "vivandière" of the army—one of those who, amid all the reckless abandon of the life of camps and battle-fields, can yet preserve some vestige of coquetry and feminine grace.

So strange the sight, so complete the heavy stupor of my faculties, that again and again I doubted whether the whole might not be the creation of a dream; but the well-known tones of the old man's voice soon reassured me, as I heard him say,

"I know it too, my child; I have followed too long the fortunes of an army not to feel and to sorrow for these things; but be comforted."

A passionate burst of tears from her who knelt at his feet interrupted him here, nor did it seem that all he could speak of consolation was able to assuage the deep sorrow of the poor girl, whose trembling frame bespoke her agony.

By degrees, however, she grew calmer—a deep sob or a long-drawn sigh alone would be heard, as the venerable father, with impassioned eloquence, depicted the happiness of those who sought the blessings of religion, and could tear themselves from the world and its ambitions; warming with his theme, he descanted on the lives of those saints on earth whose every minute was an offering of heavenly love; and contrasted the holy calm of a convent with the wild revelry of the camp, or the more revolting carnage of the battle-field.

"Speak not of these things, father; your own voice trembles with proud emotion at the mention of glorious war. Tell me, oh! tell me that I may have hope, and yet leave not all that makes life endurable."

The old man spoke again, but his tones were low, and his words seemed a reproof, for she bowed her head between her hands and sobbed heavily.

To the long and impassioned appeal of the priest there now succeeded a silence, only broken by the deep-drawn sighs of her who knelt in sadness and penitence before him.

"And his name?" said the father—"you have not told his name."

A pause followed, in which not even a breathing was heard—then a low, murmuring sound came, and it seemed to me as though I heard my own name uttered. I started at the sound, and with the noise the "vivandière" sprang to her feet.

"I heard a noise there," said she resolutely.

"It is my companion of the journey," said the priest; "poor fellow, he is tired and weary; he sleeps soundly."

"I did not know you had a fellow-traveler, father."

"Yes, we met in the Creutz Mountains, and, since that, have wended our way together. A soldier—"

"A soldier! is he wounded, then?"

"No, my child, he is leaving the army."

"Leaving the army, and not wounded—he is old and disabled, perhaps."

"Neither—he is both young and vigorous."

"Shame on him, then, that he turn his back on fame and fortune, and leave the path that brave men tread. He never was a soldier. No, father, he in whose heart the noble passion once has lived can never forget it."

"Hush, child, hush!" said the priest, motioning with his hand to her to be silent.

"Let me look on him," said the vivandière, as she stooped down and took from the hearth a piece of lighted wood—"let me see this man, and learn the features of one who can be so craven of spirit, so poor of heart, as to fly the field, while thousands are flocking toward it."

Burning with shame and indignation, I arose, just as she approached me. The pine-branch threw its red gleam over her bright uniform, and then upon her face. "Minette! Minette!" I exclaimed; but with a wild shriek she let fall the burning wood, and fell senseless to the ground.

It was some time before, with all our care, she recovered consciousness—and even then, in her wild, excited glance, one might read the struggles of her mind to credit what had occurred. A few broken, unconnected phrases would escape her at intervals, and she seemed laboring to regain the lost clue to her recollections—when, again, she turned her eyes toward me. At the same instant, the trumpet sounded without for the *réveil*, and was answered by many a call from other

parties around. With a steadfast gaze of wonderment she fixed her look on me—and twice passed her hands across her eyes, as though she doubted the evidence of her senses.

"Minette, hear me; let me speak but one word."

"There it is again," cried she, as the blast rang out a second time, and the clatter of horsemen resounded from the street. "Adieu, sir; our roads lie not together. Father, your blessing; if your good counsel, this night, has not made its way to my heart, the lesson has come elsewhere. Good-by! good-by!" She pressed the old man's hand to her lips, and darted from the room.

Stunned, and like one spell-bound, I could not move for a few seconds—and then, with a wild cry, I bounded after her through the garden. The wicket, however, was fastened on the outside, and it was some time before I could scale the wall and reach the street.

The day was just breaking, but already the village was thronged with soldiers, who were preparing for the march, and arranging their parties to conduct the wagons. Hurrying on through the crowded and confused mass, I looked on every side for the "vivandière," but in vain. Groups of different regiments passed and repassed me—but to my questions they returned either a jeering reply, or a mere laugh of derision. "But a few days ago," thought I, "and these fellows had scarce dared to address me—and now—" Oh! the blighting misery of that thought—I was no longer a soldier—the meanest horseman of his troop was my superior. I passed through the village, and reached the high-road. Before me was a party of dragoons, escorting a drove of cattle; I hastened after them, but on coming near, discovered they were a light cavalry detachment. Sick at heart, I leaned against a tree at the wayside, when again I heard the tramp of horses approaching. I looked, and saw the tall helmets of the Fourth, who were coming slowly along, conducting some large wagons, drawn by eight or ten horses. In front of the detachment rode a man, whose enormous stature made him at once remarkable, as well as the air of soldierly bearing he displayed; beside him was Minette—the reins had fallen on her horse's neck, and her face was buried in her hands.

"Ah! if I had thought that priest would have made thee so sad, mademoiselle, I'd have made him spend his night beneath a wagon, rather than in my quarters," said a deep, hollow voice I at once recognized as that of Pioche. "But the morning air will revive thee; so let us forward—by threes—open order—trot." The word was obeyed—the heavy tramp of the horses, with the dull roll of the wagons, drowned all other sounds—the cortége moved on—and I was alone.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

THE "PENSION DE LA RUE MI-CAREME."

When I returned to the garden, I found that the Père Arsène was seized by an access of that dreadful malady, whose intervals of comparative release are but periods of dread or despondence. The tertian of Egypt, so fatal among the French troops, now numbered him among its victims—and he looked worn and exhausted, like one after weeks of illness.

My first care was to present myself to the official whose business it was to inspect the passports, and by explaining the condition of my poor friend, to entreat permission to delay my journey—at least until he should be somewhat recovered. The gruff old sergeant, however, deliberately examined my passport, and as rigidly decided that I could not remain. The words of the minister were clear and definite—"Day by day, without halt, to the nearest frontier of France," was the direction—and with this I must comply. In vain I assured him that no personal convenience, no wish of my own, urged the request, but the duty of humanity toward a fellow-traveler, and one who had strong claims on every soldier of the Empire.

"Leave him to me, monsieur," was the only reply I could obtain; and the utmost favor he would grant was the permission to take leave of my poor friend before I started.

Amid all the sufferings of his malady, I found the good priest dwelling in his mind on the scene with the "vivandière" which, perhaps, from the impressionable character of a sick man's temperament, had entirely filled his thoughts—and thus he wandered from the subject of his own sorrows to hers, with scarcely a transition between them. When I mentioned the necessity of our parting, he seemed to feel it more on my account than his own.

"I wished to have reached Paris with you," he repeated over and over. "It was not impossible I could have arranged your return home. But you must go down to Sèvres—the priest there, whoever he may be, will know of me—tell him everything

without reserve. I am too ill to write, but if I get better soon— Well, well, that poor girl is an orphan too—and Alphonse was an orphan. With what misery have we struggled in France since this man has ruled our destinies—how have the crimes of a people brought their retribution to every heart and every home !—none too low, none too humble, to feel them. Leave this land—no blessing can rest upon it now. Poor thing, how worthy of a better lot she is. If this same officer should know—it is not impossible—but, why do I say this? No, no; you'll never meet him now." He continued to mutter thus some broken and disjointed sentences, half aloud, for some minutes—apparently unconscious of my presence.

"He was in a regiment of the Guard—alas, she told me which, but I forget it now—but his name, surely I remember his name? Well, well, it is a sad story. Adieu, my dear child—good-by; we have each a weary road before us—but *my* journey, although the longest, will be soonest accomplished. Do not forget my words to you—your own country, and your country's cause, above every other—all else is the hireling's part; the sense of duty alone can sustain a man in the trials which fit him for this world, or that better one which is to follow. Adieu." He threw his arm around me as he said this, and leaned exhausted and faint upon my shoulder.

The few who journey through life with little sympathy or friendship from their fellow-men, may know how it rent my heart to part with one to whom I clung every hour closer; my throat swelled and throbbed, and I could only articulate a faint good-by as we parted. As the door was closing, I heard his voice again:

"Yes, I have it now—I remember it well—'Le Capitaine Burke.'"

I started in amazement, for during all our intercourse he had never asked, nor had I told my name—and I stood unable to speak, when he continued:

"You'll think of the name. She said, too, he was on the staff—'Burke'—poor girl!"

I did not wait for more, but like one flying from some dreaded enemy I rushed through the garden, and gained the road—my heart torn with many a conflicting thought; the bitterest of all being the memory of Minette, the orphan girl, who alone of all the world cared for me. Oh! if strong, deep-rooted affection—the love of a whole heart—can raise the spirit above the every-day contentions of the world—can ennoble thought, refine sentiments, and divest life of all its meaner traits, making a path of flowers among the rocks and briers of our worldly pilgrimage—so does the possession of affection, for which we cannot give requital, throw a gloom over the soul, for which there is no remedy. Better, a thousand times better, had I borne all the solitary condition of my lot, unrelieved by one token of regard, than think of her who had wrecked her fortunes on my own.

With many a sad thought I plodded onward—the miles passed over seemed like the events in some troubled dream—and of my journey I have not a recollection remaining. It was late in the evening when I reached the *Barrière de l'Etoile*, and entered Paris. The long lines of lamps along the quays—the glittering reflection in the calm river—the subdued but continual hum of a great city—awoke me from my reverie, and I bethought me that my career of life must now begin anew, and all my energies must be called on to fashion out my destiny.

On the morning after my arrival I presented myself, in compliance with the requisite form, before the minister of police. Little information of mine was necessary to explain the circumstances under which I was placed. He was already thoroughly acquainted with the whole, and seemed in no wise disposed to evince any undue lenity toward one who had voluntarily quitted the service of the Emperor.

"Where do you purpose to remain, sir?" said the Préfet, as he concluded a lengthened and searching scrutiny of my appearance.

"In Paris," I replied, briefly.

"In Paris, I suppose," said he, with a slight derisive curl of the lip; "of that I should think there can be little doubt; but I wished to ascertain more accurately your address—in what part of the city."

"As yet I cannot tell—I am almost a stranger here; a day or two will, however, enable me to choose—and then I shall return here with the intelligence."

"That is sufficient, sir—I shall expect to see you soon." He waved his hand in sign to me to withdraw, and I was but too happy to follow the indication. As I hastened down the stairs, and forced my way through the crowd of persons who awaited an audience with the préfet, I heard a voice close to my ear whisper, "A word, one word with you, monsieur." Conceiving, however, it could not have been intended for me, to whom no face there was familiar, I passed on, and reached the court.

The noise of footsteps rapidly moving on the gravel behind me induced me to turn,

table, with its gray marble top—all were the perfection of that propriety which gives even to humble things a look of elegance.

I had but time to make a slight change in my dress when the bell sounded for dinner, and at the same instant a gentle knock came to my door. It was M. Rubichon, come to conduct me to the *salle*, and anxious to know if I were satisfied with my chamber.

"In summer, monsieur, if we shall have the happiness of possessing you here at that season, the view of the garden is delightful from this window; and—you have not noticed it, of course—but there is a little stair, which descends from the window into the garden, which you will find a great convenience when you wish to walk. This way, now. We are a small party to-day, and indeed shall be for a few weeks. What name shall I have the honor to announce?"

"Mr. Burke."

"Ah! an Irish name," said he, smiling, as he threw open the door of a spacious, but simply furnished apartment, in which about a dozen persons were standing or sitting around the stove. I could not help remarking that, as Monsieur Rubichon presented me to his other guests, my name seemed to meet a kind of recognition from each in turn. My host perceived this, and explained it at once by saying, "We have a namesake of yours amongst us—not exactly at this moment, for he is in Normandy—but he will be back in a week or so. Madame de Langeac, let me present Mr. Burke."

Monsieur Rubichon's guests were all persons somewhat advanced in life; and though, in their dress, evincing a most unvarying simplicity and economy, had yet a look of habitual good tone and breeding which could not be mistaken. Among these, the lady to whom I was now introduced was conspicuous—and in her easy and graceful reception of me, showed the polished manners of one accustomed to the best society.

After some few half-jesting observations, expressive of surprise that a young man—and consequently, as she deemed, a gay one—should have selected as his residence an unvisited quarter, and a very retired house—she took my arm, and proceeded to the dinner-room.

The dinner itself, and the table equipage, were in keeping with the simplicity of the whole establishment; but, if the fare was humble, and the wine of the very cheapest, all the habitudes of the very highest society presided at the meal, and the polished ease and elegance, so eminently the gift of ancient French manners, were conspicuous.

There prevailed among the guests all the intimacy of a large family, at the same time a most courteous deference was remarkable, which never approached familiarity; and thus they talked lightly and pleasantly together of mutual friends and places they had visited—no allusion ever being made to the popular topics of the day—to me a most inexplicable circumstance, and one which I could not avoid slightly expressing my astonishment at to the lady beside me.

She smiled significantly at my remark, and merely said, "It is so agreeable to discuss matters where there can be no great difference of opinion—at least, no more than sharpens the wit of the speakers—that you will rarely hear other subjects talked of here."

"But have the great events which are yet passing no interest?"

"Perhaps they interest too deeply to admit of much discussion," said she, with some earnestness of manner; "but I am myself transgressing—and what is still worse, losing you the observations of Monsieur de Saint George on Madame de Sévigné."

The remark was evidently made to change the current of our conversation—and so I accepted it—listening to the chit-chat around me, which, from its novelty alone, possessed a most uncommon charm to my ears. It was so strange to hear the allusions to the courtiers and the beauties of bygone days made with all the freshness of yesterday acquaintance—and the stores of anecdotes about the court of Louis XV. and the regency told with a piquancy that made the event seem like an occurrence of the morning.

Before we retired to the drawing-room for coffee, I saw that the *Pension* was a royalist establishment, and wondered how it happened that I should have been selected by the host to make one of his guests. Yet, unquestionably, there seemed no reserve toward me—on the contrary, each evinced a tone of frankness and cordiality which made me perfectly at ease, and well satisfied at the fortune which led me to the Rue Mi-Carême.

The little parties of dominoes and piquet scattered through the salon—some formed groups to converse—the ladies resumed their embroidery—and all the occupations of in-door life were assumed with a readiness that betokened habit, and gave to the *Pension* the comfortable air of a home.

Thus passed the first evening. The next

morning the party assembled at an early hour to breakfast; after which the gentlemen went out, and did not appear until dinner-time—day succeeding day in unvarying but, to me, not unpleasing monotony. I rarely wandered from the large wilderness of a garden near the house, and saw weeks pass over without a thought ever occurring to me that life must not thus be suffered to ebb.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

MY NAMESAKE.

ABOUT a month after I came to live in the *Pension*, I was sitting one evening at the window, watching, with the interest an idle man will ever attach to slight things, the budding leaves of an early spring, when I heard a step approach my chair, and, on turning my head, perceived Madame de Langeac; she carried her tabouret in her hand, and came slowly toward me.

"I am come to steal some of your sunshine, Monsieur Burke," said the old lady, smiling good-naturedly, as I rose to present a chair, "but not to drive you away, if you will be generous enough to keep me company."

I stammered out some common-place civility in reply, and was silent, for my thoughts were bent upon my future, and I was ill-disposed to interruption.

"You are fond of flowers, I have remarked," continued she, as if perceiving my preoccupation, and willing to relieve it, by taking the burden of the conversation; "and it is a taste I love to witness—it seems to me like the evidence of a homely habit. It is only in childhood we learn this love—we may cultivate it in after life as we will."

"My mother was passionately fond of them," said I, calling up a long-buried memory of home and kindred.

"I thought so. These simple tastes are the inheritance a mother gives her child, and, happily, they survive every change of fortune."

I sighed heavily as she spoke, for thus, accidentally, was touched the weakest chord of my heart.

"And better still," resumed she, "they are the links that unite us to the past—that bind the heart of manhood to infancy—that can bring down pride and haughtiness—and call forth guileless affection and childlike faith."

"They are happy," said I, musing, "who can mingle such early memories with the present."

"And who cannot?" interrupted she, rapidly; "who has not felt the love of parents—the halo of a home? Old as I am, even I can recall the little walks I trod in infancy, and the hand that used to guide me. I can bring up the very tones of that voice which vibrated on my heart as they spoke my name. But how much happier they to whom these memories are linked with tokens of present affection, and who, in their manhood's joys, can feel a father's or a mother's love."

"I was left an orphan when a mere child," said I, as though the observation had been specially addressed to me.

"But you have brothers—sisters, perhaps."

I shook my head. "A brother, indeed, but we have never met since we were children."

"And yet your country has not suffered the dreadful convulsion of ours; no social wreck has scattered those who once lived in close affection together. It is sad when such ties are broken. You came early to France, I think you told me?"

"Yes, madame. When a mere child my heart conceived a kind of devotion to the Emperor; his fame, his great exploits, seeming something more than human, filled every thought of my brain, and to be a soldier, *his* soldier, was the limit of my ambition. I fancied, too, that the cause he asserted was that of freedom—that liberty, universal liberty, was the watchword that led to victory."

"And you have discovered your error," interrupted she. "Alas! it were better to have followed the illusion; a faith once shaken leaves an unsettled spirit, and with such there is little energy."

"And less of hope," said I, despondingly.

"Not so, if there be youth. Come, you must tell me your story. It is from no mere curiosity I ask you, but that I have seen much of the world, and am better able than you to offer counsel and advice. I have remarked, for some time past, that you appear to have no acquaintance in Paris—no friend. Let me be such. If the confidence have no other result, it will relieve your heart of some portion of its burden; besides, the others here will learn to regard you with less distrust."

"And is such their feeling toward me?"

"Forgive me; I did not exactly use the word I sought for, but now that I have ventured so far, I may as well confess that you are an object of the greatest interest in

their eyes—nor can they divest themselves of the impression that some deep-laid plot had led you hither."

"Had I known this before—"

"You had left us. I guessed as much. I have remarked it in your character already, that a morbid dread of being suspected is ever uppermost in your thoughts, and accounted for it by supposing that you might have been thrown at too early an age into life; but you must not feel angry with us here. As for me, I have no merit in my right appreciation of you—Monsieur Rubichon told me how you met—a mere accident, at the bureau of the préfet."

"It was so, nor have I been able to divine why he addressed himself to me, nor what circumstance could have led him to believe my sentiments in accordance with those of his guests."

"Simple enough the reason. He heard from your own lips you were a stranger without any acquaintance in Paris. The police, for a time, have been somewhat frequent in their visits here, when the exclusively royalist feature of the *Pension* excited some dissatisfaction. To overcome the impression, M. Rubichon determined to wait each day at the bureau of the préfet, and solicit, at hazard, among the persons there, to patronize his house. We all here consented to the plan, feeling its necessity. Our good fortune sent us you. Still, you must not be surprised if long sorrows and much suffering have engendered suspicion, nor that the old followers of a king look distrustfully on the soldier of"—she hesitated and blushed slightly—then added, in a low voice, "of the Emperor." The word seemed to have cost a pang in its utterance, for she did not speak for several minutes after.

"And these gentlemen—am I to conclude that they cherish disaffection to the present government, or harbor a hope of its downfall?" Whether some accidental expression of disdain escaped me as I said this, I cannot say, but Madame de Langeac quickly replied,

"They are good Frenchmen, sir, and loyal gentlemen; what they *hope* must be a matter for their own hearts."

"I entreat your pardon, madame, if I have said one syllable which could reflect upon their motives."

"I forgive you readily," said she, smiling courteously; "he who has worn a sabre so long may well deem its influence all-powerful; but believe me, young man, there is that within the heart of a nation against which mere force is nothing; opposed to it, armed squadrons and dense ranks are powerless. Devotion to a sovereign, whose claim comes hallowed by a long line of kings, is a faith to which religion lends its sanction, and tradition its hope. Look on these very persons here; see, has adversity chilled their affection, or poverty damped their ardor? You know them not, but I will tell you who they are. There at the fire, that venerable old man with the high, bold forehead, he is Monsieur de Plessis—Count Plessis de Riancourt. His grandfather entertained Louis XIV. and his suite within his château; he himself was grand falconer to the king; and what is he now? I shame to speak it—a fencing-master at an humble school of the Faubourg. And the other opposite to him—he is stooping to pick something from the floor—I myself saw him kneel at the levee of his majesty, and beheld the king assist him to rise, as he said, 'Monsieur de Maurepas, I would make you a duke, but that no title could be so dear to a Maurepas as that his ancestors have borne for six hundred years.' And he, whose signature was but inferior to the royal command, copies pleadings of a lawyer to earn his support. And that tall man yonder, who has just risen from the table, neither years nor poverty have erased the stamp of nobility from his graceful figure—Count Felix d'Ancelot, Captain of the *Gardes du Corps*, the same who was left for dead on the stairs at Versailles, pierced by eleven wounds; he gives lessons in drawing, two leagues from this, at the other extremity of Paris. You ask me if they hope—what else than hope—what other comforter could make such men as these live on in want and indigence, declining every proffer of advancement, refusing every temptation that should warp their allegiance? I have read of great deeds of your Emperor—I have heard traits of heroism of his generals, compared to which the famed actions of the Crusaders paled away—but tell me if you think that all the glory ever won by gallant soldier, tried the courage or tested the stout heart like the long struggle of such men as these? And here, if I mistake not, comes another, not inferior to any."

As she spoke, the steps of a *calèche* at the door were suddenly lowered, and a tall and powerfully-built man stepped lightly out. In an instant we heard his footstep in the hall, and in another moment the door of the salon opened, and M. Rubichon announced "Le Général Count Burke."

The general had just time to divest himself of his traveling pelisse as he entered, and was immediately surrounded by the

others, who welcomed him with the greatest enthusiasm.

"Madame la Marquise de Langeac," said he, approaching the old lady, as she sat in the recess of the window, and lifted her hand to his lips, "I am overjoyed to see you in such health. I passed three days with your amiable cousin, Arnold de Rambuteau; who, like yourself, enjoys the happiest temperament and the most gifted mind."

"If you flatter thus, general," said Madame de Langeac, "my young friend here will scarcely recognize in you a countryman—a kinsman, perhaps. Let me present Mr. Burke."

The general's face flushed, and his eyes sparkled, as taking my hand in both of his own, he said,

"Are you indeed from Ireland? Is your name Burke? Alas! that I cannot speak one word of English to you. I left my country thirty-eight years since, and have never revisited it."

The general overwhelmed me with questions—first, about my family, of which I could tell him little; and then of my own adventures, at which, to my astonishment, he never evinced those symptoms of displeasure I so confidently expected from an old follower of the Bourbons.

This he continued to do, as he ate a hurried meal which was laid out for him in the salon; all the rest standing in a circle around, and pressing him with questions for this friend or that at every pause he made.

"You see, gentlemen," cried he, as I replied to some inquiry about my campaign, "this is an instance of what I have so often spoken to you. Here is a youth who leaves his country solely for fighting sake—he does not care much for the epaulette, he cares less for the cause. Come, come, don't interrupt me; I know you better than you know yourself. You longed for the conflict, and the struggle, and the victory; and, *parbleu!* we may say as we will, but you could have scarcely made a better selection than with his majesty, Emperor and King as they style him."

This speech met with a sorry reception from the bystanders; and in the dissatisfied expression of their faces, a less confident speaker might have read his condemnation; but the general felt not this, or, if he did, he effectually concealed it.

"You have not inquired for Gustave de Meisin," said he, looking round at the circle.

"You have not seen him, surely?" cried several together; "we heard he was at Vienna."

"No, *parbleu!* he lives about a league from his old home—the very house we spent our Christmas at eighteen years ago. They have made a barrack of his château, and thrown his park into a royal *chasse;* but he has built a hut on the river-side, and walks every day through his own ground, which, he says, he never saw so well stocked for many a year. He is as happy as ever, and loves to look out on the Seine before his door, when the bright stream is rippling through many a broad leaf—ay, messieurs, of good augury too, the lilies of France." He lifted a bumper to his lips as he spoke, and drank the toast with enthusiasm.

This sudden return to loyalty, so boldly announced, served to reinstate him in their estimation; and once again all their former pleasure at his appearance came back, and again the questions poured in from every quarter.

"And the abbé," said one, "what of him? Has he made up his mind yet?"

"To be sure he has, and changed it too, at least twice every twenty-four hours. He is ever full of confidence, and brimming with hope, when the wind is from the eastward; but let it only come a point west, his spirits fall at once, and he dreams of frigates and gunboats, and the hulks in the Thames; and though they offered him a cardinal's hat, he'd not venture out to sea."

The warning looks of the bystanders, and even some signals to be cautious, here interrupted the speaker, who paused for a few seconds, and then fixed his eyes on me.

"I have no fears, gentlemen, on that score. I know my countrymen well, though I have lived little among them. My namesake here may like the service of the Emperor better than that of a king—he may prefer the glitter of the eagle to the war-cry of St. Louis—but he'll never betray the private conversations nor expose the opinions expressed before him in all the confidence of social intercourse. We are speaking, Mr. Burke, of an abbé who is about to visit Ireland, and whose fears of the English cruisers seem little reasonable to some of my friends here, though you can explain, perhaps, that they are not groundless. I forgot—you were but a boy when you crossed that sea."

"But he will go at last," said Madame de Langeac; "I suppose we may rely on that."

"We hope," said the General, shrugging his shoulders with an air of doubt, "because, when we can do nothing else, we can always hope;" and so saying he arose

from the table, and taking a courteous leave of each person in turn, pleading the fatigue of his journey, he retired for the night. I left the saloon soon after, and went to my room full of all I had heard, and pondering many thoughts about the abbé and his intended voyage.

I spent a sleepless night—thoughts of home, long lost in the excitement of my career, came flocking to my brain, and a desire to revisit my country, stronger, perhaps, because undefined in its object, made me restless and feverish. It was with delight I perceived the day dawning, and dressing myself hastily, I descended into the garden. To my surprise, I found General Burke already there. He was sauntering along slowly by himself, and seemed wrapped in meditation. The noise of my approach startled him, and he looked up.

"Ah! my countryman—so early astir," said he, saluting me courteously. "Is this a habit of yours?"

"No, sir. I cannot claim the merit of such wakefulness; but last night I never closed my eyes. A few words you dropped in conversation in the drawing-room kept possession of my heart, and even yet I cannot expel them."

"I saw it at the time I spoke," replied the General, with a keen, quick glance. "You changed color twice as I mentioned the Abbé Gernon—do you know him?"

"No, sir. It was his intended journey, not himself, for which I felt interested."

"You would wish to accompany him, perhaps. Well, the matter is not impossible; but, as time presses, and we have little leisure for mysteries, tell me frankly why are you here?"

In few words, and without a comment on any portion of my conduct, I told him the principal circumstances of my life, down to the decisive moment of my leaving the army. "After that step," said I, "feeling that no career can open to me here, I wish to regain my own country."

"You are right," said the General, slowly. "It is your only course now. The venture is not without risk, less from the English cruisers than the French, for the abbé is well known in England, and Ireland too; but his royalist character would find slight favor with Fouché. You are willing to run the risk, I suppose?"

"I am."

"And to travel as the abbé's servant, at least to Falaise?—there the disguise will end."

"Perfectly so."

"And for this service, are you also ready to render us one in return?" said he, peering at me beneath his eyelashes.

"If it involve the good faith I once swore to preserve toward the Emperor Napoleon, I refuse it at once. On such a condition I cannot accept your aid."

"And does your heart still linger where your pride has been so insulted?"

"It does, it does—to be his soldier once more, I would submit to everything but dishonor."

"In that case," said he, smiling good-naturedly, "my conscience is a clear one; and I may forward your escape with the satisfying reflection that I have diminished the enemies of his Majesty Louis XVIII. by one most inveterate follower of Napoleon. I shall ask no conditions of you. When are you ready?"

"To-day—now."

"Let me see—to-morrow will be the 8th—to-morrow will do. I will write about it at once. Meanwhile, it is as well you should not drop any hint of your intended departure, except to Madame de Langeac, whose secrecy may be relied on."

"May I ask," said I, "if you run any risk in thus befriending me? It is an office, believe me, of little promise."

"None whatever. Rarely a month passes over without some one or other leaving this for England. The intercourse between Rome and Ireland is uninterrupted, and has been so during the hottest period of the war."

"This seems most unaccountable to me—I cannot understand it."

"There is a key to the mystery, however," said he, smiling. "The English government have confidence in the peaceful efforts of the priesthood as regards Ireland, and permit them to hold unlimited intercourse with the Holy See, which fears France and the spirit of her Emperor. The Bourbons look to the Church as the last hope of the restoration. It is in the Catholic religion of this country, and its traditions, that monarchy has its root. Sap one, and you undermine the other. Legitimacy is a holy relic—like any other, the priests are the guardians of it; and as for the present ruler of France, he trusts in the spirit of the Church to increase its converts, and believes that Ireland is ripening to revolt through the agency of the priests. Fouché alone is not deceived. Between him and the Church the war is to the knife; and but for him the high seas would be more open than the road to Strasbourg—at least to all with a shaven crown and a silk frock. Here, then, is the simple explanation of what seemed so difficult; and I believe you will find it the true one."

"But two out of the three parties must be deceived," said I.

"Perhaps all three are," replied he, smiling sarcastically. "There are some, at least, who deem the return of the rightful sovereign is more to be hoped from the sabre than the crozier, and think that Rome never was true except to Rome. As to your journey, however, its only difficulty or danger is the transit through France—once at the coast, and all is safe. Your passport shall be made out as a retired *sous-officier* returning to his home. You will take Marbœuf in the route, and I will give you the necessary directions for discovering the abbé."

"Is it not possible," said I, "that *he* may feel no inclination to incumber himself with a fellow-traveler, and particularly one a stranger to him?"

"Have no fear on that head. Your presence, on the contrary, will give him courage, and we must let him suppose you accompany him at our suggestion."

"Not with any implied knowledge, or any connection with your views, however," said I. "This is well understood between us?"

"Perfectly so. And now meet me here this evening, after coffee, and I will give you your final instructions. Adieu, for the present."

He waved his hand and left me. Then, after walking a few paces, turned quickly round, and said,

"You will remember, a blouse and knapsack are indispensable for your equipment. Adieu."

CHAPTER LXXV.

AN OLD SAILOR OF "THE EMPIRE."

No circumstance of any interest occurred on my journey to Marbœuf; my passport, made out in my own name as a *sous-officier* on leave, secured me against any interruption or delay; and on the third evening I reached the little wayside cabaret, about a league beyond the town, where I was informed by the count that the abbé would await me.

To my surprise, however, I discovered that the house was occupied by a detachment of the "Marines of the Guard," proceeding from Marbœuf to the coast; with these, assuming the "camaraderie" of the service, I soon made acquaintance, and being possessed of some information about the army, my company was at once coveted by the sailors, who had no opportunity of learning the events of the campaign.

The flurried manner and the over-solicitous desire of the landlord to please, did not escape me; and taking the first opportunity that offered, I followed him into his room, and closed the door behind me.

"Has *he* arrived?" said I, assuming at once the tone of one with whom there need be no secrecy.

"Ha, you are the captain, then; and I was right," said he, not replying to my question, but showing that he was aware who I was. But in an instant he resumed: "Alas! no, sir; the orders to have quarters ready for ten men reached me yesterday; and though I told his messenger that he might come in safety, the marines never noticing any traveler, he has evidently been afraid to venture. This is the 10th, on the 12th the vessel is to be off the coast; after that it will be too late."

"But he may come yet."

The man shook his head and sighed, then muttered half aloud, "It was a foolish choice to take a coward for a hazardous enterprise. The Count de Chambord has been here twice to-day to see him, but in vain."

"Where is he, then; at what distance from here?"

"No one knows; it must be some leagues away, however, for his messenger seems tired and weary when he comes, and never returns the same day."

"Is it not possible he may have pushed on to the coast, finding this place occupied?"

"Ah, sir, it is plain you know him not; he has no daring like this, and would never seek a new path if the old were closed against him; but, after all, it would be useless here."

"How so?"

"The letters have not come yet, and without them he could not leave the coast. Meanwhile, be cautious; take care lest your absence should be remarked by the men; return to them now, and if anything occur, I will make a signal for you."

The landlord's advice was well timed, for I found that the party were already becoming impatient at my delay, and wondering what had caused it.

"They say, comrade," said a short-set, dark-featured Breton, whose black beard and moustache left little vestige of a human face visible—"they say that the cavalry of the Guard give themselves airs with us marines, and that our company is not good enough for them; is this the case?"

"It is the first time I have heard the re-

mark," replied I, "and I hope it may be the last; with us of the Eighth, I know such a feeling never existed, and yet we thought ourselves not inferior to our neighbors."

"Then why did you leave us just now?" grumbled out two or three in a breath.

"You shall know that presently," said I, smiling; at the same time I arose and opened the door: "You may bring in the Burgundy now, Master Joseph; we are all ready for it."

A hearty cheer welcomed this speech, and many a rude hand was stretched forth to grasp mine; at the same instant the host, accurately divining the necessity of the moment, entered, with a basket containing six bottles, whose cobwebbed necks and crusted surface bespoke the choicest bin of his cellar.

"*Macon!* gentlemen," said he, drawing the cork of a flask with all the steadiness of hand of one accustomed to treat Burgundy properly.

"Ah, *parbleu!* a generous grape, too," said the short sailor, who spoke first, as he drained his glass and refilled it. "*Allons*, comrades, 'The Emperor!'"

"The Emperor!" repeated each voice in turn, even to the poor landlord, whose caution was stronger than his loyalty.

"The Emperor, and may Heaven preserve him!" said the dark-whiskered fellow.

"The Emperor, and may Heaven forgive him!" said the host, who this time uttered the true sentiments of his heart, without knowing it.

"Forgive him!" roared three or four together—"forgive him what?"

"For not making thee an admiral of the fleet," said the landlord, slapping the stout sailor familiarly on the shoulder.

A burst of rude laughter acknowledged the success of this speech, and by common consent the host was elected one of the company. As the wine began to work upon the party, the dark fellow, whose grade of sergeant was merely marked by a gold cord on his cuff, and which had hitherto escaped my notice, assumed the leadership, and recounted some stories of his life, which, treating of a service so novel to me in all its details, were sufficiently interesting, though the materials themselves were slight and unimportant.

One feature struck me in particular through all he said, and gave a character most distinctive to the service he belonged to, and totally unlike what I had observed among the soldiers of the army. With *them* the armies of all Europe were accounted the enemy—the Austrian, the Russian, the Italian, and the Prussian, were the foes he had met and conquered in so many fields of glory. The pride he felt in his triumphs was a great but natural sentiment, involving, however, no hatred of his enemy, nor any desire to disparage his courage or his skill. With the sailor of the Empire, however, there was but one antagonist, and that one he detested with his whole heart—England was a word which stirred his passion from its very inmost recesses, and made his blood boil with intense excitement. The gay insolence of the soldier, treating his conquest as a thing of ease and certainty, had no resemblance to the collected and impassioned hate of the sailor, who felt that *his* victories were not such as proclaimed his superiority by evidence incontestable. The victories on land contrasted, too, so strongly with even what were claimed as such at sea, that the sailors could not control their detestation of those who had robbed them of a share of their country's praise, and made the hazardous career they followed one of mere secondary interest in the eyes of France.

A more perfect representative of this mingled jealousy and hate could not be found than Paul Dupont, the *sous-officier* in command of this little party. He was a Breton, and carried the ruling trait of his province into the most minute feature of his conduct. Bold, blunt, courageous, open-hearted, and fearless, but passionate to the verge of madness when thwarted, and unforgiving in his vengeance when insulted, he only believed in Brittany, and for the rest of France he cared as little as for Switzerland. His whole life had been spent at sea, until about two years previous, when from boatswain he was promoted to be a sergeant of the "Marines of the Guard"—a step he regretted every day, and was now actually petitioning to be restored to his old grade, even at the sacrifice of pay and rank—such was the impression a short life ashore had made on him, and so complete his contempt for any service save that in blue water.

"Come, old 'sea-wolf'"—such was the sobriquet Paul went by among his comrades—"thou art dull to-night," said an old sailor with a head as white as snow; "I haven't seen thee so low of heart this many a day."

"What wonder, comrade, if I am so?" retorted Paul, gruffly. "This shore service is bad enough, not to make it worse by listening to such yarns as these we have been hearing, about platoons and squadrons—of charges here and counter-marches there. *Ventre d'enfer!* that may amuse those who

never saw a broadside or a boarding, but as for me, look ye, comrade!"—here he addressed himself to me, laying his great hand upon my shoulder as he spoke—"until ye can bring your mounted lines to charge up to the mouth of a battery, vomiting grape and round-shot, ye must not tell your stories before old sailors—ay, though they be only Marines of the Guard, some of them."

"Don't be angry with old Paul, comrade," said the man who spoke before, "he does not mean to offend you."

"Who told you that?" said Paul, sternly; "why can't you sheer off, and leave me to lay alongside of my enemy my own way?"

"You must not call me by such a name," said I; "we all serve the Emperor, and have no enemies save his. Come, Paul, let us have a cup of wine together."

"Agreed—an ye promise to tell no more tales of dragoons and hussars, and such like cattle, I'll drink with you. Bah! it's not Christianlike to fight a-horseback—it's only fit for Turks and Arabs; but for men that are made to stand fast on their own stout timbers, they have no need of four-footed beasts to carry them against an enemy. Here's my hand, comrade, is it a bargain?"

"Willingly," said I, laughing; "if you consent, instead, to tell us some of your own adventures, I promise faithfully not to trouble you with one of mine."

"That's like a man," said Paul, evidently flattered by the successful assertion of his own superiority; "and now, if the host will let us have some more wine, I'm ready."

"Ay, ay," cried several together, "replenish the basket once more."

"This time, gentlemen, you must permit me to treat you. It is not every day such guests assemble under my poor roof," said the landlord, bowing courteously, "nor am I likely soon to pass so pleasant an evening."

"That's as you please it," said Paul carelessly; "if you are too good a fellow to care for money, there's three Naps for the poor of the village; mayhap there may be an old sailor amongst them."

A murmur of satisfaction at their comrade's conduct ran around the circle, as the host disappeared for the fresh supply of wine. In an instant he was back again, carrying a second basket under his arm, which he placed carefully on the table, saying, "Pomard of '87, gentlemen—I wish it were Chambertin for your sakes."

"*Tête bleue!* that's what I call wine," said one, smacking his lips, as he tasted the generous liquor.

"Yes," said Paul, "that's better than drinking the pink water they serve us out on service. *Morbleu!* how we'd fight, if they'd tap an aume of that when they beat to quarters."

The bottle now passed freely from hand to hand; and Paul, leaning back in his chair, crossed his arms before him, as, with his eyes half closed, he seemed to be occupied in remembering some long-passed occurrence.

"Ay, comrades," said he, after a long pause, "the landlord was not so far out as you may think him. I might have been, if not an admiral of the fleet, at least a captain or a commodore by this time, if I only wished it, but I wouldn't."

"You wouldn't, Paul?" cried three or four in a breath. "How do you mean, you wouldn't? Is it that you didn't like it?"

"That's it; I didn't like it," replied he, glaring around him as he spoke, with a look which had repressed any tendency to mirth, if such an inclination existed in the party. "Mayhap there are some here don't believe this," he continued, as if anxious to extort a contradiction from any one bold enough to adventure it; but none seemed disposed to meet his wishes. He resumed. "The way of it was this:

"We sailed from Brest, seven sail and two frigates, on a cruise, in the Messidor of the year '13—it was the time of the Republic then—and our orders were to keep together, and afford protection to all vessels of our flag, and wherever an opportunity offered to engage the enemy, to do so, if we had a fair chance of success. There was one heavy sailer of the fleet, the 'Old Torch,' and by good luck I was in her; and so, before we were eight days out, it came on to blow a hurricane from the north-east, with a great sea, that threatened to poop us at every stroke. How the others weathered it I can't say. We rolled so badly that we carried away our mainmast and half our bulwarks, and when day broke we could see nothing of the rest. We were lying floundering there in the trough of the sea, with nothing left but a storm-jib to keep her head straight, and all hands at the pumps; for in working she had opened her old seams, and leaked like a basket. Well, we cut away the wreck of the mast, and we threw twelve of our guns over—short eighteens they were, and all heavy metal—and that lightened her a bit, and we began to have hopes of weathering out the gale, when the word was passed of a

strange sail to windward. We looked, and there saw a great vessel looming, as large as a three-decker, coming down toward us with close-reefed topsails, but going through the water like a sword-fish. At first we hoped it was one of our own, but that hope did not last long, for as she neared us we saw floating from the peak that confounded flag that never boded us good fortune. She was an English eighty-gun ship; the 'Blanche' they called her. *Ventrebleu!* I didn't know how they ever got so handsome a model; but I learned after she was a French ship, and built at Toulon; for you see, comrades, they never had such craft as ours. Well, down they came, as if they were about to come right over us, and never once made a signal, nor took any notice of us whatever, till quite close, when a fellow from the poop-deck shouted out in French—bad enough it was, too—desiring us to keep close till the sea went down a bit, and then to send a boat to them. *Sacristi!* there was no more about it than that, and they made a prize of us at once. But our captain was not one of that mold, and he answered by beating to quarters; and just as the 'Blanche' swept past, up flew our ports, and eight carronades threw in a fire of grape along her deck that made them dance to the music. *Diable!* the fun was short, though. Round she came in stays like a pinnace, down helm, and passed us again, when, as if her sides slit open, forty guns flashed forth their flame, and sent us a broadside that made the craft tremble again, and left our deck one mass of dead and wounded. There was no help for it now. The clear water came gushing up the hatchways from many a shot-hole, the craft was settling fast, and so we hauled down the ensign and made the signal of distress. The answer was, 'Keep her afloat if you can.' But, faith, our fellows didn't care much to save a prize for the English, and they wouldn't lend a hand to the pumps, but crossed their arms and stood still, waiting for her to go down; when what did we see but two boats lowered from the 'Blanche' and dropped into the sea, which was then running mountains high. *Feu d'enfer!* they don't know where there is danger and where not, these English, and that's the reason they seem so brave! For a minute or two we thought they were swamped, for they were hidden entirely; then we saw them on the top of a wave, balancing, as it might be, and again they disappeared, and the huge dark swell seemed to have swallowed them; and so we strained eyes after them, just as if our own danger was not as great as theirs, when suddenly a fearful cry for'ed was heard, and a voice called out, 'She is sinking by the head!' And so it was. A crash like falling timber was heard above the storm and the sea, and the 'Torch' rolled heavily from side to side, and then plunged bowsprit down, and the boiling surf met over her. There was a wild yell—some said it was a cheer—I thought it like a drowning cry, and I remember no more—that is, I have a kind of horrid dreamy remembrance of buffeting in the waves, and shaking off a hand that grasped me by the shoulder, and then feeling the water gathering over me as I grew more and more exhausted. But the end of it was, I came to my senses some hours after, and found myself in a hammock on board the 'Blanche,' with twenty-eight of my comrades. All the rest, above two hundred and fifty, had perished, the captain and the officers among them.

"The 'Blanche' was under orders for St. Domingo, and was in no way anxious to have our company; and before a week was over we were drafted into a small sloop of war, carrying eight guns, and called the 'Fawn.' She was bound for England with dispatches from Nelson, one of their English admirals they're always talking about. This little craft could sail like the wind, but she was crowded with sick and invalided men from some foreign station, and there was not a place the size of a dog-kennel on board of her that was not occupied. As for us, we were only prisoners, and you may think they weren't very particular about our comforts; and so they ranged us along under the bulwarks to leeward, for they wouldn't spoil her sailing trim by suffering us to sit to windward; and there we were, drenched to the skin, and shivering from day to dark.

"Four days went over in this way, when, on the fifth, about eight o'clock in the morning, the look-out announced several strange sail in sight, and the same instant we perceived the officers setting the glasses to observe them. We could remark that the sight did not seem to please them much; but more we knew not, for we were not allowed to stand up, nor look over the bulwarks. The lieutenant of the watch called up the commander, and when he came on deck he ordered the men to cram on more sail, and hold her head a point or so off the wind; and, as soon as it was done, the rushing noise at the cutwater told the speed she was making through the sea. It was a fine day, with a fresh breeze, and a nice curl from the water; and it was a handsome thing to see how the sloop

bent to the gale and rose again, her canvas white as snow and steady as a board; and we soon knew, from the manner of the officers and the anxious looks they'd give to leeward from time to time, that another vessel was in chase of the 'Fawn.' Not a man stirred on the deck save the lieutenant of the watch, who walked the quarter-deck with his glass in his hand, now lifting it to his eye, and now throwing a glance aloft to see how the sails were drawing.

"'She's gaining on us, sir,' cried the boatswain, as he went aloft, to the lieutenant. 'Shall we ease her off a little more?'

"'No, no,' said he, impatiently. 'She's coming hand-over-hand now. Clear the deck, and prepare for action.'

"My heart jumped to my throat as I heard the words; and waiting until the lieutenant's back was turned, I stole my eyes above the bulwark, and beheld the tall masts and taper spars of a frigate, all covered with canvas, about two miles astern of us. She was a good-sized craft, apparently of thirty-eight guns; but what I liked best about her was the broad tri-color that fluttered from her mast-head. Every curl that floated on the breeze whispered liberty to my heart.

"'You know her,' said the lieutenant, laying his hand on my shoulder, before I was aware he was behind me. 'What is she?'

"'Lend me your glass, lieutenant, and perhaps I can tell you,' said I; and with that he gave the telescope into my hand, and leaned on the bulwark beside me. 'Ha!' said I, as soon as I caught the side of her hull, 'I ought to know her well. I sailed in her for two years and a half. She's the "Créole," of thirty-eight guns, the fastest frigate in our navy. She has six carronades on her quarter-deck, and never goes to sea without three hundred and twenty men.'

"'If she had three tiers of them we'd not flinch from her,' said a voice behind. It was the commander himself, who was now in full uniform, and wore a belt with four pistols stuck around it.

"There is no use in denying it, the English prepared for action like brave fellows, and soon cleared the deck of everything in the way of the guns; but what use was it? In less than an hour the 'Créole' worked to windward, and opened a fire from her long guns, to which the other could make no reply. There they came plumping in, some into the hull, some splintering through the bulwarks, and some crashing away through the rigging, and all the crew could do was to repair the mischief the distant cannonade was making.

"'It's a cowardly way your countrymen come into action after all,' said the lieutenant, as he watched the shot hopping and skipping along the water to leeward. 'With four times our strength, they don't bear down and engage us.'

"As he spoke, a shot cut the peak halyards in two, and down came the spar with a crash, carrying with it in its fall that ensign they're so proud of. It was all we could do, prisoners as we were, not to cheer at this; but the faces around us did not encourage us to such a course, and we sat silently watching them.

"The moment the accident happened, twenty stout fellows were clambering up the rigging, and as many more engaged to repair the mischief; but suddenly the commander whispered something to the lieutenant; the men were called down again, and the craft was let fall off the wind, trailing the sails and the tangled rigging over her sides.

"'And the prisoners, sir,' said the lieutenant, at the close of something I could not hear.

"'Send them below,' was the short reply.

"'We cannot, the space between docks is crowded to suffocation, but here she comes.' And, as he spoke, the frigate came bearing down in gallant style, her whole deck swarming with men.

"'Down, men, down,' whispered the lieutenant, and he dropped on his knee behind the bulwark, and motioned to the rest to kneel; and I now perceived that every sailor had a drawn cutlass in his hand, and pistols in his belt, as he lay crouching on the deck. The frigate was now so close, I could hear the commands of the officers on the quarter-deck, and the word '*Bas les branles*'—the signal to board—passed from mouth to mouth. The next instant, she closed on us, and showed her tall sides towering above us.

"'Now, men,' cried the commander of the 'Fawn,' 'now forward! All who care to live, there's your ground,' said he, pointing to the frigate. 'Such as like to die on a British deck, remain with me.' The boarders sprang up the side of the 'Créole' before the crew could fasten the grapples. *Tonnerre de Dieu!* what a moment it was! The fellows cheered like madmen, as they poured into certain death; the lieutenant himself was one of the first on board, and fell back the same instant, dead upon his own deck. The struggle was a bloody, but brief one; for a few minutes the English pressed our men back, and gained a footing on the quarter-deck, but a murderous fire from the tops cut them

down in numbers, and they now fought, not for victory, but vengeance.

"'Now, captain, now,' screamed a youth, in a lieutenant's uniform, but all covered with blood, and his face gashed with a cutlass-wound, as he leaned over the bulwark of the 'Créole,' and waved his cap in the air.

"'I'm ready,' replied the English commander, and sprang down the main hatchway as he spoke, with a pistol in his hand. At the same instant, a fearful cry burst forth from the prisoners; for, with the instinct of despair, they guessed his desperate resolve was to blow up the vessel. We were tied, wrist to wrist, and the rope run through the blocks at our back in such a way as to prevent our moving more than a few inches; but what will not the fear of a dreadful death do? With one unanimous effort we tore the lashings in pieces, and got free. I was myself the first at liberty, and sprang toward the 'Créole.' Alas! they had divined the awful doom awaiting us, and were endeavoring to shove off at once. Already there were some ten or twelve feet between the vessels. I rushed forward to gain the bowsprit, a vague hope of escape suggesting the effort. As I did so, my eyes caught sight of a book, which, with his hat, the captain threw from him as he hastened below. I stooped down and put it in my bosom—why, I know not. Life, and life only, was my thought at that moment. Then, with lightning's speed, I ran along the deck, and out on the bowsprit. At this instant, the frigate shot ahead of us; I made a leap, the last effort of despair, and caught the flue of the anchor—a friendly hand threw me a rope, and dragged me on the deck; as I gained it, a thunder-clap, louder than ten broadsides, broke forth, and the frigate fell over on one side as if sinking; while over her rigging and her masts flew spars and timbers, blazing and burning, amid a black smoke that filled the air on every side. Every man about dropped wounded or terrified on the deck, where they lay amid the falling fire of the wreck, and the terrible carnage. I wiped the blood from my eyes, for I was bleeding profusely from a splinter cut, and looked about me. The deck was a mass of dead and dying; their piercing cries and groans were maddening to hear. The frigate, however, was flying fast through the water—the 'Fawn' was gone!"

"*Tête bleue!* he blew her up?" said three or four in a breath.

Paul nodded, and resumed: "Ay, comrades, and the half-dozen of her crew who stood alive on our quarter-deck cheered the explosion as if it was a victory; and one fellow, as he lay bleeding on the planks, cried out, 'See, there; look, if our gay flag is not high above yours, as it always will be!' and that time he was right, for the spar that bore it was nigh the clouds. Well, to finish my story, in eight days we made Brest, and all of us who were wounded were sent on shore to the naval hospital. A sorry set we were—most of us disabled by splinter-wounds, and many obliged to suffer amputation. I was about again sooner than the rest, and was sent for one morning on board the admiral's ship, to give some account of the 'Fawn,' of which they never could hear enough; and when I came to that part where I made my escape, they all began a-laughing at my stopping to take up a book at such a moment. And one of the lieutenants said, jokingly,

"'Well, Paul, I suppose it was the Englishman's breviary saved your life, wasn't it?'

"'No, lieutenant,' said I; 'but you'd be mighty proud this day to have that same breviary in your possession.'

"'How so, good fellow?' said the admiral himself, old Villaret Joyeuse, who always talked like one of ourselves. 'What is this book, then, that is so precious?'

"'I'll show it you, sir, because I've no fear of foul play at your hands, but there's not another man of the fleet I'd let see it;' and with that I took it out of my breast, where I always carried it, and gave it to him. Ah! if you'd seen his face how it flushed up as he turned over the leaves, and how his eyes sparkled with fire.

"'Paul Dupont,' said he, 'are you aware what this is?'

"'Yes, admiral,' said I, 'as well as you are.'

"'Your fortune's made, then, my brave fellow,' said he, slapping me on the shoulder. 'The finest frigate in the English navy is a less prize than this.'

"*Mille tonnerres!* how the others stared at me then; but I stood without minding how they looked, for I was the same Paul Dupont they laughed at a few minutes before.

"Meanwhile the admiral laid down the book on the table, and covered it with his cocked-hat, and then taking a pen, he wrote some lines on a piece of paper before him.

"'Will that do, Paul?' said he, handing it toward me. It was just this: 'Bureau of the Marine, Brest. Pay Paul Dupont the sum of ten thousand francs, for service rendered to his Imperial Majesty, and attested in a note by me, Villaret Joyeuse, Admiral of France.'

"I could scarce read the lines, comrades, for pure passion. 'Ten thousand francs!' said I at last, as soon as I found breath—'ten thousand francs!'

"'What!' cried the admiral, 'not content? Well, then, thou shalt have more; but I have rarely met one of your cloth with so mercenary a spirit.'

"'Stay, admiral,' said I, as I saw him about to write a new order; 'we both are in error here—you mistake me, and I you. An old admiral of the fleet ought to know his sailors better than to think that money is their highest reward; it never was so at least with Paul Dupont. Let me have my book again.'

"'Come, come, Paul—I believe I understand you now,' said he; 'your warrant shall be made out this day.'

"'No, admiral, it's too late,' said I; 'if that had come first, and from yourself, all well—but it looks like a bargain now, and I'll not have promotion that way.'

"'*Mort du diable!*' said he, stamping with passion, 'but they're all the same. These Bretons are as brutal in their obstinacy as their own cattle.'

"'You say true, admiral,' said I; 'but, if they're obstinate in wrong, they're resolute in right. You are a Breton gentleman, give me back my book.'

"'Take it,' said he, flinging it at me, 'and let me never see your face again;' and with that he left the cabin, and banged the door after him in a rage. And so, I went my way, comrades, back to my ship, and served for many a long year after, carrying that book always in my breast, and thinking to myself, 'Well, what if thou art only a boatswain, Paul, thou hast wherewithal in thy keeping to make thee a commodore any day.'"

"And what can it be, then, this book?" said the party, in a breath.

"You shall see," said Paul, solemnly; "for, though I have never shown it since, nor have I ever told the story before, here it is." With these words he drew from his bosom a small square volume, bound in vellum, and fastened by a clasp, lettered on the cover, "Signals of the Channel Fleet."

This was the secret of honest Paul's life, and as he turned over the leaves, he expatiated with eloquent delight on the various British emblems which were represented there, in all their brilliant coloring.

"That double streak of yellow on the black is to make all sail, comrades," said he. "Whenever they see us standing out to sea you may remark that signal flying."

"And what is this large blue flag here, with all the colored bars across it?" said one.

"Ay," cried another, "they're very fond of that ensign. What can it be?"

"Close action," growled out Paul, sullenly, who didn't fancy even the reflective praise this question implied to the hated rival.

"*Sacrèbleu!*" said a third, "they've no other to announce a victory. Look here, it is the same flag for both."

Paul shut up the book at this, with a muttered curse, which might have been intended either for his comrades, or the English, or both together, and the whole party became suddenly silent.

It was now that the landlord's tact became conspicuous; for instead of any condoling expressions on what might have been deemed the unsuccessful result of Paul's career, he affected to think that the brave seaman was more to be envied for the possession of that volume than if he walked the deck an admiral of France.

This flattery, aided by a fresh supply of Burgundy, had full success; and from story-telling the party fell to singing—the songs being only a more boastful detail of their prowess at sea than their prose narratives, and even here Paul maintained his supremacy.

Sleep, however, stronger than self-glorification and pride, fell on the party one by one, and they lay down at last on the tables and benches, and slumbered heavily.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

A MOONLIGHT RECOGNITION.

I SAT on my bed in the little chamber allotted me, and as the bright moonlight streamed along the floor, and lit up the wide landscape without, I hesitated within myself whether I should await the morning, or at once set forth on my way to the coast. It was true, the abbé had not arrived, and without him I knew nothing of the vessel, nor where she lay, much less by what means I should induce the crew to receive me as a passenger; but my heart was fixed on gaining the coast; once there, I felt that the sea alone rolled between me and my country, and I had little doubt some means of escape would present itself.

The desire to return to Ireland, long stilled, was now become a passion. I thought some new career must there open for me, and in its active vicissitudes I should make amends for the wearisome languor of

my late life. What this novel path was to be, and where to lead, I cannot say; nor am I able now, in looking back, to guess by what sophistry I persuaded myself into this belief. It was the last ray of hope within me, however, and I cherished it only the more fondly for its very uncertainty.

As I sat thus deliberating with myself what course to take, the door was cautiously opened, and the landlord entered.

"He is come," whispered he; "and, thank Heaven! not too late."

"The abbé?" inquired I.

"No, not the abbé, but the Count de Chambord. The abbé will not venture; but it matters not, if you will. The letters are all ready—the sloop is off the coast—the wind is fair—"

"And not a moment to be lost," added a deep, low voice, as the figure of a tall man, wrapped in a traveling cloak, darkened the doorway. "Leave us, Pierre—this is the gentleman, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir," said the landlord. "Should you need a light, I'll bring one."

"Thank you, friend, we can dispense with any, save what the moon affords us."

As the door closed on the retiring figure of the host, the stranger took his place beside me on the bed, and in a low voice thus began:

"I only know, sir, that you have the full confidence of one of my stanchest and best friends, who tells me that you are willing to incur great risk, provided you gain the chance of reaching your native land. That chance—nay, I will call it that certainty—lies in my power; and, in return for the assistance, are you willing to do me a service?"

"I served the Emperor, sir; ask me not anything unworthy of one who wore his epaulette. Aught else, if it be but honorable and fair, I'll do."

"I have no leisure for casuistry, nor is it my humor, sir," replied he, angrily. "Neither do I seek any wondrous devotion at your hands. The service is any easy one—costs nothing at the present—involves nothing for the future."

"The slight value you place upon it may detract but little from my objection," said I.

"*Sacré ciel!*" exclaimed he, in a louder voice, as he sprang from the bed and clasped his hands before him. "Is it to be ever thus? Is every step we take to be marred by some unlooked-for casualty? Is the stamp of fear and vacillation to be on every act of our lives? This abbé, the creature we have made, the man whose fortune is our handiwork, could render but one service to our cause, and he fails us in our need; and now, you—"

"Beware, sir, how you speak to one who has never been accustomed to hear his name slightingly used, nor his honor impugned; with your cause, whatever it be, I have no sympathy—remember that, and remember, also, we are strangers to each other."

"No, *par St. Denis!* that are we not!" said he, seizing me by the arm, as he turned his head round, and stared me steadfastly in the face. "It was but this instant I deemed my fortune at the worst, and now I find myself mistaken. Do you know me now?" said he, throwing off his traveling cap, and letting his cloak fall from his shoulders to the ground.

"De Beauvais!" exclaimed I, thunderstruck at the sight.

"Yes, sir, the same De Beauvais whose fortunes you have blighted—whose honor you have tarnished. Interrupt me not. The mill at Holbrun witnessed the latter—if even the former were an error—and now we meet once more."

"Not as enemies, however—at least on my side. You may persist, if you will, in attributing to me wrongs I never inflicted. I can better bear the imputation, unjust though it be, than involve myself in any quarrel with one I feel no anger toward. I was in hopes a few hours hence might have seen me on my way from France, forever—but here, or elsewhere, I will not reply to your enmity."

De Beauvais made no reply as I concluded, but with his arms crossed, and head bent down, seemed lost in thought. "And so," said he, at length, in a slow, sad voice, "you have not found the service of the Usurper as full of promise as you hoped—you have followed his banner long enough to learn how mean a thing even ambition may be, and how miserably selfish is the highest aspiration of an adventurer."

"The Emperor was my good master," said I, sternly. "It would ill become me to vent my disappointment on aught save my own demerits."

"I have seen as slight deservings bring a high reward, notwithstanding," replied he—"ay, and win their meed of praise from lips whose eulogy was honor. There was a service, Burke—"

"Stay, no more of this!" said I. "You are unjust to your own cause, and to me, if you deem that the hour of baffled hopes is that in which I could see its justice. *You* are true and faithful to one whose fortunes look darkly. I respect the fidelity, while I will not follow its dictates. I leave the path where fame and riches abound—I only ask

you to believe that I do so with honor. Let us part, then."

"Where do you mean to go, hence?"

"I know not—a prospect of escape had led me hither—I must now bethink me of some other course."

"Burke, I am your debtor for one kindness, at least," said De Beauvais, after a brief pause. "You saved my life, at the risk of your own. The night at the Château d'Ancre should never be forgotten by me—nor had it been, if I did not revenge my own disappointed hopes, in not seducing you to our cause, upon yourself. It may be that I wrong you in everything as in this."

"Believe me, that you do, De Beauvais."

"Be it as it may, I am your debtor. I came here to night to meet one who had pledged himself to perform a service—he has failed in his promise—will you take his place? The same means of escape shall be yours. All the precautions for his safety and sure conduct shall be taken in your behalf. I ask no pledge for the honorable discharge of what I seek at your hands, save your mere assent."

"What is it you require of me?"

"That you deliver these letters to their several addresses—that you do so with your own hands—that when questioned, as you may be, on the state of France, you will not answer as the partisan of the Usurper."

"I understand you—enough—I refuse your offer. Your zeal for the cause you serve must indeed be great, when it blinds you to all consideration for one placed as I am."

"It has made me forget more, sir—far more than that, as I might prove to you, were I to tell you what my life has been for two years past; but for such forgetfulness there is an ample recompense—a glorious one—the memory of our king." He paused at these words, and in his tremulous voice and excited gesture I could read the passion that worked within him. "Come, then, there shall be no more question of a compact between us. I ask no conditions—I seek for no benefits—you shall escape. Take my horse—my servant, who is also mounted, will accompany you to Beudron, where you will find fresh horses in readiness. This passport will prevent all interruption or delay; it is countersigned by Fouché himself. At Lisieux, which you will reach by sunset, you can leave the cattle, and the boy of the cabaret will be your guide to the Falaise de Biville. The tide will ebb at eleven o'clock, and a rocket from the sloop will be your signal to embark?"

"And for this I can render nothing in return?" said I, sadly.

"Yes. It may be that in your own country you will hear the followers of our king scoffed at and derided—called fools, or fanatics, perhaps worse. I would only ask of you to bear witness that they are at least ardent in the cause they have sworn to uphold, and firm to the faith to which they have pledged themselves. This is the only service you can render us, but it is no mean one. And now farewell."

"Farewell, De Beauvais; but ere we separate forever, let me hear from your lips that you bear me no enmity—that we are friends, as we used to be."

"Here is my hand. I care not if you injured me once, we can be friends now, for we are little likely to meet again as enemies. Adieu!"

While De Beauvais left the room to order the horses to be in readiness, the landlord entered it, and seemed to busy himself most eagerly in preparing my knapsack for the road.

"I trust you will be many a mile hence ere the day breaks," said he, with an anxiety I could ill comprehend, but which at the time I attributed to his desire for the safety of one intrusted with an important mission. "And now, here come the horses."

A moment more, and I was seated in the saddle. A brief word at parting was all De Beauvais spoke, and turned away, and the minute after I was hurrying onward toward Beudron.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

THE "FALAISE DE BIVILLE."

EVERYTHING occurred as De Beauvais had predicted. The authorities in the little villages we passed glanced at my passport, and as instantaneously handed it back, and we journeyed like couriers of the Emperor, without halt or impediment.

We reached Lisieux early in the evening, where, having dismissed the servant and horses, I took my way on foot toward a small fishing village called La Hupe, where, at a certain cabaret, I was to find my guide to Biville.

The address of the sailor written on a card, and marked with a peculiar cipher by De Beauvais, was at once recognized by the old Norman, who welcomed me with a rude but kindly hospitality.

"Thou art more like a man to make this venture than the last three who came down

here," said he, as he slowly measured me with his eye from head to foot. "These priests they sent us never dared even to look at the coast, much less to descend the cliffs; but thou hast a look about thee of another fashion. And now, the first thing is to have something to eat, and I promise thee a *goutte* of brandy will not be amiss to prepare thee for what is before thee."

"Is there, then, so much of danger in the descent?"

"Not if a man's head be steady and his hand firm; but he must have both, and a stout heart to guide them, or the journey is not over pleasant. Art thou cool enough in time of peril to remember what has been told thee for thy guidance?"

"Yes; I hope I can promise so much."

"Then thou art all safe; so eat away, and leave the rest to me."

Although the sailor's words had stimulated my curiosity in the highest degree, I repressed every semblance of the feeling, and ate my supper with a well-feigned appearance of easy indifference, while he questioned me about the hopes of the Bourbon party in their secret machinations, with a searching inquisitiveness that often nearly baffled all my ingenuity in reply.

"Ah, *par St. Denis!*" said he, with a deep sigh, "I see well thou hast small hope now; and, in truth, I feel as thou dost. When George Cadoudal and his brave fellows failed, where are we to look for success? I mind well the night he supped here."

"Here, said you?"

"Ay, where you sit now — on the same seat. There was an English officer with him. He wore a blue uniform, and sat yonder, beneath that fishing net—the others were hid along the shore."

"Was it here they landed, then?"

"Yes, to be sure, at the Falaise; there is not another spot to land on for miles along the coast." The old sailor then began a circumstantial account of the arrival of George and his accomplices from England, and told how they had, one by one, scaled the cliffs by means of a cord, well known in these parts, called the "smuggler's rope." "Thou shalt see the spot now," added he, "for there's the signal yonder." He pointed as he spoke to an old ruined tower, which crowned a cliff about half a mile distant, and from a loophole in which I could see a branch of ivy waving, as though moved by the wind.

"And what may that mean?"

"The cutter is in sight; as the wind is off shore, she'll be able to come in close to-night. Indeed, if it blew from the westward, she dared not venture nearer, nor thou, either, go down to meet her. So, now let's be moving."

About twenty minutes' walking brought us to the old signal-tower, on looking from the window of which I beheld the sea plashing full three hundred feet beneath. The dark rocks, fissured by time and weather, were abrupt as a wall, and, in some places, even overhung the waves that rolled heavily below. Masses of tangled sea-weed and shells, which lay in the crevices of the cliffs, showed where, in times of storm, the wild waters were thrown, while lower down, amid fragments of rocks, the heavy beams and planks of shipwrecked vessels surged with every motion of the tide.

"You cannot see the cutter now," said the old sailor. "The setting sun leaves a haze over the sea; but in a few minutes more we shall see her."

"I am rather looking for the pathway down this bold cliff," replied I, as I strained my eyes to catch something like a way to descend by.

"Then throw thine eyes in this direction," said the sailor, as he pointed straight down beneath the window of the tower. "Seest thou that chain there? Well, follow it a little further, and thou may'st mark a piece of timber jutting from the rock."

"Yes, I see it plainly."

"Well, the path thou askest for is beneath that spar. It is a good rope of stout hemp, and has carried the weight of many a brave fellow before now."

"The smuggler's rope?"

"The same. Art afraid to venture, now thou seest the place?"

"You'll not find me so, friend. I have seen danger as close before now, and did not blink it."

"Mark me well, then," said he, laying his hand on my arm. "When thou reachest that rope, thou wilt let thyself cautiously down to a small projecting point of rock—we cannot see it here, but thou wilt soon discern it in the descent. The rope from this goes no further, for that spot is nigh sixty fathom below us. From thence the cliff slopes sharply down about thirty or forty feet; here thou must creep cautiously, for the moss is dry and slippery at this season, till thou nearest the edge. Mark me well, now; near the edge thou'lt find a large stone fast-rooted in the ground, and around that another rope is fastened, by which thou may'st reach the bottom of the precipice. There is but one place of peril in the whole."

"The sloping bank, you mean?"

"Yes; that bit will try thy nerve. Remember, if thy foot slip, there's nothing to stop thy fall; the cliff is rounded over the edge, and the blue sea beats two hundred feet below it. And see! look yonder, far away there—seest thou the twinkling, as of a small star, on the water?"

"The cutter will throw up a rocket, will she not?"

"A rocket!" repeated he, contemptuously; "that's some landsman's story thou hast been listening to. A rocket would bring the whole fleet of boats from Tréport on her. No, no; they know better than that—the faintest glimmer of a fishing-craft is all they'll dare to show; but see how steadily it burns now—we must make the signal seaward."

"Halloa, Joseph! a light there."

A boy's voice answered from the upper part of the tower—the same figure who made the signal toward the shore, and whose presence there I had altogether forgotten; and, in a few minutes, a red glare on the rocks below showed that the old man's command was obeyed, and the beacon lighted.

"Ah! they see it already," cried he, triumphantly, pointing seaward; "they've extinguished the light now, but will show it again, from time to time."

"But tell me, friend, how happens it that the Marines of the Guard, who line this coast, do not perceive these signals?"

"And who tells thee that they do not? They may be looking, as we are now, at that same craft, and watching her as she beats in shore, but they know better than to betray us. Ay, *ma foi*, the 'contrebande' is better than the government. Enough for them, if they catch some poor English prisoner now and then, and have him shot—that contents the Emperor, as they call him—and he thinks the service all that is brave and vigilant. But as to us, it is our own fault if we fall in with them—it would need the rocket you spoke of a while ago to shame them into it. There, look again, thou seest how far in shore they've made already—the cutter is stealing fast along the water. Answer the signal, Joseph."

The boy replenished the fire with some dry wood, and it blazed up brilliantly, illuminating the gray cliffs and dark rocks, on which the night was fast falling, but leaving all beyond its immediate sphere in deepest blackness.

"I see not, friend, by what means I am to discover this sloping cliff, much less guide my way along it," said I, as I gazed over the precipice, and tried to penetrate the gloomy abyss below me.

"Thou'lt have the moon at full in less than two hours, and, if thou'lt take a friend's counsel, thou'lt have a sleep ere that time. Lay thee down yonder on those rushes; I'll awake thee, when time comes for it."

The rather that I resolved to obey my old guide in his every direction, than from any desire for slumber at such a time, I followed his advice, and threw myself full length in a corner of the tower. In the perfect stillness of the hour, the sea alone was heard, surging in slow, minute peals through many a deep cavern below, and then, gathering for fresh efforts, it swelled and beat against the stern rocks in passionate fury. Such sounds, heard in the silence of the night, are of the saddest; nor was their influence lightened by the low, monotonous chant of the old sailor, who, seated in a corner, began to repair a fishing-net, as he sang to himself some ditty of the sea.

How strangely came the thought to my mind, that all the peril I once incurred to reach France, the hoped-for, wished-for land, I should again brave, to escape from its shores. Every dream of boyish ambition dissipated—every high hope flown—I was returning to my country as poor and humble as I left it, but with a heart shorn of all the enthusiasm that gave life its coloring. In what way I could shape my future career I was not able even to guess—a vague leaning to some of England's distant colonies, some new world beyond the seas, being all my imagination could frame of my destiny. A sudden flash of light illuminating the whole interior of the tower, startled me from my musings, while the sailor called out,

"Come, wake up, friend, the cutter is standing in close, and a signal to make haste flying from her mast."

I sprang to my legs, and looked out. The sea was all freckled with the moonlight, and the little craft shone like silver, as the bright beams glanced on her white sails. The tall cliffs alone preserved their gloom, and threw a dark and frowning shadow over the waves beneath them.

"I can see nothing close to shore," said I, pointing to the dark rocks beneath the window.

"Thou'lt have the moon presently, she's rising above the crest of the hill, and then the cliffs are clear as at noonday. So, make haste; strap on that knapsack on your shoulder—high up, mind—and give thine arms full play. That's it; now fasten thy shoes over all. Thou wert not about to

wear them, surely?" said he, in a tone almost derisive. "Take care, in keeping from the face of the rock, not to sway the rope—it wears the cordage; and, above all, mind well when thou reach the cliff below. Let not thy hold go before thou hast well felt thy footing. See, the moon is up already."

As he spoke, a vast sheet of yellow light seemed to creep over the whole face of the precipice, displaying every crag and projection, and making every spot of verdure or rock brilliant in color; while, many a fathom down below, the heavy waves were seen, now rising in all their majestic swell, now pouring back in their thousand cataracts from every fissure in the precipice. So terribly distinct did each object show, so dreadfully was each distance marked, I felt that all its former gloom and darkness were not one-half so thrilling as that moonlight splendor.

"*La bonne Marie* guard thee now!" said the old seaman, as he wrung my hand in his strong fingers. "Be steady, and cool of head, and there is no danger; and look not downward till thou hast got accustomed to the cliff."

As he said this, he opened a small door at the foot of the tower stairs, and, passing through himself, desired me to follow. I did so, and now found myself on a narrow ledge of rock, directly over the crag; below, at about ten feet, lay the chain, to which the rope was attached, and to reach it was not the least perilous part of the undertaking. But in this I was assisted by the old man, who, passing a rope through a massive iron staple, gradually lowered me, till my hand came opposite the chain.

"Thou hast it now," cried he, as he saw me disengage one hand and grasp the iron links firmly.

"Yes—all safe! Good-by, friend—good-by."

"Wait yet," cried he again. "Let not go the cord before thou thinkest a minute or so. I have known more than one change his mind when he felt himself where thou art."

"Mine is made up. Farewell!"

"Stay, stay!" shouted he, rapidly. "See, thou hast forgotten this purse on the rock here. Wait, and I will lower it with a cord."

By this time I had grasped the chain firmly with both hands, and with the resolve of one who felt life depend on his own firmness, I began the descent. The old man's voice, as he muttered a prayer for my safety, grew fainter and fainter, till at length it ceased to reach my ears altogether. Then, for the first time, did my heart sink within me. The words of one human being, faint and broken by distance, suggested a sense of sympathy, which nerved my courage and braced my arm; but the dreary silence that followed, only broken by the booming of the sea below, was awful beyond measure.

Hand below hand I went, the space seeming never to lessen, as I strained my eyes to catch the cliff where the first rope ended. Time, as in some fearful dream, seemed protracted to years long; and I already anticipated the moment when, my strength failing, my hands would relinquish their hold, and I should be dashed upon the dark rocks below. The very seabirds, which I startled in my descent, wheeled round my head, piercing the air with their shrill cries, and as if impatient for a prey. Above my head, the frowning cliff beetled darkly; below, a depth unfathomable seemed to stretch, from whose black abyss arose the wild sounds of beating waves. More than once, too, I thought that the rope had given way above, and that I was actually falling through the air, and held my breath in horror; then, again, the idea flashed upon me that death inevitable awaited me, and I fancied in the singing billows I could hear the wild shouts of demons rejoicing over my doom. Through all these maddening visions, the instinct to preserve my life held its strong sway, and I clutched the knotted rope with the eager grasp of a drowning man, when suddenly I felt my foot strike a rock beneath, and then discovered I was on the cliff of which the sailor had told me.

In a few seconds the sense of security imparted a thrill of pleasure to my heart, and I uttered a prayer of thankfulness for my safety; but the fearful conviction of greater danger as suddenly succeeded. The rope I had so long trusted terminated here; the end hung listlessly on the rock, and from thence to the brow of the cliff nothing remained to afford a grip, save the short moss and the dried ferns, withered with the sun. The surface of this frightful ledge sloped rapidly toward the edge, where was the rock around which the rope was tied.

Fatigued by my previous exertion, I sat down on that moss-grown cliff and gazed out upon the sea, along which the cutter came, proudly dashing the spray from her bows, and bending gracefully with every wave. She was standing fearlessly in, for the wind was off the land, and, as she swept along, I could have fancied her directly beneath my very feet.

AGAIN, THE IDEA FLASHED UPON ME, THAT DEATH INEVITABLE AWAITED ME, AND I FANCIED IN THE SINGING BILLOWS I COULD HEAR THE WILD SHOUTS OF DEMONS REJOICING OVER MY DOOM. (P. 578.)

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Arousing myself from the momentary stupor of my faculties, I began to creep down the cliff; but so slippery had the verdure become by heat, that I could barely sustain myself by grasping the very earth with my fingers. A loud "Holloa!" was shouted from the craft, and arose in many an echo around me. I tried to reply, but could not. A second cheer saluted me, but I did not endeavor to answer it. The moment was full of peril; I had come to the last spot which offered a hold, and below me, at some feet, lay the rock, hanging, as it were, over the precipice. It seemed to me as though a sea-bird's weight might have sent it thundering into the depth beneath. The moon was on it, and I could see the rope coiled twice around it, and knotted carefully. What would I have given in that terrible minute for one tuft of grass, one slender bough, even enough to have sustained my weight for a second or two, until I should grasp the cord! But none was there. A louder cry from the cutter now rang in my ears, and the dreadful thought of destruction now flashed on me. I fixed my eyes on the rock to measure the place, and then, turning with my face toward the cliff, I suffered myself to slip downward. At first I went slowly, then faster and faster. At last my legs passed over the brow of the precipice. I was falling! My head reeled. I uttered a cry, and, in an agony of despair, threw out my hands. They caught the rope. Knot after knot slipped past my fingers in the descent ere my senses became sufficiently clear to know what was occurring; but even then, the instinct of self-preservation was stronger than reason, for I afterward learned from the boat's crew with what skill I guided myself along the face of the cliff, avoiding every difficulty of the jagged rocks, and tracking my way like the most experienced climber.

I stood upon a broad flat rock, over which white sheets of foam were dashing. Oh, how I loved to see them curling on my feet! I could have kissed the bright water on which the moonbeans sported, for the moment of danger was passed. The shadow of a dreadful death had moved from my soul. What cared I now for the boiling surf that toiled and fretted about me? The dangers of the deep were as nothing to that I escaped from, and when the cutter's boat came bounding toward me, I minded not the oft-repeated warnings of the sailors, but, plunging in, I dashed toward her on a retreating wave, and was dragged on board almost lifeless from my struggles.

The red glare of the signal-fire was blazing from the old tower as we got under weigh. I felt my eyes riveted on it as I lay on the deck of the little vessel, which now stood out to sea in gallant style. It was my last look of France, and so I felt it.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

THE LANDING.

With the crew of the cutter I had little intercourse. They were Jerseymen—that hybrid race, neither French nor English—who followed the trade of spies and smugglers, and were true to nothing save their own interests. The skipper, a coarse, ill-featured fellow, in no respect superior to the others, leisurely perused the letter De Beauvais gave me on my departure; then, tearing it slowly, threw the pieces into the fire.

"What, then, is this?" said he, taking up a sealed packet, which I now for the first time perceived was fastened to my knapsack. "It seems meant for me. Look at the address—'Jacques Cloquette, on board the Rouge Galant.'" And, so saying, he broke the seal, and bent over the contents.

"Oh!" cried he, in a voice of triumphant delight, "this is a prize worth having—the English signal-book!" and he held up the little volume which Paul Dupont had rescued from the 'Fawn.'

"How came it here?" said I, horror-struck at the loss the poor sailor had sustained.

"Old Martin, of the 'Star,' tells me he stole it from a Marine of the Guard, and that it cost him twenty-four flasks of his best Pomard before the fellow and his companions were drunk enough to make the theft practicable."

I remembered at once the eagerness of the landlord for my departure, and the hurried anxiety of his wish that morning might find me miles off on my journey, as well as the care he bestowed on strapping my knapsack, and saw how all had occurred.

"I knew most of them already," continued the skipper, "but here is one will serve our turn well now—the very thing we wanted, for it saves all delay and stoppage. That flag is the signal for Admiralty dispatches, which are often brought by small craft like ours, when they can't spare cruisers. We'll soon rig it out, you'll see, and run down Channel with all our canvas set."

He went aft as he spoke, and in a few seconds the cutter's head was directed straight toward the English coast, while, crowding on more sail, she seemed to fly through the water.

The cheering freshness of the sea-breeze, the sense of danger past, the hope of escape, all combining, raised my spirits, and elevated my courage; but, through all, I felt grieved beyond measure at the loss of poor Paul Dupont. The prize the honest fellow valued next to life itself, if not above it, taken from him in the very moment of his exultation. Besides, I could not help feeling that suspicion must light on me from my sudden disappearance; and my indignation was deep, to think how such an imputation would tarnish the honor of that service I gloried in so much. "How far may such a calumny spread?" thought I. "How many lips may repeat the tale, and none be able to deny it?" Deep as was my regret at the brave Breton's loss, my anger for its consequences was still deeper; and I would willingly have periled all my hope of reaching England to have been able to restore the book into Paul's own hand.

These feelings did not tend to draw me closer in intimacy with the skipper, whose pleasure at the acquisition was only heightened by the subtlety of its accomplishment, and seemed never so happy as when repeating some fragment of the landlord's letter, and rejoicing at the discomfiture the brave sailor must have experienced on discovering his loss. To witness the gratification a coarse nature feels in some unworthy but successful action, is the heaviest penalty an honorable mind can experience, when unhappily its possessor has been in any way accessary to the result. With these reflections I fell off to sleep, and never woke till the bright sun was shining over the white-crested water, and the craft breasting the waves, with a strong breeze upon her canvas.

As we held on down Channel, we passed several ships of war beating up for Spithead; but our blue bunting, curiously streaked with white, was a signal which all acknowledged, and none ventured to retard. Thus passed the first day. As night was falling, we beheld the Needles on our lee, and, with a freshening breeze, held on our course.

A second morning broke, and now the sea was covered with the white sails of a magnificent fleet, bound for the West Indies—at least, so the skipper pronounced it. It was indeed a glorious sight to see the mighty vessels obeying the signals of the flag-ship, and shaping their course through the blue water, as if instinct with life and reason. They were far seaward of us, however, for now we hugged the land, as the skipper was only desirous of an opportunity to land me unobserved, before he proceeded on his own more immediate enterprise—the smuggling of some hogsheads of brandy on the coasts of Ireland.

Left to my own thoughts, the memories of my past life, I dreamed away the hours unconsciously, and, as the time sped on, I knew not of its flight. Some strange sail, seen from afar off, would for an instant arouse my attention; but it was a mere momentary effect, and I fell back into my musings, as though they had never been interrupted. As I look back upon that voyage now, and think of the dreamy listlessness in which its hours were passed, I can half fancy that certain periods of our lives are destined to sustain the part which night performs in our daily existence, and by their monotony contribute to that renewal of energy and vigor so essential after times of labor and exertion. It seemed to me as though, the period of exertion past, I was regaining in rest and repose the power for future action, and I canvassed every act of the past, to teach me more of my own heart, and to instruct me for my guidance in life after.

"You can land now, whenever you please," said the skipper to me, as, by a faint moonlight, we moved along the waveless sea. "We can put you ashore at any moment here."

I started with as much surprise as though the thought had never occurred to me, and, without replying, I leaned over the bulwark, and gazed at the faint shadows of tall headlands, about three miles distant.

"How do you call that bluff yonder?" said I, carelessly.

"Wicklow Head."

"Wicklow Head! Ireland!" cried I, with a thrill of ecstasy my heart had never felt for many a day before. "Yes, yes; land me there, now, at once," said I, as a thousand thoughts came rushing to my mind, and hopes too vague for utterance, but palpable enough to cherish.

With the speed their calling teaches, the crew lowered the boat, and, as I took my place in the stern, pulled vigorously toward the shore. As the swift bark glided along the shallow sea, I could scarce restrain my impatience, from springing out, and rushing on land. Without family or friend, without one to welcome or meet me, still it was home—the only home I ever had.

The sharp keel grated on the beach, its sound vibrated within my heart—I jumped on shore—a few words of parting, and the

men backed their oars—the boat slipped fast through the water. The cutter, too, got speedily under weigh again, and I was alone. Then the full torrent of my feelings found their channel, and I burst into tears. Oh! they were not tears of sorrow—neither were they the outpourings of excessive joy—they were the utterance of a heart loaded with its own unrelieved griefs, who now found sympathy on touching the very soil of home. I felt I was no longer friendless. Ireland, my own dear native country, would be to me a place of kindred and family—and I fell upon my knees, and blessed it.

Following a little path, which led slantingly up the cliff, I reached the top as day was beginning to break, and gained a view of the country. The range of swelling hills, dotted with cottages, and waving with wood; the fields of that emerald green one sees not in other lands; the hedge-rows, bounding the little farms—all so unlike the spreading plains of France—struck me with delight, and it was with a rapture of happiness I called the land my country.

Directing my steps toward Dublin, I set out at a good pace, but following a path which led near the cliffs, in preference to the high-road, for I was well aware that my appearance and dress would expose me to curiosity, and perhaps subject me to more serious annoyance. My first object was to learn some news of my brother, for, although the ties of affection had been long since severed between us, those of blood still remained, and I wished to hear of, and it might be to see, him once more. For some miles I had kept my eyes directed toward a little cabin, which crowned a cliff that hung over the sea, and this I reached at last, somewhat wearied and hungry.

As I followed a little footpath which conducted to the door, a fierce terrier rushed out as if to attack me, but was immediately restrained by the voice of a man within, calling, "Down, Vicksey, down, you baste!" and the same moment a stout, middle-aged man appeared at the door.

"Don't be afeared, sir, she's not wicked, but we're unused to strangers down here."

"I should think so, friend, from my path," said I, throwing a glance at the narrow footway I had followed for some miles, over hill and precipice; "but I am unacquainted with the country, and was looking out for some house where I might obtain a breakfast."

"There's a town about three miles down yonder, and a fine inn, I'm tould, sir," replied he, as he scrutinized my appearance with a shrewd eye; "but if I might make so bould, maybe you'd as lief not go there, and, perhaps, you'd take share of what we have here?"

"Willingly," said I, accepting the hospitable offer, as freely as it was made, and entered the cabin at once.

A good-featured country woman, and some young children, were seated at a table, where a large dish of potatoes and some fresh fish were smoking, a huge jug of milk occupying the middle of the board. The woman blushed as she heard that her husband had invited a gentleman to partake of his humble meal, but the honest fellow cared little for the simple fare he offered with so good a grace, and placed my chair beside his own with the air of one who was more anxious for his guest's comfort than caring what impression he himself might make upon him.

After some passing words about the season, and the state of the tides—for my host was a fisherman—I turned the conversation on the political condition of the country, avowing frankly that I had been for some years absent, and was ignorant of what had occurred meantime.

"'Twas that same I was thinking, sir," said he, replying to the first and not the latter part of my remark. "When I saw your honor's face, and the beard you wore, I said to myself you wor a Frenchman."

"You mistook there, then; I am your countryman, but have passed a good many years in France."

"Fighting for Boney?" said he, as his eyes opened wide with surprise to behold one actually before him who might have served under Napoleon.

"Yes, my good friend, even so; I was in the army of the Emperor."

"Tare an ages! then, are they coming over here now?" cried he, almost gasping in his eagerness.

"No, no," replied I, gravely; "and be thankful, too, for it, for your own and your children's sakes, that you see not a war raging in the fields and cities of your native land. Be assured, whatever wrongs you suffer—I will not dispute their existence, for, as I told you, I am ignorant of the condition of the country—but whatever they may be, you can pay too dearly for their remedy."

"But sure they'd be on our side, wouldn't they?"

"Of course they would; but think you that they'd fight your battles without their price? Do you believe that Frenchmen so love you here that they would come to shed their blood in your cause without their own prospect of advantage?"

"They hate the English, I'm tould, as bad as we do ourselves."

"They do so, and with more of justice for their hate; but that dislike might suffice to cause a war, it never would reward it. No, no. I know something of the spirit of French conquest; I glory in the bravery and the heroism that accomplished it; but I never wish to see my own country at the mercy of France. Whose soldier would you become if the Emperor Napoleon landed here to-morrow? His. Whose uniform would you wear—whose musket carry—whose pay receive—whose orders obey? His, and his only. And how long, think you, would your services be limited to home? What should prevent your being sent away to Egypt, to Poland, or to Russia? How much favor would an Irish deserter receive from a French court-martial, think you? No, good friend, while you have this warm roof to shelter you, and that broad sea is open for your industry and toil, never wish for foreign aid to assist you."

I saw that the poor fellow was discouraged by my words, and gradually led him to speak of those evils for whose alleviation he looked to France. To my surprise, however, he descanted less on political grievances than those which affect the well-being of the country socially. It was not the severity of a government, but the absence of encouragement to industry—the neglect of the poor—which afflicted him. England was no longer the tyrant. The landlord had taken her place; still, with the pertinacity of ignorance, he visited all the wrongs on that land from which originally his first misfortunes came, and with perverse ingenuity would endeavor to trace out every hardship he suffered as arising from the ill-will and hatred the Saxon bore him. It was easy to perceive that the arguments he used were not of his own devising; they had been supplied by others, in whose opinion he had confidence; and though valueless and weak in reality, to him they were all-convincing and unanswerable—not the less, perhaps, that they offered that value to self-love which comes from attributing any evils we endure to causes outside and independent of ourselves. These, confronted with extravagant hopes of what would ensue should national independence be established, formed his code; and however refuted on each point, a certain conviction, too deeply laid to be disturbed by any opposing force, remained; and in his, "Well, well, God knows best, and maybe we'll have better luck yet," you could perceive that he was inaccessible to any appeal, except from the quarter which ministered to his discontent and disaffection.

One thing was clear to me, from all he said, that if the spirit of open resistance no longer existed toward England, it was replaced by as determined and as rancorous hatred—a brooding, ill-omened dislike had succeeded, to the full as hostile, and far less easily subdued. How it would end—whether in the long-lingering fear, which wastes the energies and saps the strength of a people, or in the conflict of a civil war—the prospect was equally ruinous.

Sadly pondering on these things, I parted with my humble host, and set out toward the capital. If my conversation with the Irishman had taught me somewhat of the state of feeling then current in Ireland, it also conveyed another and very different lesson: it enabled me to take some account of the change years had effected in my own sentiments. As a boy, high-flown, vague, and unsettled ideas of national liberty and independence had made me look to France as the emancipator of Europe. As a man, I knew that the lust of conquest had extinguished the love of freedom in Frenchmen; that they who trusted to her did but exchange the dominion of their old masters for the tyranny of a new one; while such as boldly stepped forward in defense of their liberties, found that there was neither mercy nor compassion for the conquered.

I had seen the Austrian prisoners and the Russian led captive through the streets of Paris—I had witnessed the great capital of Prussia in its day of mourning after Jena—and all my idolatry for the General scarce balanced my horror of the Emperor, whose vengeance had smitten two nations thus heavily; and I said within my heart, "May my countrymen, whatever be their day of need, never seek an alliance with despotic France."

CHAPTER LXXIX.

A CHARACTER OF "OLD DUBLIN."

It was about nine o'clock of a calm summer evening as I entered Dublin; nearly the same hour at which, some ten years before, I had approached that city—poor, houseless, friendless; and still was I the same. In that great capital of my country I had not one to welcome me—not one who would rejoice at my coming, or feel any interest in my fortunes. This indeed was loneliness—utter solitude. Still if there be something which weighs heavily on the heart in the isolation of one like me, there is a proportionate sense of independence of his fellow-man that sustains the courage

and gives energy to the will. I felt this as I mixed with the crowds that thronged the streets, and shrank not from the inquisitive glances which my questionable appearance excited as I passed.

Though considerable changes had taken place in the outskirts of the capital since I had seen it last, the leading thoroughfares were just as I remembered them; and as I walked along Dame street, and one by one each familiar object caught my eye, I could almost have fancied the long interval since I had been there before like a mere dream. National physiognomy, too, has a strange effect on him who has been long absent from his country. Each face you meet seems well known. The traits of features, to which the eye was once so well accustomed, awake a memory of individuals, and it is sometimes a most difficult task to distinguish between the acquaintance and the passing stranger. This I experienced at every moment; and at length, as I stood gazing on the space before the Bank, and calling to mind the last scene I witnessed there, a tall, strongly-built man brushed close past me, and then turning round, fixed a steady and searching look on me. As I returned his stare, a sudden thought flashed upon me that I had seen the face before, but where, how, and when, I could not call to mind; and thus we stood silently confronting each other for some minutes.

"I see you are a stranger here, sir," said he, touching his hat courteously; "can I be of service to you with any information as to the city?"

"I was curious to know, sir," said I, still more puzzled by the voice than I had been by the features of the stranger, "if Miley's Hotel, which was somewhere in the neighborhood, exists still?"

"It does, sir, but it has changed proprietors several times since you knew it," replied he, significantly. "The house is yonder, where you see that large lamp. I perceive, sir, I was mistaken in supposing you a foreigner. I wish you good-evening." And again saluting me, he resumed his way.

As I crossed the street toward the hotel, I remarked that he turned as if to watch me, and became more than ever embarrassed as to who he might be.

The doorway of the hotel was crowded with loungers and idlers of every class, from the loitering man about town to the ragged news-vender—between whom, whatever disparity of condition existed, a tone of the most free-and-easy condition prevailed. The newsman interpolating amid the loud announcements of the latest intelligence, the reply to the observation beside him.

One figure was conspicuous in the group. He was a short, dwarfish creature, with an enormous head, covered with a fell of black hair, falling in masses down his back and on his shoulders. A pair of fierce, fiery black eyes glared beneath his heavy brows; and a large, thick-lipped mouth moved with all the glib eloquence of his class and calling. Fearfully distorted legs and club feet gave to his gait a rolling motion, which added to the singularity of his whole appearance.

Terry Regan was then at the head of his walk in Dublin, and to his capacious lungs and voluble tongue were committed the announcement of those great events which, from time to time, were given to the Irish public through the columns of the *Correspondent* and the *Dublin Journal*.

I soon found myself in the crowd around this celebrated character, who was, as usual, extolling the great value of that night's paper, by certain brief suggestions regarding its contents.

"Here's the whole, full, and true account—bad luck to the less—of the great and sanguinary battle between Boney and the Roosians, with all the particklars about the killed, wounded, and missing, with what Boney said when it was over."

"What was that, Terry?"

"Hould yer peace, ye spalpeen. Is it to the likes of yez I'd be telling cabinet sacrets? Here, yer honor—'Falkner,' is it, or 'The Saunders?' With the report of Mr. O'Gorman's grand speech in Ennis, on the Catholic claims. There's, yer sowl, there's fippence-worth any day av the week. More be token, the letter from Jemmy O'Brien to his wife, wid an elegant epic poem called 'The Gauger.' Bloody news, gentlemen, bloody news! Won't yez sport a tester for a sight of a real battle, and ten thousand kilt—with 'The Whole Duty of an Informer, in two easy lessons.' The price of stocks and shares— Ay, Mr. O'Hara, and what boroughs is bringing in the market."

This last sally was directed toward a large, red-faced man, who good-humoredly joined in the laugh against himself.

"And who's this, boys?" cried the fellow, turning suddenly his piercing eyes on me, as I endeavored, step by step, to reach the door of the hotel. "Hurroo. Look at his beard, acushla! On my conscience, I wouldn't wonder if it was General Hoche himself. 'Tis late yer come, sir," said he, addressing me directly; "there's no fun here now at all, barrin' what Beresford has in the riding-house."

"Get away, you ruffian," said a well-

dressed and respectable-looking man, somewhat past the middle of life. "How dare you permit your tongue to take liberties with a stranger? Allow me to make room for you, sir," continued he, as he politely made an opening in the crowd, and suffered me to enter the house.

"Ah, counselor, dear, don't be cross," whined out the news-vender. "Sure, isn't it wid the bad tongue we both make our bread. And here," vociferated he once more—"and here ye have the grand dinner at the Lord Mayor's, wid all the speeches and toasts—wid the glorious, pious, and immortial memory of King William, who delivered us from popery—(by pitched caps)—from slavery—(by whipping)—from brass money—(by bad ha'pence)—and from wooden shoes—(by bare feet). Haven't we reason to bless his—? Ay, the heavens be his bed! 'Tis like Molly Crownahon's husband he was."

"How was that, Terry?" asked a gentleman near.

"Take a 'Saunders,' yer honor, and I'll tell you."

"Here, then, here's fippence; and now for the explanation."

"Molly Crownahon, yer honor, was, like us poor craytures, always grateful and contented wid the Lord's goodness to us, even in taking away our chief comfort and blessing—the darling up there on the horse! Ah, 'tis an elegant sate ye have, without stirrups! And she went one day to say a handful of prayers over his grave—the husband's, ye mind—and sure if she did, when she knelt down on the grass, she sprung up again as quick as she went down, for the nettles was all over the place entirely. 'Bad scran to ye, Peter,' says she, as she rubbed her legs—'bad scran to ye—living or dead, there was always a sting in ye.'"

As the latter part of this speech was addressed in a tone of apostrophe to the statue of King William, it was received by the assembled crowd with a roar of laughter.

By this time I had entered the house, and only bethought me how little suited was the great hotel of the city to pretensions as humble as mine. It was now, however, too late to retreat, and I entered the coffee-room, carrying my knapsack in my hand. As I passed up the room in search of a vacant table, the looks of astonishment my appearance excited on each side were most palpable evidences that the company considered me as an interloper. While some contented themselves with a stare of steady surprise, others, less guarded in their impertinence, whispered with, and even winked at their neighbors, to attract attention toward me.

Offensive as this unquestionably was, it amazed even more than it annoyed me. In France, such a display of feeling would have been impossible—and the humblest soldier of the army would not have been so received, had he deemed fit to enter Beauvilliers's or Véry's.

Whether hurt at this conduct, and, consequently, more alive to affront from any quarter, or that the waiters participated in the sentiments of their betters, I cannot exactly say; but I certainly thought their manner even less unequivocally betrayed the same desire of impertinence. This was not long a mere suspicion on my part, for, on inquiring whether I could have a room for the night, the waiter, touching my knapsack, which lay on the ground beside me, with his foot, replied,

"Is this your luggage, sir?"

Amazement so completely mastered my indignation at this insolence, that I could make no answer, but by a look. This had its effect, however, and the fellow, without further delay, bustled off to make the inquiry.

He returned in a few minutes with a civil message, that I could be accommodated, and, having placed before me the simple meal I ordered, retired. As I sat over my supper, I could not help feeling that, unless memory played me false, the company were little like the former frequenters of this house. I remembered it of old, when Bubbleton and his brother officers came there, and when the rooms were thronged with members of both houses of parliament—when peers and gentlemen of the first families were grouped about the windows and the fireplaces, and the highest names of the land were heard in the din of recognition—handsome equipages and led horses stood before the doors; but now, the ragged mob without was scarce a less worthy successor to the brilliant display than were the company within to the former visitants. A tone of pretentious impertinence, an air of swagger and mock defiance, the most opposite to the polished urbanity which once prevailed, was now conspicuous; and in their loud speech and violent gesticulation, it was easy to mark how they had degenerated from that high standard which made the Irish gentleman of his day the most polished man of Europe.

If, in appearance and manner, they fell far short of those my memory recalled, their conversation more markedly still displayed the long interval between them.

Here, of old, were retailed the latest

news of the debate—the last brilliant thing of Grattan, or the last biting retort of Flood; here came hot from debate the great champions of either party to relax and recruit for fresh efforts, and in the groups that gathered around them you might learn how great genius can diffuse its influence and scatter intelligence around it, as the Nile waters spread plenty and abundance wherever they flow. High and noble sentiments, holy aspirations and eloquent thoughts, made an atmosphere, to breathe which was to feel an altered nature. But now, a vapid mixture of conceit and slang had usurped the place of these, and a tone of vulgar self-sufficiency, unhappily too much in keeping with the externals of those who displayed it: the miserable contentions of different factions had replaced the bolder strife of opposite parties, and provincialism had put its stamp on everything. The nation, too, if I might trust my ears with what fell around me, had lost all memory of its once great names, and new candidates for popular favor figured in their places.

Such were some of the changes I could mark, even as I sat. But my attention was speedily drawn from them by a circumstance more nearly concerning myself. This was the appearance in the coffee-room of the gentleman who first addressed me in the street.

As he passed round the room, followed by a person whose inferiority was evident, he was recognized by most of those present, many of whom shook him warmly by the hand, and pressed him to join their parties; but this he declined, as he continued to walk slowly on, scrutinizing each face as he went. At last I saw his eyes turn toward me. It was scarcely a glance, so rapid was it, and so quickly were his looks directed to a different quarter; but I could mark that he whispered something to the person who followed, and then, after carelessly turning over a newspaper on the table, sauntered from the room. As he did so, the shaggy head of the dwarf news-vender peeped in, and the great black eyes took a survey of the coffee-room, till finally they settled on me.

"Ah!" cried the fellow, with a strange blending of irony and compassion in his voice, "be gorra, I knew how it would be—the major has ye!" At this a general laugh broke out from all present, and every eye was fixed on me. Meanwhile, the follower had taken his place nearly opposite me at the table, and was busily engaged examining a paper which he had taken from his pocket.

"May I ask, sir, if your name be Burke?" said he, in a low voice, across the table.

I started with amazement to hear my name pronounced where I believed myself so completely a stranger, and, in my astonishment, forgot to answer.

"I was asking, sir—" repeated he.

"Yes, you are quite correct," interrupted I; "that is my name. May I beg to know, in return, for what purpose you make the inquiry?"

"Thomas Burke, sir?" continued he, inattentive to my observation, and apparently about to write the name on the paper before him.

I nodded, and he wrote down the words.

"That saves a deal of trouble to all of us, sir," said he, as he finished writing. "This is a warrant for your arrest; but the major is quite satisfied if you can give bail for your appearance."

"Arrest!" repeated I; "on what charge am I arrested?"

"You'll hear in the morning, I suppose," said he, quietly. "What shall we say about the bail—have you any acquaintance, or friend, in town?"

"Neither—I am a perfect stranger here; but if you are authorized to arrest me, I here surrender myself at once." By this time, several persons of the coffee-room had approached the table, and, among the rest, the gentleman who so politely made way for me in the crowd to reach the door.

"What is it, Roche?" said he, addressing the man at the table—"a warrant?"

"Yes, sir—for this gentleman here; but we can take bail, if he has it."

"I have told you already that I am a stranger, and know no one here."

The gentleman threw his eyes over the warrant, and then looking me steadily in the face, muttered, in a whisper, to the officer, "Why, he must have been a boy—a mere child, at the time."

"Very true, sir; but the major says it must be done. Maybe you'd bail him yourself." These words were added in a tone of half irony, as the fellow gave a sly look beneath his eyelashes.

"I tell you, again," said I, impatient at the whole scene, "I am quite ready to accompany you."

"Is this your name, sir?" said the strange gentleman, addressing me, as he pointed to the warrant.

"Yes," interposed the officer, "there's no doubt about that; he gave it himself."

"Come, come, then, Roche," said he, cajolingly, "these are not times for undue strictness. Let the gentleman remain where

he is to-night, and to-morrow he will attend you. You can remain here, if you like, with him."

"If you say so, I suppose we may do it," replied the officer, as he folded up the paper, and arose from the table.

"Yes, yes—that's the proper course. And now," said he, addressing me, "will you permit me to join you while I finish this bottle of claret?"

I could have no objection to so pleasant a proposal, and thus, for the time at least, ended this disagreeable affair.

CHAPTER LXXX.

AN UNFORESEEN EVIL.

"I PERCEIVE, sir," said the stranger, seating himself at my table, "they are desirous to restore an antiquated custom in regard to you. I thought the day of indemnities was past and gone forever."

"I am ignorant to what you allude."

"The authorities would make you out an emissary of France, sir; as if France had not enough on her hands already, without embroiling herself in a quarrel from which no benefit could accrue—not to speak of the little likelihood that any one on such an errand would take up his abode, as you have, in the most public hotel of Dublin."

"I have no apprehensions as to any charges they may bring against me. I am conscious of no crime, saving having left my country a boy, and returned to it a man."

"You were in the service of France, then?"

"Yes, since 1801 I have been a soldier."

"So long? You must have been but a mere boy when you quitted Ireland. How have they connected you with the troubles of that period?"

I hesitated for a second or two, uncertain what answer, if any, I should return to this abrupt question. A glance at the manly and frank expression of the stranger's face soon satisfied me that no unworthy curiosity had prompted the inquiry, and I told him in a few words, how, as a child, the opinions of the patriotic party had won me over to embark in a cause I could neither fathom nor understand. I traced out rapidly the few leading events of my early career down to the last evening I spent in Ireland. When I came to this part of my story, the stranger became unusually attentive, and more than once questioned me respecting the origin of my quarrel with Crofts, and the timely appearance of Darby, of whose name and character, however, I gave him no information, merely speaking of him as an old and attached follower of my family.

"Since that period, then, you have not been in Ireland?" said he, as I concluded.

"Never: nor had I any intention of returning until lately, when circumstances induced me to leave the Emperor's service; and from very uncertainty I came back here, without well knowing why."

"Of course, then, you have never heard the catastrophe of your adventure with Crofts. It was a lucky hit for him."

"How so? I don't understand you."

"Simply this:—Crofts was discovered in the morning, severely wounded, where you left him, his account being, that he had been waylaid by a party of rebels, who had obtained the countersign of the night, and passed the sentry in various disguises. You yourself—for so, at least, I surmise it must have been—were designated the prime mover of the scheme, and a government reward was offered for your apprehension. Crofts was knighted, and appointed to the staff—the reward of his loyalty and courage—of the exact details of which my memory is, unfortunately, little tenacious."

"And the truth of the occurrence was never known?"

"What I have told you is the only version current. I have reason to remember so much of it, for I was then, and am still, one of the legal advisers of the Crown, and was consulted on the case, of which, I confess, I always had my misgivings. There was a rage, however, for rewarding loyalty, as it was termed, at the period, and the story went the round of the papers. Now, I fancy Crofts would just as soon not see you back again. He has made all he can of the adventure, and would as lief have it quietly forgotten."

"But can I suffer it to rest here? Is such an imputation to lie on my character as he would cast on me?"

"Take no steps in the matter on that score: vindication is time enough when the attack is made directly: besides, where should you find your witness—where is the third party, who could prove your innocence, and that all you did was in self-defense?—without his testimony, your story would go for nothing. No, no. Be well satisfied if the charge is suffered to sleep, which is not unlikely. Crofts would scarcely like to confess that his antagonist was little more than a child; his prowess would gain nothing by the avowal; besides, the

world goes well with him latterly: it is but a month ago, I think, he succeeded, unexpectedly, to a large landed property."

The stranger, whose name was M'Dougall, continued to talk for some time longer, most kindly volunteered to advise me in the difficult position I found myself, and having given me his address in town, wished me a good-night and departed.

It was to no purpose I laid my head on my pillow; tired and fatigued as I was, I could not sleep; the prospect of fresh troubles awaiting me made me restless and feverish, and I longed for day to break, that I might manfully confront whatever danger was before me, and oppose a stout heart to the arrows of adverse fortune. My accidental meeting with the stranger also reassured my courage, and I felt gratified to think that such rencontres in life are the sunny spots which illumine our career in the world—the harbingers of bright days to come.

This feeling was still more strongly impressed on me as I entered the small room on the ground-floor at the Castle, where was the secretary's office, and beheld M'Dougall seated in an arm-chair, reading the newspaper of the day. I could not help connecting his presence there with some kindly intention toward me, and already regarded him as my friend. Major Barton stood at the secretary's side, and whispered from time to time in his ear.

"I have before me certain information, sir," said the secretary, addressing me, "that you were connected with parties who took an active part in the late rebellion in this country, and by them sent over to France to negotiate co-operation and assistance from that quarter"—Barton here whispered something, and the secretary resumed—"and in continuance of this scheme are at present here."

"I have only to observe, sir, that I left Ireland a mere boy, when, whatever my opinions might have been, they were, I suspect, of small moment to his majesty's government; that I have served some years in the French army, during which period I neither corresponded with any one here, nor had intercourse with any from Ireland; and lastly, that I have come back unaccredited by any party, not having, as I believe, a single acquaintance in the island."

"Do you still hold a commission in the French service?"

"No, sir. I resigned my grade as captain some time since."

"What were your reasons for that step?"

"They were of a purely personal nature, having no concern with politics of any sort. I should, therefore, ask of you not to demand them. I can only say, they reflect neither on my honor nor my loyalty."

"His loyalty! Would you ask him, sir, how he applies the term, and to what sovereign and what government the obedience is rendered?" said Barton, with a half smile of malicious meaning.

"Very true, Barton—the question is most pertinent."

"When I said loyalty, sir," said I, in answer, "I confess I did not express myself as clearly as I intended. I meant, however, that an Irishman, and a subject of his Majesty George III., as I now am, no act of mine in the French service ever compromised me."

"Why, surely, you fought against the allies of your own country."

"True, sir. I speak only with reference to the direct interests of England. I was a soldier of the Emperor, but never a spy under his government."

"Your name is amongst those who never claimed the indemnity. How is this?"

"I never heard of it. I never knew such an act was necessary. I am not guilty of any crime, nor do I see any reason to seek a favor."

"Well, well; the gracious intentions of the Crown lead us to look leniently on the past. A moderate bail for your appearance when called on, and your own recognisances for the same object, will suffice."

"I am quite willing to do the latter; but as to bail, I repeat it, I have not one I could ask for such a service."

"No relative?—no friend?"

"Come, come, young gentleman," said M'Dougall, speaking for the first time, "recollect yourself. Try if you can't remember some one who would assist you at this conjuncture."

Basset was the only name I could think of, and however absurd the idea of a service from such a quarter, I deemed that, as my brother's agent, he would scarce refuse me. I thought that Barton gave a very peculiar grin as I mentioned the name; but my own securities being entered into, and a few formal questions answered, I was told I was at liberty to seek out the bail required.

Once more in the streets, I turned my steps toward Basset's house, where I hoped, at all events, to learn some tidings of my brother. I was not long in arriving at the street, and speedily recognized the old house, whose cobwebbed windows and unwashed look reminded me of former times. The very sound of the heavy iron knocker awoke its train of recollections; and when

the door was opened, and I saw the narrow hall, with its cracked lamp, and damp, discolored walls, the old heart-sinking with which they once inspired me came back again, and I thought of Tony Basset, when his very name was a thing of terror to me.

Mr. Basset, I was told, was at court, and I was shown into the office to await his return. The gloomy little den, I knew it well, with its dirty shelves of dirtier papers, its old tin boxes, and its rickety desk, at which two meanly-dressed starveling youths were busy writing. They turned a rapid glance toward me as I entered; and, as they resumed their occupation, I could hear a muttered remark upon my dress and appearance, the purport of which I did not catch.

I sat for some time patiently, expecting Basset's arrival, but, as the time stole by, I grew wearied with waiting, and determined on ascertaining, if I might, from the clerks, some intelligence concerning my brother.

"Have you any business with Mr. Burke?" said the youth I addressed, while his features assumed an expression of vulgar jocularity.

"Yes," was my brief reply.

"Wouldn't a letter do as well as a personal interview?" said the other, with an air of affected courtesy.

"Perhaps so," I replied, too deeply engaged in my own thoughts to mind their flippant impertinence.

"Then mind you direct your letter 'Churchyard, Loughrea;' or, if you want to be particular, say, 'Family vault.'"

"Is he dead? Is George dead?"

"That's hard to say," interposed the other, "but they've buried him, that's certain."

Like a stunning blow, the shock of this news left me unable to speak or hear. A maze of confused thoughts crossed and jostled each other in my brain, and I could neither collect myself, nor listen to what was said around me. My first clear memory was of a thousand little childish traits of love which had once passed between us. Tokens of affection long forgotten now rushed freshly to my mind; and he whom, a moment before, I had condemned as wanting in all brotherly feeling, I now sorrowed for with true grief. The low and vulgar insolence of the speakers made no impression on me; and when, in answer to my questions, they narrated the manner of his death—a fever contracted after some debauch at Oxford—I only heard the tidings, but did not notice the unfeeling tone it was conveyed in. My brother dead!—the only one of kith or kindred belonging to me. How slight the tie seemed but a few moments back! What would I not give for it now? Then, for the first time, did I know how the heart can heap up its stores of consolation in secrecy; and how unconsciously the mind can dwell on hopes it has never confessed even to itself! How I fancied to myself our meeting, and thought over the long pent-up affection years of absence had accumulated, now flowing in a gushing stream from heart to heart! The grave was indeed hallowed when the grass of the churchyard can cover all memory, save that of love. We dwell on every good gift of the lost one, as though no unworthy thought could cross that little mound of earth—the barrier between two worlds! Sad and sorrow-struck, I covered my face with my hands, and did not notice that Mr. Basset had entered, and taken his place at the desk.

His voice, every harsh tone of which I well remembered, first made me aware of his presence. I lifted my eyes, and there he stood, little changed, indeed, since I had seen him last. The hard lines about the mouth had grown deeper, the brow more furrowed, and the hair more mixed with gray, but in other respects he was the same. As I gazed at him I could not help fancying that time makes less impression on men of coarse, unfeeling mold, than on natures of a finer temper. The world's changes leave no trace on the stern surface of the one, while they are wearing deep tracks of sorrow in the other.

"Insert the advertisement again, Simms," said he, addressing one of the clerks, "and let it appear in some paper of the seaport towns. Among the Flemish or French smugglers who frequent them there might be some one to give the information. They must be able to show that though Thomas Burke—"

I started at the sound of my name. The motion surprised him—he looked round and perceived me. Quick and piercing as his glance was, I could not trace any sign of recognition, although, as he scanned my features, and suffered his eyes to wander over my dress, I perceived that his was no mere chance or cursory observation.

"Well, sir," said he, at length, "is your business here with me?"

"Yes; but I would speak with you in private."

"Come in here, then. Meanwhile, Sam, make out that deed—for we may go on without the proof of demise."

Few and vague as the words were, their real meaning flashed on me, and I perceived

that Mr. Basset was engaged in the search of some evidence of my death, doubtless, to enable the heir-at-law to succeed to the estates of my brother. The moment the idea struck me, I felt assured of its certainty, and at once determined on the plan I should adopt.

"You have inserted an advertisement regarding a Mr. Burke," said I, as soon as the door was closed, and we were alone together —"what are the particular circumstances of which you desire proof?"

"The place, date, and manner of his death," replied he, slowly—"for, though informed that such occurred abroad, an authentic evidence of the fact will save some trouble. Circumstances to identify the individual with the person we mean, of course, must be offered—showing whence he came, his probable age, and so on. For this intelligence I am prepared to pay liberally—at least a hundred pounds may be thought so."

"It is a question of succession to some property, I have heard."

"Yes; but the information is not of such moment as you may suppose," replied he, quickly—and, with the wariness of his calling, anticipating the value I might be disposed to place on my intelligence—"we are satisfied with the fact of the death; and even, were it otherwise, the individual most concerned is little likely to disprove the belief—his own reasons will, probably, keep him from visiting Ireland."

"Indeed!" I exclaimed, the word escaping my lips ere I could check its utterance.

"Even so," resumed he; "but this, of course, has no interest for you. Your accent bespeaks you a foreigner—have you any information to offer on this matter?"

"Yes; if we speak of the same individual who may have left this country about 1800, as a boy of some fourteen years of age, and entered the *Ecole Polytechnique* of Paris."

"Like enough. Continue, if you please —what became of him afterward?"

"He joined the French service, attained the rank of captain, and then left the army —came back to Ireland—and now, sir, stands before you."

Mr. Basset never changed a muscle of his face as I made this declaration. So unmoved, so stolid was his look, that for a moment or two I believed him incredulous of my story; but this impression soon gave way, as with his eyes bent on me, he said:

"I knew you, sir, I knew you the moment I passed you in the office without—but it might have fared ill with you to have let my recognition appear."

"As how?—I do not understand you."

"My clerks there might have given information for the sake of the reward—and once in Newgate, there was an end of all negotiation."

"You must speak more intelligibly, sir, if you wish me to comprehend you. I am unaware of any circumstance which should threaten me with such a fate."

"Have you forgotten Captain Crofts—Montague Crofts?" said Basset, in a low whisper, while a smile of insulting malice crossed his features.

"No; I remember him well—what of him?"

"What of him! He charges you with a capital felony—a crime for which the laws have little pity here, whatever your French habits may have taught you to regard it. Yes—the attempt to assassinate an officer in his majesty's service, when foiled by him in an effort to seduce the soldiery, is an offense which might have a place in your memory."

"Can the man be base enough to make such a charge as this against me—a boy, as I then was?"

"You were not alone—remember that fact."

"True; and most thankful am I for it. There is one, at least, can prove my innocence, if I can but discover him."

"You will find that a matter of some difficulty. Your worthy friend and early preceptor was transported five years since."

"Poor fellow—I could better bear to hear that he was dead."

"There are many of your opinion on that head," said Basset, with a savage grin; "but the fellow was too cunning for all the lawyers—and his conviction, at last, was only effected by a stratagem."

"A stratagem!" exclaimed I, in amazement.

"It was neither more nor less. Darby was arraigned four several times, but always acquitted. Now, it was defective evidence—now, a lenient jury—now, an informal indictment—but so was it, he escaped the meshes of the law, though every one knew him guilty of a hundred offenses. At last, Major Barton resolved on another expedient. Darby was arrested in Ennis—thrown into jail—kept four weeks in a dark cell, on prison fare—and at the end, one morning, the hangman appeared to say his hour was come, and that the warrant for his execution had arrived. It was to take place, without judge or jury, within the four walls of the jail. The scheme succeeded—his courage fell—and he offered, if his life was spared, to plead guilty to any trans-

portable felony, for which the grand jury would send up true bills. He did so, and was then undergoing the sentence."

"Great Heavens! and can such iniquity be tolerated in a land where men call themselves Christians?" exclaimed I, as I heard this to the end.

"Iniquity!" repeated he, in mockery, "to rid the country of a ruffian, stained with every crime—a fellow mixed up in every outrage in the land. Is this your notion of iniquity? Not so do I reckon it; and if I have told you of it now, it is that you may learn, that when loyal and well-affected men are trusted with the execution of the laws, the principle of justice is of more moment than the nice distinction of legal subtleties. You may learn a lesson from it worth acquiring."

"I! how can it affect me or my fortunes?"

"More nearly than you think. I have told you of the accusation which hangs over your head; weigh it well, and deliberate what are your chances of escape. We must not waste time in discussing your innocence. The jury who will try the cause will be more difficult of belief than you suspect. Neither the opinions you are charged with, your subsequent escape, nor your career in France, will contribute to your exculpation, even had you evidence to adduce in your favor; but you have not. Your only witness is equally removed, as by death itself. On what do you depend, then? Conscious innocence! Nine out of every ten who mount the scaffold proclaim the same; but I never heard that the voice that cried it stifled the word 'guilty.' No, sir. I tell you, solemnly, you will be condemned!"

The tone of his voice, as he spoke the last few words, made my very blood run cold. The death of a soldier on the field of battle had no terrors for me—but the execrated fate of a felon I could not confront. The pallor of my cheek, the trembling of my limbs, must have betrayed my emotion—for even Basset seemed to pity me, and pressed me down into a chair.

"There is one way, however, to avoid all the danger," said he, after a pause—"an easy and a certain way both. You have heard of the advertisements for information respecting your death, which it was surmised had occurred abroad. Now, you are unknown here—without a single acquaintance to recognize or remember you—why should not you, under another name, came forward with these proofs? By so doing, you secure your own escape, and can claim the reward."

"What, perjure myself, that I may forfeit my inheritance!"

"As to the inheritance," said he, sneeringly, "your tenure does not promise a very long enjoyment of it."

"Were it but a day—an hour!" exclaimed I, passionately, "I will make no compromise with my honor. On their own heads be it, who sentence an innocent man to death—better such even on a scaffold, than a life of ignominy and vain regret."

"The dark hours of a jail change men's sentiments wonderfully," said he, slowly. "I have known some who faced death in its wildest and most appalling shape, shrink from it like cowards when it came in the guise of a common executioner. Come, sir, be advised by me, reflect at least on what I have said, and if there be any path in life, where a moderate sum may assist you—"

"Peace, sir—I beg of you to be silent; it may be that your counsel is prompted by kindly feeling toward me; but, if you would have me think so, say no more of this—my mind is made up."

"Wait until to-morrow, in any case; perhaps some other plan may suggest itself. What say you to America—have you any objection to go there?"

"Had you asked me the question an hour since, I had replied, 'None whatever.' Now it is different; my departure would be like the flight of a guilty man. I cannot do it."

"Better the flight, than the fate of one," muttered Basset, between his teeth, while at the same instant the sound of voices talking loudly together was heard in the hall without.

"Think again, before it is too late; remember what I have told you: your opinions, your career, your associates, are not such as to recommend you to the favorable consideration of a jury. Is your case strong enough to oppose all these? Sir Montague will make liberal terms—he has no desire to expose the calamities of a family."

"Sir Montague!—of whom do you speak?"

"Sir Montague Crofts," said Basset, reddening, for he had unwittingly suffered the name to escape his lips. "Are you ignorant that he is your relative—a distant one, it is true—but your nearest of kin notwithstanding."

"And the heir to the estate?" said I, suddenly, as a new light flashed on my mind. "The heir, in the event of my life lapsing?" Basset nodded an assent.

"You played a deep game, sir," said I,

drawing a long breath, "but you never were near winning it."

"Nor you either," said he, throwing wide the door between the two rooms. "I hear a voice without there, that settles the question forever."

At the same instant, Major Barton entered, followed by two men.

"I suspected I should find you here, sir," said he, addressing me. "You need scarcely trouble my worthy friend for his bail. I arrest you now under a warrant of felony."

"A felony!" exclaimed Basset, with a counterfeited astonishment in his look. "Mr. Burke accused of such a crime!"

I could not utter a word—indignation and shame overpowered me, and, merely motioning with my hand that I was ready to accompany him, I followed to the door, at which a carriage was standing, getting into which we drove toward Newgate.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

THE PERIL AVERTED.

If I have dwelt with unnecessary prolixity on this dark portion of my story, it is because the only lesson my life teaches has lain in similar passages. The train of evils which flows from one misdirection in early life, the misfortunes which ensue from a single false and inconsiderate step, frequently darken the whole subsequent career. This I now thought over in the solitude of my cell. However I could acquit myself of the crime laid to my charge, I could not so easily absolve my heart of the early folly which made me suppose that the regeneration of a land should be accomplished by the efforts of a sanguinary and bigoted rabble. To this error could I trace every false step I made in life—to this cause attribute the long struggle I endured between my love of liberty and my detestation of mob rule; and yet how many years did it cost me to learn, that to alleviate the burdens of the oppressed may demand a greater exercise of tyranny than ever their rulers practiced toward them. Like many others, I looked to France as the land of freedom—but where was despotism so unbounded! where the sway of one great mind so unlimited! They had bartered liberty for equality, and because the pressure was equal on all, they deemed themselves free; while the privileges of class with us suggested the sense of bondage to the poor man, whose actual freedom was yet unincumbered.

Of all the day-dreams of my boyhood, the ambition of military glory alone survived, and that lived on amid the dreary solitude of my prison, comforting many a lonely hour by memories of the past. The glittering ranks of the mounted squadrons, the deep-toned thunder of the artillery, the solid masses of the infantry, immovable beneath the rush of cavalry, were pictures I could dwell on for hours and days; and my dearest wish could point to no higher destiny than to be once more a soldier in the ranks of France.

During all this time my mind seldom reverted to the circumstances of my imprisonment, nor did I feel the anxiety for the result my position might well have suggested. The conscious sense of my innocence kept the flame of hope alive, without suffering it either to flicker or vary. It burned like a steady fire within me, and made even the dark cells of a jail a place of repose and tranquillity. And thus time rolled on, the hours of pleasure and happiness to thousands, too short and flitting for the enjoyments they brought. They went by, also, to the prisoner as to one who waits on the bank of the stream, nor knows what fortune may await him on his voyage. A stubborn feeling of conscious right had prevented my taking even the ordinary steps for my defense, and the day of trial was now drawing nigh, without any preparation on my part. I was ignorant how essential the habits and skill of an advocate are in the conduct of every case, however simple, and implicitly relied on my guiltlessness, as though men can read the heart of a prisoner and know its workings.

M'Dougall, the only member of the bar I knew even by name, had accepted a judicial appointment in India, and was already on his way thither, so that I had neither friend nor adviser in my difficulty. Were it otherwise, I felt I could scarcely have bent my pride to that detail of petty circumstances which an advocate might deem essential to my vindication, and was actually glad to think that I should owe the assertion of my innocence to nothing less than the pure fact.

When November at length arrived, I learned that the trial had been deferred to the following February; and so listless and indifferent had imprisonment made me, that I heard the intelligence without impatience or regret. The publicity of a court of justice, its exposure to the gaze and observation of the crowd who throng there, were subjects of more shrinking dread to my heart than the weight of an accusation which, though false, might peril

my life, and for the first time I rejoiced that I was friendless. Yes, it brought balm and comfort to me to think that none would need to blush at my relationship, nor weep over my fate. Sorrow has surely eaten deeply into our natures, when we derive pleasure and peace from what, in happier circumstances, are the sources of regret.

Let me now hasten on. My reader will readily forgive me if I pass with rapid steps over a portion of my story, the memory of which has not yet lost its bitterness. The day at last came, and amid all the ceremonies of a prison I was marched from my cell to the dock. How strange the sudden revolution of feeling, from the solitude and silence of a jail to the crowded court, teeming with looks of eager curiosity, dread, or perhaps compassion, all turned toward him, who himself, half forgetful of his condition, gazes on the great mass in equal astonishment and surprise.

My thoughts at once recurred to a former moment of my life, when I stood accused among the Chouan prisoners before the tribunal of Paris; but though the proceedings were less marked by excitement and passion, the stern gravity of the English procedure was far more appalling; and in the absence of all which could stir the spirit to any effort of its own, it pressed with a more solemn dread on the mind of a prisoner.

I have said I would not linger over this part of my life. I could not do so if I would. Real events, and the impressions they made upon me—facts, and the passing emotions of my mind, are strangely confused and commingled in my memory; and although certain minute and trivial things are graven in my recollection, others of moment have escaped me unrecorded.

The usual ceremonial went forward, the jury were impanneled, and the clerk of the Crown read aloud the indictment, to which my plea of "Not Guilty" was at once recorded. Then the judge asked if I were provided with counsel, and hearing that I was not, appointed a junior barrister to act for me, and the trial began.

I was not the first person who, accused of a crime of which he felt innocent, yet was so overwhelmed by the statements of imputed guilt—so confused by the inextricable web of truth and falsehood, artfully intangled, that he actually doubted his own convictions, when opposed to views so strongly at variance with them.

The first emotion of the prisoner is a feeling of surprise to discover that one utterly a stranger—the lawyer he has, perhaps, never seen—whose name he never so much as heard of—is perfectly conversant with his own history, and, as it were by intuition, seems acquainted with his very thoughts and motives. Tracing out not only a line of acting, but of devising, he conceives a story of which the accused is the hero, and invests his narrative with the appliances to belief which result from time, and place, and circumstance.

No wonder that the very accusation should strike terror into the soul. No wonder that the statement of guilt should cause heart-sinking to him who, conscious that all is not untrue, may feel that his actions can be viewed in another and a very different light to that which conscience sheds over them.

Such, so far as I remember, was the channel of my thoughts. At first mere astonishment at the accuracy of detail regarding my name, age, and condition in life, was uppermost, and then succeeded a sense of indignant anger at the charges laid against me, which yielded gradually to a feeling of confusion as the advocate continued, which again merged into a sort of dubious fear as I heard many trivial facts repeated, some of which my refreshed memory acknowledged as true, but of which my puzzled brain could not detect the inapplicability to sustain the accusation—all ending in a chaos of bewilderment, where conscience itself was lost, and nothing left to guide or direct the reason.

The counsel informed the jury, that although they were not placed in the box to try me on any charge of a political offense, they must bear in mind that the murderous assault of which I was accused was merely part of a system organized to overthrow the government; that, young as I then was, I was in intimate connection with the disaffected party, which the mistaken leniency of the Crown had not thoroughly eradicated on the termination of the late rebellion, my constant companion being one whose crimes were already undergoing their but too merciful punishment in transportation for life; that, to tamper with the military, I had succeeded in introducing myself into the barrack, where I obtained the confidence of a weak-minded but good-natured officer of the regiment.

"These schemes," continued he, "were but partially successful. My distinguished client was then an officer of the corps, and with that ever-watchful loyalty which has distinguished him, he determined to keep a vigilant eye on this intruder, who, from circumstances of youth and apparent innocence, already had won upon the confidence

of the majority of the regiment; nor was this impression a false one. An event, apparently little likely to unvail a treasonable intention, soon unmasked the true character of the prisoner and the nature of his mission."

He then proceeded to narrate with circumstantial accuracy the night in the George's street barracks, when Hilliard, Crofts, and some others came with Bubbleton to his quarters to decide a wager between two of the parties. Calling the attention of the jury to this part of the case, he detailed the scene which occurred, and if I could trust my memory, not a phrase, not a word escaped him, which had been said.

"It was then, gentlemen," said he, "at that instant, that the prisoner's habitual caution failed him, and an unguarded moment developed the full story of his guilt. Captain Bubbleton lost the wager, of which my client was the winner. The habits of the service are peremptory in these matters; it was necessary that payment should be made at once. Bubbleton had not the means of discharging his debt, and while he looked around among his comrades for assistance, the prisoner steps forward and supplies the sum. Mark what followed. A sudden call of service now summoned the officers beneath, all save Crofts, who, not being on duty, had no necessity for accompanying them.

"The bank-note so opportunely furnished by the prisoner lay on the table, and this Crofts proceeded leisurely to open and examine before he left the room. Slowly unfolding the paper, he spread it out before him, and what, think you, gentlemen, did the paper display? A Bank of England bill for twenty pounds, you'll say, of course. Far from it, indeed! The paper was a French assignat, bearing the words—*'Payez au porteur la somme de deux mille livres.'* Yes, the sum so carelessly thrown on the table by this youth was an order for eighty pounds issued by the French government.

"Remember the period, gentlemen, when this occurred; we had just passed the threshold of a most fearful and sanguinary rebellion—the tranquillity of the land scarce restored after a convulsion that shook the very constitution and the throne to their centers—the interference of France in the affairs of the country had not been a mere threat—her ships had sailed, her armies had landed, and though the bravery and the loyalty of our troops had made the expedition result in utter defeat and overthrow, the emissaries of the land and of anarchy yet lingered on our shores, and disseminated that treason in secret, which openly they dared not proclaim. If they were sparing of their blood, they were lavish of their gold—what they failed in courage they supplied in assignats. Large promises of gain, rich offers of booty, were rife throughout the land, and wherever disaffection lurked, or rebellion lingered, the enemy of England found congenial allies. Nothing too base, nothing too low for this confederacy of crime; neither was anything too lowly in condition or too humble in efficiency. Treason cannot choose its agents; it must take the tools which chance and circumstances offer; they may be the refuse of mankind, but if inefficient for good, they are not the less active for evil. Such a one was the youth who now stands a prisoner before you, and here was the price of his disloyalty."

At these words he held up triumphantly the French assignat, and waved it before the eyes of the court. However little the circumstances weighed within me, such was the impression manifestly produced upon the jury by this piece of corroborative evidence, that a thrill of anxiety for the result ran suddenly through me.

Until that moment I believed Darby had repossessed himself of the assignat when Crofts lay insensible on the ground—at least I remembered well that he stooped over him and appeared to take something from him. While I was puzzling my mind on this point, I did not remark that the lawyer was proceeding to impress on the jury the full force of conviction such a circumstance implied.

The offer I had made to Crofts to barter the assignat for an English note—my urgent entreaty to have it restored to me—the arguments I had employed to persuade him that no suspicion could attach to my possession of it—were all narrated with so little of exaggeration, that I was actually unable to say what assertion I could object to, while I was conscious that the inferences sought to be drawn from them were false and unjust.

Having displayed with consummate skill the critical position this paper had involved me in, he took the opportunity of contrasting the anxiety I evinced for my escape from my difficulty, with the temperate conduct of my antagonist, whose loyalty left him no other course than to retain possession of the note, and inquire into the circumstances by which it reached my hands.

Irritated by the steady determination of Crofts, it was said that I endeavored by op-

probrious epithets and insulting language to provoke a quarrel, which a sense of my inferiority as an antagonist rendered a thing impossible to be thought of. Baffled in every way, I was said to have rushed from the room, double-locking it on the outside, and hurried down the stairs and out of the barrack, not to escape, however, but with a purpose very different—to return in a few moments accompanied by three fellows, whom I passed with the guard as men wishing to recruit.

To ascend the stairs, unlock the door, and fall on the imprisoned officer, was the work of an instant. His defense, although courageous and resolute, was but brief. His sword being broken, he was felled by a blow of a bludgeon, and thus believed dead. The ruffians ransacked his pockets, and departed.

The same countersign which admitted, passed them out as they went, and when morning broke the wounded man was found weltering in his blood, but with life still remaining, and strength enough to recount what had occurred. By a mere accident, it was stated, the French bank-note had not been consigned to his pocket, but fell during the struggle, and was discovered the next day on the floor.

These were the leading features of an accusation, which, however improbable, while thus briefly and boldly narrated, hung together with a wonderful coherence in the speech of the lawyer, supported as they were by the number of small circumstances corroboratory of certain immaterial portions of the story. Thus, the political opinions I professed, the doubtful—nay, equivocal—position I occupied, the intercourse with France or Frenchmen, as proved by the *billet de banque*, my sudden disappearance after the event, and my escape thither, where I continued to live until, as it was alleged, I believed that years had eradicated all trace of, if not my crime, myself,—such were the statements displayed with all the specious inferences of habitual plausibility, and to confirm which, by evidence, Sir Montague Crofts was called to give his testimony.

There was a murmur of expectancy through the court as this well-known individual's name was pronounced, and in a few moments the throng around the inner bar opened, and a tall figure appeared upon the witness-table. The same instant that I caught sight of his features he had turned his glance on me, and we stood for some seconds confronting each other. Mutual defiance seemed the gage between us; and I saw, with a thrill of savage pleasure, that, after a minute or so, his cheek flushed, and he averted his face, and appeared ill at ease and uncomfortable.

To the first questions of the lawyer he answered with evident constraint, and in a low, subdued voice; but soon recovering his self-possession, gave his testimony freely and boldly, corroborating by his words all the statements of his advocate. By both the court and the jury he was heard with attention and deference; and when he took a passing occasion to allude to his loyalty and attachment to the constitution, the senior judge interrupted him by saying,

"On that point, Sir Montague, no second opinion can exist. Your character for unimpeachable honor is well known to the court."

The examination was brief—lasting scarcely half an hour; and when the young lawyer came forward to put some questions as cross-examination, his want of instruction and ignorance were at once seen, and the witness was dismissed almost immediately.

Sir Montague's advocate declined calling any other witness. The regiment to which his client then belonged was on foreign service, but he felt satisfied that the case required nothing in addition to the evidence the jury had heard.

A few moments of deliberation ensued among the members of the bench, and then the senior judge called on my lawyer to proceed with the defense.

The young barrister rose with diffidence, and expressed in few words his inability to rebut the statements that had been made by any evidence in his power to produce. "The prisoner, my lord," said he, "has confided nothing to me of his case. I am ignorant of everything, save what has taken place in open court."

"It is true, my lord," said I, interrupting. "The facts of this unhappy circumstance are known but to three individuals. You have already heard the version which one of them has given: you shall now hear mine. The third, whose testimony might incline the balance in my favor, is, I am told, no longer in this country; and I have only to discharge the debt I feel due to myself, and to my own honor, by narrating the real occurrence, and leave the issue in your hands, to deal with as your consciences may dictate."

With the steadiness of purpose truth inspires, and in few words, I narrated the whole of my adventure with Crofts, down to the moment of Darby's sudden appearance. I told of what passed between us, and how the altercation, that began in angry words,

terminated in a personal struggle, where, as the weaker, I was overcome, and lay beneath the weapon of my antagonist, by which already I had received a severe and dangerous wound.

"I should hesitate here, my lords," said I, "before I spoke of one who then came to my aid, if I did not know that he is already removed by a heavy sentence, both from the penalty his gallant conduct might call down on him, and the enmity which the prosecutor would as certainly pursue him with; but he is beyond the reach of either, and I may speak of him freely."

I then told of Darby's appearance that night in the barrack, disguised as a ballad-singer; how, in this capacity, he passed the sentry, and was present in the room when the officers entered to decide the wager; that he had quitted it soon after their arrival, and only returned on hearing the noise of the scuffle between Crofts and myself. The struggle itself I remembered but imperfectly, but, so far as my memory bore me out, recapitulated to the court.

"I will relate, my lords," said I, "the few events which followed—not that they can in any wise corroborate the plain statement I have made, nor indeed that they bear, save remotely, on the events mentioned—but I will do so in the hope—a faint hope it is—that in this court there might be found some one person who could add his testimony to mine, and say, 'This is true; to that I can myself bear witness.'"

With this brief preface, I told how Darby had brought me to a house in an obscure street, in which a man, apparently dying, was stretched upon a miserable bed. That while my wound was being dressed, a car came to the door, with the intention of conveying the sick man away somewhere. This, however, was deemed impossible, so near did his last hour appear; and in his place I was taken off, and placed on board the vessel bound for France.

"Of my career in that country it is needless that I should speak; it can neither throw light upon the events which preceded it, nor have any interest for the court. My commission as a captain of the Imperial Hussars may, however, testify the position that I occupied, while the certificate of the minister of war on the back will show that I quitted the service voluntarily, and with honor."

"The court would advise you, sir," said the judge, "not to advert to circumstances which, while they contribute nothing to your exculpation, may have a very serious effect on the minds of the jury against you. Have you any witnesses to call?"

"None, my lord."

A pause of some minutes ensued, when the only sounds in the court were the whispering tones of Crofts' voice, as he said something into his counsel's ear. The lawyer rose.

"My task, my lords," said he, "is a short one. Indeed, in all probability, I need not trouble either your lordships or the jury with an additional word on a case where the evidence so conclusively establishes the guilt of the accused, and where the attempt to contradict it has been so abortive. Never, perhaps, was a story narrated within the walls of a court so full of improbable—might I not almost say impossible—events, as that of the prisoner." He then recapitulated with rapid but accurate detail the principal circumstances of my story, bestowing some brief comment on each as he went. He sneered at the account of the struggle, and turned the whole description of the contest with Crofts into ridicule, calling on the jury to bestow a glance on the manly strength and vigorous proportions of his client, and then remember the age of his antagonist—a boy of fourteen. "I forgot, gentlemen—I ask your pardon—he confesses to one ally, this famous piper. I really did hope that was a name we had done with forever. I indulged the dream, that among the memories of an awful period, this was never to recur; but, unhappily, the expectation was delusive. The fellow is brought once more before us; and, perhaps, for the first time in his long life of iniquity, charged with a crime he did not commit." In a few sentences he explained that a large reward was at that very moment offered for the apprehension of Darby, who never would have ventured, under any disguise, to approach the capital, much less trust himself within the walls of a barrack. "The tissue of wild and inconsistent events which the prisoner has detailed as following the assault, deserves no attention at my hands. Where was this house? What was the street? Who was this doctor of which he speaks?—and the sick man, how was he called?"

"I remember his name well. It is the only one I remember among all I heard," said I from the dock.

"Let us hear it, then," said the lawyer, half contemptuously.

"Daniel Fortescue was the name he was called by."

Scarcely was the name uttered by me, when Crofts leaned back in his seat and became pale as death, while, stretching out his hand, he took hold of the lawyer's

gown and drew him toward him. For a second or two he continued to speak with rapid utterance in the advocate's ear, and then covering his face with his handkerchief, leaned his head on the rail before him.

"It is necessary, my lords," said the lawyet, "that I should explain the reason of my client's emotion, and, at the same time, unvail the baseness which has dictated this last effort of the prisoner, if not to injure the reputation, to wound the feelings of my client. The individual whose name has been mentioned was the half-brother of my client, and whose unhappy connection with the disastrous events of the year '98 involved him in a series of calamities, which ended in his death, which took place in the year 1800, but some months earlier than the circumstance which we now are investigating. The introduction of this unhappy man's name was, then, a malignant effort of the prisoner to insult the feelings of my client, on which your lordships and the jury will place its true value."

A murmur of disapprobation ran through the crowded court as these words were spoken; but whether directed against me or against the comment of the lawyer, I could not determine; nor, such was the confusion I then felt, could I follow the remainder of the advocate's address with anything like clearness. At last he concluded, and the chief justice, after a whispered conversation with his brethren of the bench, thus began:

"Gentlemen of the jury, the case which you have this day to try, to my mind, presents but one feature of doubt and difficulty. The great fact for your consideration is, to determine to which of two opposite and conflicting testimonies you will accord your credence. On the one side you have the story of the prosecutor, a man of position and character, high in the confidence of honorable men, and invested with all the attributes of rank and station; on the other, you have a narrative strongly coherent in some parts, equally difficult to account for in others, given by the prisoner, whose life, even by his own showing, has none of those recommendations to your good opinions which are based on loyalty and attachment to the constitution of these realms. Both testimonies are unsupported by any collateral evidence. The prosecutor's regiment is in India, and the only witnesses he could adduce are many thousand miles off. The prisoner appeals also to the absent, but with less of reason; for if we could call this man, M'Keown, before us—if, I say, we had this same Darby M'Keown in court—"

A tremendous uproar in the hall without drowned the remainder of the sentence, and although the crier loudly proclaimed silence, and the bench twice interposed its authority to enforce it, the tumult continued, and eventually extended within the court itself, where all semblance of respect seemed suddenly annihilated.

"If this continues one moment longer," exclaimed the chief justice, "I will commit to Newgate the very first disorderly person I can discover."

The threat, however, did but partially calm the disturbance, which in a confused murmur prevailed, from the benches of the counsel to the very galleries of the court.

"What means this?" said the judge, in a voice of anger. "Who is it that dares to interfere with the administration of justice here?"

"A witness—a witness, my lord," called out several voices from the passage of the court, while a crowd pushed violently forward, and came struggling onward till the leading figures were pressed over the inner bar.

Again the judge repeated his question, while he made a signal for the officer of the court to approach him.

"'Tis me, my lord," shouted a deep-toned voice from the middle of the crowd. "Your lordship was asking for Darby M'Keown, and it isn't himself's ashamed of the name!"

A perfect yell of approval broke from the ragged mob, which now filled every avenue and passage of the court, and even jammed up the stairs and the entrance-halls.

And now, raised upon the shoulders of the crowd, Darby appeared, borne aloft in triumph; his broad and daring face, bronzed with sun and weather, glowed with a look of reckless effrontery, which no awe of the court nor any fear for himself was able to repress.

Of my own sensations while this scene was enacting I need not speak; and as I gazed at the weatherbeaten features of the hardy piper, it demanded every effort of my reason to believe in the testimony of my eyesight. Had he come back from death itself the surprise would scarcely have been greater. Meanwhile the tumult was allayed, and the lawyers on either side—for now that a glimmer of hope appeared, my advocate had entered with spirit on his duties—were discussing the admissibility of evidence at the present stage of the proceedings. This point being speedily established in my favor, another and a graver question arose: how far the testimony of a

convicted felon—for such the lawyer at once called Darby—could be received as evidence.

Cases were quoted, and authorities shown, to prove that such cannot be heard as witnesses—that they are among those whom the law pronounces infamous and unworthy of credit; and while the lawyer continued to pour forth on this topic a perfect ocean of arguments, he was interrupted by the court, who affirmed the opinion, and concurred in his view of the case.

"It only remains, then, my lord," said my counsel, "for the Crown to establish the identity of the individual—"

"Nothing easier," interposed the other.

"I beg pardon. I was about to add—and produce the record for his conviction."

This last seemed a felling blow; for, although the old lawyer never evinced here, or at any other time, the slightest appearance of discomfiture at any opposition, I could see by the puckering of the deep lines around his mouth that he felt vexed and annoyed by this new suggestion.

An eager and animated discussion ensued, in which my advocate was assisted by the advice of some senior counsel, and again the point was ruled in my favor, and Darby M'Keown was desired to mount the table.

It required all the efforts of the various officers of the court to repress another outbreak of mob enthusiasm at the decision; for already the trial had assumed a feature perfectly distinct from any common infraction of the law. Its political bearing had long since imparted a character of party warfare to the whole proceeding; and while Sir Montague Crofts found his well-wishers among the better dressed and more respectable persons present, a much more numerous body of supporters claimed me as their own, and, in defiance of all the usages and solemnity of the place, did not scruple to bestow on me looks and even words of encouragement at every stage of the trial. Darby's appearance was the climax of this popular enthusiasm. There were few who had not seen, or at least heard of, the celebrated piper in times past. His daring infraction of the law—his reputed skill in evading detection—his acquaintance with every clue and circumstance of the late rebellion—the confidence he enjoyed among all the leaders—had made him a hero in a land where such qualities are certain of obtaining their due estimation. And now, the reckless effrontery of his presence as a witness in a court of justice, while the sentence of transportation still hung over him, was a claim to admiration none refused to acknowledge.

His air and demeanor as he took his seat on the table seemed an acknowledgment of the homage rendered him; for though as he placed his worn and ragged hat beside his feet, and stroked down his short black hair on his forehead, a careless observer might have suspected him of feeling awed and abashed by the presence in which he sat, one more conversant with his countrymen would have detected in the quiet leer of his roguish black eye, and a certain protrusion of his thick under lip, that Darby was as perfectly at his ease there as the eminent judge was, who now fixed his eyes upon him. A short but not disrespectful nod was the only notice he bestowed on me, and then concealing his joined hands within his sleeves, and drawing his legs back beneath the chair, he assumed that attitude of mock humility your least bashful Irishman is so commonly fond of.

The veteran barrister was, meanwhile, surveying the witness with the peculiar scrutiny of his caste; he looked at him through his spectacles, and then he stared at him above them; he measured him from head to foot, his eye dwelling on every little circumstance of his dress or demeanor, as though to catch some clue to his habits of thinking or acting. Never did a matador survey the brawny animal with which he was about to contend in skill or strength with more critical acumen than did the lawyer regard Darby the Blast; nor was the object of this examination unaware of it. Very far from this, indeed, he seemed pleased by the degree of attention bestowed on him, and felt all the flattery such notice conveyed; but while doing so, you could only detect his satisfaction in an occasional sidelong look of drollery, which, brief and fleeting as it was, had still a numerous body of admirers through the court, whose muttered expressions of "Divil fear ye, Darby, but ye're up to them any day;" or, "Faix! 'tis himself cares little about them!" showed they had no lack of confidence in the piper.

"Your name is M'Keown, sir?" said the lawyer, with that abruptness which so often succeeds in oversetting the balance of a witness's self-possession.

"Yes, sir—Darby M'Keown."

"Did you ever go by any other than this?"

"They do call me 'Darby the Blast' betimes, av that's a name."

"Is that the only other name you have been called by?"

"I misremember rightly, it's so long since I was among friends and acquaintances; but if yer honor would remind me a little, maybe I could tell."

"Well, were you ever called 'Larry the Flail?'"

"Faix, I was," replied he, laughing, "divil a doubt of it."

"How did you come by the name of 'Larry the Flail?'"

"They gave me that name up at Mulhuldad, there, for bating one M'Clancy wid a flail."

"A very good reason. So you got the name because you beat a certain M'Clancy with a flail?"

"I didn't say that. I only said they gave me the name because they said I bate him."

"Were you ever called 'Fire-the-Haggard?'"

"I was, often."

"For no reason, of course?"

"Divil a rayson. The boys said it in sport, just as they talk of yer honor out there in the hall."

"How do you mean, talk of me?"

"Sure I heard them say myself, as I was coming in, that you wor a clever man and a cute lawyer. They do be always humbugging that way."

A titter ran round the benches of the barristers at this speech, which was delivered with a *naïve* simplicity that would deceive many.

"You were a United Irishman, Mr. M'Keown, I believe?" rejoined the counsel, with a frown of stern intimidation.

"Yes, sir, and a White Boy, and a Defender, and a Thrasher besides. I was in all the fun them times."

"The Thrashers are the fellows, I believe, who must beat any man they are appointed to attack—isn't that so?"

"Yes, sir."

"So that, if I was mentioned to you as a person to be assaulted, although I had never done you any injury, you'd not hesitate to waylay me?"

"No, sir, I wouldn't do that. I'd not touch yer honor."

"Come, come—what do you mean? Why wouldn't you touch me?"

"I'd rather not tell, av it was plazing to ye."

"You must tell, sir. Speak out! Why wouldn't you attack me?"

"They say, sir," said Darby—and, as he spoke, his voice assumed a peculiar lisp, meant to express great modesty—"they say, sir, that when a man has a big wart on his nose there, like yer honor, it's not lucky to bate him, for that's the way the divil marks his own."

This time the decorum of the court gave way entirely, and the unwashed faces which filled the avenues and passages were all expanded in open laughter; nor was it easy to restore order again amid the many marks of approval and encouragement bestowed on Darby by his numerous admirers.

"Remember where you are, sir," said the judge, severely.

"Yes, my lord," said Darby, with an air of submission. "'Tis the first time I was ever in sich a situation as this. I'm much more at my ease when I'm down in the dock there—it's what I'm most used to, God help me."

The whining tone in which he delivered this mock lament on his misfortunes occasioned another outbreak of the mob, who were threatened with expulsion from the court if any future interruption took place.

"You were, then, a member of every illegal society of the time, Mr. Darby?" said the lawyer, returning to the examination. "Is it not so?"

"Most of them, anyhow," was the cool reply.

"You took an active part in the doings of the year '98 also?"

"Throth I did—mighty active. I walked from beyant Castlecomer one day to Dublin, to see a trial here. Be the same token, it was Mr. Curran made a hare of yer honor that day. Begorra! I wonder ye ever held up yer head after."

Here a burst of laughter at the recollection seemed to escape Darby so naturally, that its contagious effects were felt throughout the assembly.

"You are a wit, Mr. M'Keown, I fancy—eh?"

"Bedad I'm not, sir. Very little of that same would have kept me out of this today."

"But you came here to serve a friend—a very old friend, he calls you."

"Does he?" said Darby, with an energy of tone and manner very different from what he had hitherto used. "Does Master Tom say that?"

As the poor fellow's cheek flushed, and his eye sparkled with proud emotion, I could perceive that the lawyer's face underwent a change equally rapid. A look of triumph at having at length discovered the assailable point of the witness's temperament now passed over his pale features, and gave them an expression of astonishing intelligence.

"A very natural thing it is, Darby, that he should call you so. You were companions at an early period—at least of his life;—fellow-travelers, too, if I don't mistake?"

Although these words were spoken in a

tone of careless freedom, and intended to encourage Darby to some expansion on the same theme, the cunning fellow had recovered all his habitual self-possession, and merely answered, if answer it could be called,

"I was a poor man, sir, and lived by the pipes."

The advocate and the witness exchanged looks at this moment, in which their relative positions were palpably conveyed. Each seemed to say it was a drawn battle; but the lawyer returned with vigor to the charge, desiring Darby to mention the manner in which our first acquaintance began, and how the intimacy was originally formed.

He narrated with clearness and accuracy every step of our early wanderings, and while never misstating a single fact, contrived to exhibit my career as totally devoid of any participation in the treasonable doings of the period. Indeed, he laid great stress on the fact that my acquaintance with Charles de Meudon had withdrawn me from all relations with the insurgent party, between whom and the French allies feelings of open dislike and distrust existed.

Of the scene at the barrack his account varied in nothing from that I had already given; nor was all the ingenuity of a long and intricate cross-examination able to shake his testimony in the most minute particular.

"Of course, then, you know Sir Montague Crofts? It is quite clear that you cannot mistake a person with whom you had a struggle such as you speak of."

"Faix, I'd know his skin upon a bush," said Darby, "av he was like what I remember him; but sure he may be changed since that. They tell me I'm looking ould myself, and no wonder. Hunting kangaroos wears the constitution terribly."

"Look around the court, now, and say if he be here."

Darby rose from his seat, and shading his eyes with his hand, took a deliberate survey of the court. Though well knowing, from past experience, in what part of the assembly the person he sought would probably be, he seized the occasion to scrutinize the features of the various persons, whom, under no other pretense, could he have examined.

"It's not on the bench, sir, you need look for him," said the lawyer, as M'Keown remained for a considerable time with his eyes bent in that direction.

"Bedad, there's no knowing," rejoined Darby, doubtfully; "av he was dressed up that way, I wouldn't know him from an old ram." He turned round as he said this, and gazed steadfastly toward the bar. It was an anxious moment for me. Should Darby make any mistake in the identity of Crofts, his whole testimony would be so weakened in the opinion of the jury as to be nearly valueless. I watched his eyes, therefore, as they ranged over the crowded mass, with a palpitating heart; and when, at last, his glance settled on a far part of the court, very distant from that occupied by Crofts, I grew almost sick with apprehension lest he should mistake another for him.

"Well, sir," said the lawyer, "do you see him now?"

"Arrah, it's humbugging me yez are," said Darby, roughly, while he threw himself down into his chair in apparent ill temper.

A loud burst of laughter broke from the bar at this sudden ebullition of passion, so admirably feigned that none suspected its reality, and while the sounds of mirth were subsiding, Darby dropped his head, and placed his hand above his ear. "There it is, by gorra; there's no mistaking that laugh, anyhow," cried he; "there's a screech in it might plaze an owl;" and with that he turned abruptly round and faced the bench where Crofts was seated. "I heard it a while ago, but I couldn't say where. That's the man," said he, pointing with his finger to Crofts, who seemed actually to cower beneath his piercing glance.

"Remember, sir, you are on your solemn oath. Will you swear that the gentleman there is Sir Montague Crofts?"

"I know nothing about Sir Montague," said Darby, composedly, while rising he walked over toward the edge of the table where Crofts was sitting, "but I'll swear that's the same Captain Crofts that I knocked down while he was shortening his sword to run it through Master Burke; and by the same token, he has a cut in the skull, where he fell on the fender," and, before the other could prevent it, he stretched out his hand, and placed it on the back of the crown of Crofts's head: "There it is, just as I tould you."

The sensation these words created in the court was most striking, and even the old lawyer appeared overwhelmed at the united craft and consistency of the piper. The examination was resumed; but Darby's evidence tallied so accurately with my statement, that its continuance only weakened the case for the prosecution.

As the sudden flash of the lightning will sometimes disclose what in the long blaze of noonday has escaped the beholder, so will conviction break unexpectedly upon the

human mind, from some slight but striking circumstance, which comes with the irresistible force of unpremeditated truthfulness. From that moment it was clear the jury to a man were with Darby. They paid implicit attention to all he said, and made notes of every trivial fact he mentioned; while he, as if divining the impression he had made, became rigorously cautious that not a particle of his evidence could be shaken, nor the effect of his testimony weakened by even a passing phrase of exaggeration. It was, indeed, a phenomenon worth studying, to see this fellow, whose natural disposition was the irrepressible love of drollery and recklessness—whose whole heart seemed bent on the indulgence of his wayward, careless humor—suddenly throw off every eccentricity of his character, and become a steady and accurate witness, delivering his evidence carefully and cautiously, and never suffering his own leanings to repartee, nor the badgering allusions of his questioner, to draw him for a moment away from the great object he had set before him; resisting every line, every bait the cunning lawyer threw out to seduce him into that land of fancy so congenial to an Irishman's temperament, he was firm against all temptation, and even endured that severest of all tests to the forbearance of his country—he suffered the laugh more than once to be raised at his expense, without an effort to retort on his adversary.

The examination lasted three hours, and, at its conclusion, every fact I stated had received confirmation from Darby's testimony, down to the moment when we left the barrack together.

"Now, M'Keown," said the lawyer, "I am about to call your recollection, which is so wonderfully accurate that it can give you no trouble in remembering, to a circumstance which immediately followed this affair." As he got thus far, Crofts leaned over and drew the counsel toward him, while he whispered some words rapidly in his ear. A brief dialogue ensued between them, at the conclusion of which the lawyer turned round, and addressing Darby, said, "You may go down, sir; I've done with you."

"Wait a moment," said the young barrister on my side, who quickly perceived that the interruption had its secret object.

"My learned friend was about to ask you concerning something which happened after you left the barrack, and although he has changed his mind on the subject, we, on this side, would be glad to hear what you have to say."

Darby's eyes flashed with unwonted brilliancy, and I thought I caught a glance of triumphant meaning toward Crofts, as he began his recital, which was in substance nothing more than what the reader already knows. When he came to the mention of Fortescue's name, however, Crofts, whose excitement was increasing at each moment, lost all command over himself, and cried out, "It's false!—every word untrue! The man was dead at the time."

The court rebuked the interruption, and Darby went on:

"No, my lord, he was alive. But Mr. Crofts is not to blame, for he believed he was dead; and, more than that, he thought he took the sure way to make him so."

These words produced the greatest excitement throughout the court, and an animated discussion ensued, how far the testimony could go to inculpate a party not accused. It was ruled, at last, the evidence should be heard, as touching the case on trial, and not immediately as regarded Crofts. And then Darby began a recital, of which I had never heard a syllable before, nor had I conceived the slightest suspicion.

The story, partly told in narrative form, partly elicited by questioning, was briefly this:

Daniel Fortescue was the son of a Roscommon gentleman of large fortune, of whom, also, Crofts was the illegitimate child. The father, a man of high Tory politics, had taken a most determined part against the patriotic party in Ireland, to which his son Daniel had shown himself, on more than one occasion, favorable. The consequence was, a breach of affection between them, widened into an actual rupture by the old man, who was a widower, taking home to his house the illegitimate son, and announcing to his household that he would leave him everything he could in the world.

To Daniel, the blow was all that he needed to precipitate his ruin. He abandoned the university, where already he had distinguished himself, and threw himself heart and soul into the movement of the "United Irish" party. At first, high hopes of an independent nation—a separate kingdom, with its own train of interests, and its own sphere of power and influence—was the dream of those with whom he associated; but, as events rolled on, it was found that, to mature their plans, it was necessary to connect themselves with the masses, by whose agency the insurrectionary movement was to be effected, and in doing so, they discovered that, although theories of liberty and independence, high notions of

pure government, may have charms for men of intellect and intelligence, to the mob, the price of a rebellion must be paid down in the sterling coin of pillage and plunder—or even worse, the triumphant dominion of the depraved and the base over the educated and the worthy.

Many who favored the patriotic cause, as it was called, became so disgusted at the low associates and base intercourse the game of party required, that they abandoned the field at once, leaving to others, less scrupulous or more ardent, the path they could not stoop to follow. It was probable that young Fortescue might have been among these, had he been left to the guidance of his own judgment and inclination; for, as a man of honor and intelligence, he could not help feeling shocked at the demands made by those who were the spokesmen of the people; but this course he was not permitted to take, owing to the influence of a man who had succeeded in obtaining the most absolute power over him. This was a certain Maurice Mulcahy, a well-known member of the various illegal clubs of the day, and originally a country schoolmaster. Mulcahy it was who first infected Fortescue's mind with the poison of this party—now lending him volumes of the incendiary trash with which the press teemed; now, newspapers, whose articles were headed, "Orange outrage on a harmless and unresisting peasantry!" or, "Another sacrifice of the people to the bloody vengeance of the Saxon!" By these, his youthful mind became interested in the fate of those he believed to be treated with reckless cruelty and oppression, while, as he advanced in years, his reason was appealed to by those great and spirit-stirring addresses which Grattan and Curran were continually delivering, either in the senate or at the bar, and wherein the most noble aspirations after liberty were united with sentiments breathing love of country and devoted patriotism. To connect the garbled and lying statements of a debased newspaper press with the honorable hopes and noble conceptions of men of mind and genius, was the fatal process of his political education, and never was there a time when such a delusion was more easy.

Mulcahy—now stimulating the boyish ardor of a high-spirited youth, now flattering his vanity by promises of the position one of his ancient name and honored lineage must assume in the great national movement—gradually became his directing genius, swaying every resolution, and ruling every determination of his mind. He never left his victim for a moment; and while thus insuring the unbounded influence he exercised, he gave proof of a seeming attachment, which Fortescue confidently believed in. Mulcahy, too, never wanted for money—alleging that the leaders of the plot knew the value of Fortescue's alliance, and were willing to advance him any sums he needed, he supplied the means of every extravagance a wild and careless youth indulged in, and thus riveted the chain of his bondage to him.

When the rebellion broke out, Fortescue, like many more, was horrorstruck at the conduct of his party. He witnessed, hourly, scenes of cruelty and bloodshed at which his heart revolted, but to avow his compassion for which would have cost him his life on the spot. He was in the stream, however, and must go with the torrent, and what will not stern necessity compel! Daily intimacy with the base-hearted and the low, hourly association with crime, and, perhaps, more than either, despair of success, broke him down completely, and with the blind fatuity of one predestined to evil, he became careless what happened to him, and indifferent to whatever fate was before him.

Still, between him and his associates there lay a wide gulf. The tree, withered and blighted as it was, still preserved some semblance of its once beauty, and, among that mass of bigotry and bloodshed, his nature shone forth conspicuously as something of a different order of being.

To none was this superiority more insulting than to the parties themselves. So long as the period of devising and planning the movement of an insurrection lasts, the presence of a gentleman, or a man of birth or rank, will be hailed with acclamation and delight. Let the hour of acting arrive, however, and the scruples of an honorable mind, or the repugnance of a high-spirited nature, will be treated as cowardice by those who only recognize bravery in deeds of blood, and know no heroism save when allied to cruelty.

Fortescue became suspected by his party. Hints were circulated, and rumors reached him, that he was watched—that it was no time for hanging back. He who sacrificed everything for the cause to be thus accused! He consulted Mulcahy, and to his utter discomfiture discovered that even his old ally and adviser was not devoid of doubt regarding him. Something must be done, and that speedily: he cared not what. Life had long ceased to interest him either by hope or fear. The only tie that bound him to existence was the strange desire to be respected by those his heart sickened at the thought of.

An attack was at that time planned against the house and family of a Wexford gentleman, whose determined opposition to the rebel movement had excited all their hatred. Fortescue demanded to be the leader of that expedition, and was immediately named to the post by those who were glad to have the opportunity of testing his conduct by such an emergency.

The attack took place at night—a scene of the most fearful and appalling cruelty, such as the historian yet records among the most dreadful of that dreadful period. The house was burned to the ground, and its inmates butchered, regardless of age or sex. In the effort to save a female from the flames, Fortescue was struck down by one of his party, while another nearly cleft his chest across with a cut of a large knife. He fell, covered with blood, and lay seemingly dead. When his party retreated, however, he summoned strength to creep under shelter of a ditch, and lay there till near daybreak, when he was found by another gang of the rebel faction, who knew nothing of the circumstances of his wound, and carried him away to a place of safety.

For some months he lay dangerously ill. Hectic fever, consequent on long suffering, brought him to the very brink of the grave; and at last he managed by stealth to reach Dublin, where a doctor well known to the party resided, and under whose care he ultimately recovered and succeeded at last in taking a passage to America. Meanwhile his death was currently believed, and Crofts was everywhere recognized as the heir to the fortune.

Mulcahy, of whom it is necessary to speak a few words, was soon after apprehended on a charge of rebellion, and sentenced to transportation. He appealed to many who had known him, as he said, in better times, to speak to his character. Among others, Captain Crofts—so he then was—was summoned. His evidence, however, was rather injurious than favorable to the prisoner, and, although not in any way influencing the sentence, was believed by the populace to have mainly contributed to its severity.

Such was, in substance, the singular story which was now told before the court—told without any effort at concealment or reserve—and to the proof of which M'Keown was willing to proceed at once.

"This, my lord," said Darby, as he concluded, "is a good time and place to give back to Mr. Crofts a trifling article I took from him the night at the barracks. I thought it was the bank-notes I was getting, but it turned out better, after all."

With that he produced a strong black leather pocket-book, fastened by a steel clasp. No sooner did Crofts behold it, than, with the spring of a tiger, he leaped forward and endeavored to clutch it. But Darby was on his guard, and immediately drew back his hand, calling out,

"No, no, sir! I didn't keep it by me eight long years to give it up that way. There, my lords," said he, as he handed it to the bench, "there's his pocket-book, with plenty of notes in it from many a one well known—Maurice Mulcahy among the rest—and you'll soon see who it was first tempted Fortescue to ruin, and who paid the money for doing it."

A burst of horror and astonishment broke from the assembled crowd as Darby spoke. Then, in a loud, determined tone,

"He is a perjurer!" screamed Crofts. "I repeat it, my lord, Fortescue is dead."

"Faix, and for a dead man he has a remarkable appetite," said Darby, "and an elegant color in his face besides, for there he stands;" and as he spoke he pointed with his finger to a man who was leaning with folded arms against one of the pillars that supported the gallery. Every eye was now turned in the direction toward him, while the young barrister called out, "Is your name Daniel Fortescue?" But before any answer could follow, several among the lawyers, who had known him in his college days, and felt attachment to him, had surrounded and recognized him.

"I am Daniel Fortescue, my lord," said the stranger. "Whatever may be the consequences of the avowal, I say it here, before this court, that every statement the witness has made regarding me is true to the letter."

A low, faint sound, heard throughout the stillness that followed these words, now echoed throughout the court, and Crofts had fallen, fainting, over the bench behind him.

A scene of tumultuous excitement now ensued, for while Crofts's friends, many of whom were present, assisted to carry him into the air, others pressed eagerly forward to catch a sight of Fortescue, who had already rivaled Darby himself in the estimation of the spectators. He was a tall, powerfully-built man, of about thirty-five or six, dressed in the blue jacket and trowsers of a sailor; but neither the habitude of his profession, nor the humble dress he wore, could conceal the striking evidence his air and bearing indicated of condition and birth. As he mounted the witness-table—for it was finally agreed that his testimony in disproof or corroboration of

M'Keown should be heard—a murmur of approbation went round, partly at the daring step he had thus ventured on taking, and partly excited by those personal gifts which are ever certain to have their effect upon any crowded assembly.

I need not enter into the details of his evidence, which was given in a frank, straightforward manner, well suited to his appearance; never concealing for a moment the cause he had himself embarked in, nor assuming any favorable coloring for actions which ingenuity and the zeal of party would have found subjects for encomium rather than censure.

His narrative not only confirmed all that Darby asserted, but also disclosed the atrocious scheme by which he had been first induced to join the ranks of the disaffected party. This was the work of Crofts, who knew and felt that Fortescue was the great barrier between himself and a large fortune. For this purpose Mulcahy was hired; to this end the whole long train of perfidy laid, which eventuated in his ruin; for so artfully had the plot been devised, each day's occurrence rendered retreat more difficult, until at last it became impossible.

The reader is already aware of the catastrophe which concluded his career in the rebel army. It only remains now to be told that he escaped to America, where he entered as a sailor on board a merchantman; and although his superior acquirements and conduct might have easily bettered his fortune in his new walk in life, the dread of detection never left his mind, and he preferred the hardships before the mast to the vacillation of hope and fear a more conspicuous position would have exposed him to.

The vessel in which he served was wrecked off the coast of New Holland, and he and a few others of the crew were taken up by an English ship on her voyage outward. In a party sent on shore for water, Fortescue came up with Darby, who had made his escape from the convict settlement, and was wandering about the woods, almost dead of starvation, and scarcely covered with clothing. His pitiful condition, but perhaps more still, his native drollery, which even then was unextinguished, induced the sailors to yield to Fortescue's proposal, and they smuggled him on board in a water-cask, and, thus concealed, he made the entire voyage to England, where he landed about a fortnight before the trial. Fearful of being apprehended before the day, and determined at all hazards to give his evidence, he lay hid till the time we have already seen, when he suddenly came forward to my rescue.

Mulcahy, who worked in the same gang with Darby, or, to use the piper's grandiloquent expression, for he burst out in this occasionally, was "in concatenated proximity to him," told the whole story of his own baseness, and loudly inveighed against Crofts for deserting him in his misfortunes. The pocket-book taken from Crofts by Darby amply corroborated this statement. It contained, besides various memoranda in the owner's handwriting, several letters from Mulcahy, detailing the progress of the conspiracy; some were in acknowledgment of considerable sums of money, others asking for supplies, but all confirmatory of the black scheme by which Fortescue's destruction was compassed.

Whatever might have been the sentiments of the crowded court regarding the former life and opinions of Fortescue and the piper, it was clear that now only one impression prevailed—a general feeling of horror at the complicated villany of Crofts, whose whole existence had been one tissue of the basest treachery.

The testimony was heard with attention throughout; no cross-examination was entered on, and the judge, briefly adverting to the case which was before the jury, and from whose immediate consideration subsequent events had in a great measure withdrawn their minds, directed them to deliver a verdict of not guilty.

The words were re-echoed by the jury, who, man for man, exclaimed these words aloud, amid the most deafening cheers from every side.

As I walked from the dock, fatigued, worn out, and exhausted, a dozen hands were stretched out to seize mine; but one powerful grasp caught my arm, and a well-known voice called in my ear,

"An' ye wor with Boney, Master Tom? Tare and 'ounds, didn't I know you'd be a great man yet."

At the same instant Fortescue came through the crowd toward me, with his hands outstretched.

"We should be friends, sir," said he, "for we both have suffered from a common enemy. If I am liberty to leave this—"

"You are not, sir," interposed a deep voice behind. We turned and beheld Major Barton. "The massacre at Kilmacshogue has yet to be atoned for."

Fortescue's face grew actually livid at the mention of the word, and his breathing became thick and short.

"Here," continued Barton, "is the warrant for your committal; and you also,

Darby," said he, turning round; "we want your company once more in Newgate."

"Bedad, I suppose there's no use in sending an apology when friends is so pressing," said he, buttoning his coat as coolly as possible; "but I hope you'll let the master come in to see me."

"Mr. Burke shall be admitted at all times," said Barton, with an obsequious civility I had never witnessed in him previously.

"Faix, maybe you'll not be for letting him out so aisy," said Darby, dryly, for his notions of justice were tempered by a considerable dash of suspicion.

I had only time left to press my purse into the honest fellow's hand, and salute Fortescue hastily, as they both were removed, under the custody of Barton; and I now made my way through the crowd into the hall, which opened a line for me as I went; a thousand welcomes meeting me from those who felt as anxious about the result of the trial as if a brother or a dear friend had been in peril.

One face caught my eye as I passed; and partly from my own excitement, partly from its expression being so different from its habitual character, I could not recognize it as speedily as I ought to have done. Again and again it appeared; and at last, as I approached the door into the street, it was beside me.

"If I might dare to express my congratulations," said a voice, weak from the tremulous anxiety of the speaker, and the shame which, real or affected, seemed to bow him down.

"What," cried I, "Mr. Basset!" for it was the worthy man himself.

"Yes, sir. Your father's old and confidential agent—I might venture to say, friend—come to see the son of his first patron occupy the station he has long merited."

"A bad memory is the only touch of age I remark in you, sir," said I, endeavoring to pass on, for I was unwilling at the moment of my escape from a great difficulty to lose temper with so unworthy an object.

"One moment, sir—just a moment," said he, in a low whisper. "You'll want money, probably. The November rents are not paid up; but there's a considerable balance to your credit. Will you take a hundred or two for the present?"

"Take money!—money from you!" said I, shrinking back.

"Your own, sir—your own estate. Do you forget," said he, with a miserable effort at a smile, "that you are Mr. Burke of Cromore, with a clear rental of four thousand a year? We gained the Cluan Bog lawsuit, sir," continued he. "'Twas I, sir, found the satisfaction for the bond. Your brother said he owed it all to Tony Basset."

The two last words were all that were needed to sum up the measure of my disgust, and I once more tried to get forward.

"I know the property, sir, for thirty-eight years. I was over it. Your father and your brother always trusted me—"

"Let me pass on, Mr. Basset," said I, calmly. "I have no desire to become a greater object of mob curiosity. Pray let me pass on."

"And for Darby M'Keown," whispered he.

"What of him?" said I; for he had touched the most anxious chord of my heart at that instant.

"I'll have him free. He shall be at liberty in forty-eight hours for you. I have the whole papers by me; and a statement to the privy council will obtain his liberation."

"Do this," said I, "and I'll forgive more of your treatment of me than I could on any other plea."

"May I call on you this evening, or to-morrow morning, at your hotel? Where do you stop, sir?"

"This evening be it, if it hasten M'Keown's liberation. Remember, however, Mr. Basset, I'll hold no converse with you on any other subject till that be settled, and to my perfect satisfaction."

"A bargain, sir," said he, with a grin of satisfaction; and dropping back, he suffered me to proceed.

Along the quays I went, and down Dame street, accompanied by a great mob of people, who thought in my acquittal they had gained a triumph; for so it was—every case had its political feature, and seemed to be intimately connected with the objects of one party or the other. Partisan cheers—the watchwords of faction—were uttered as I went, and I was made to suffer that least satisfactory of all conditions, which bestows notoriety without fame, and popularity without merit.

As I entered the hotel, I recognized many of the persons I had seen there before; but their looks were no longer thrown toward me with the impertinence they then assumed. On the contrary, a studied desire to evince courtesy and politeness was evident. "How strange is it!" thought I—"how differently does the whole world smile to the rich man and to the poor!" Here were many who could in no wise derive advantage from my altered condition—as perfectly independent of me as I of them; and yet even they showed that degree of defer-

ence in their manner which the expectant bestows upon a patron. So it is, however. The position which wealth confers is recognized by all—the individual who fills it is but an attribute of the station.

Life had, indeed, opened on me with a new and very different aspect, and I felt, as I indulged in the day-dreams which the sudden possession of fortune excites, that to enjoy thoroughly the blessings of independence, one must have experienced, as I had, the hard pressure of adversity. It seemed to me that the long road of gloomy fate had at length reached its turning-point, and that I should now travel along a calmer and a happier path.

Thoughts of the new career that lay before me were blended with the memories of the past—hopes they were, but dashed with the shadows which a blighted affection will throw over the whole stream of life. Still that evening was one of happiness—not of that excited pleasure derived from the attainment of a long-coveted object, but the calmer enjoyment felt in the safety of the haven by him who has experienced the hurricane and the storm. With such thoughts I went to rest, and laid my head on my pillow in thoughtfulness and peace. In my dreams my troubles still lingered; but who regrets the anxious minutes of a vision which wakening thoughts dispel—are they not rather the mountain shadows that serve to brighten the gleam of the sunlight in the plain?

It was thus the morning broke for me, with all the ecstasy of danger passed, and all the crowding hopes of a happy future. The hundred speculations which in poverty I had formed for the comfort of the poor and the humble might now be realized; and I fancied myself the center of a happy peasantry, confiding and contented.

It would be hard, indeed, to forget "the camp and the tented field" in the peaceful paths of a country life; but simple duties are often as engrossing as those of a higher order, and bring a reward not less grateful to the heart, and I flattered myself to think my ambition reached not above them.

The moments in which such day-dreams are indulged are the very happiest of a lifetime. The hopes which are based on the benefits we may render to others are sources of elevation to ourselves; and such motives purify the soul and exalt the mind to a pitch far above the petty ambitions of the world.

To myself, and to my own enjoyments, wealth could contribute less than to most men. The simple habits of a soldier's life satisfied every wish of my mind. The luxuries which custom makes necessary to others I never knew; and I formed my resolution not to wander from this path of humble, inexpensive tastes, so that the stream of charity might flow the wider.

These were my waking thoughts. Alas, how little do we ever realize of such speculations! and how few glide down the stream of life unswayed by the eddies and cross-currents of fortune! The higher we build the temple of our hopes, the more surely will it topple to its fall. Who shall say that our greatest enjoyment is not in raising the pile, and our happiest hours the full abandonment to those hopes our calmer reason never ratified? As yet it had not occurred to me to think what position the world might concede to one whose life had been passed like mine, nor did I bestow a care upon a matter whereon so much of future happiness depended. These, however, were considerations which could not be long averted. How they came, and in what manner they were met, must remain for a future chapter of my history.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

A HASTY RESOLUTION.

In my last chapter I brought my reader to that portion of my story which formed the turning-point of my destiny; and here I might, perhaps, conclude these brief memoirs of an early life, whose chief object was to point out the results of a hasty and rash judgment, which, formed in mere boyhood, exerted its influence throughout the entire of a lifetime. One only incident remains still to be told; and I shall not trespass on the good-natured patience of my readers by any delay in the narrative.

From being poor, houseless, and unknown, a sudden turn of fortune had made me wealthy and conspicuous in station, the owner of a large estate—almost a leading man in my native county. My influence was sufficient to procure the liberation of M'Keown, and my interference in his behalf mainly contributed to procure for Fortescue the royal pardon. The world, as the phrase is, went well with me; and the good luck which attended every step I took, and every plan I engaged in, was become a proverb among my neighbors.

Let not any one suppose I was unmindful or ungrateful, if I confess that, even with all these, I was not happy. No. The tranquil mind, the spirit at ease with itself,

cannot exist where the sense of duty is not. The impulse which swayed my boyish heart still moved the ambition of the man. The pursuits I should have deemed the noblest and the purest seemed to me uninteresting and ignoble; the associations I ought to have felt the happiest and the highest appeared to me vulgar, and low, and commonplace. I was disappointed in my early dream of liberty, and had found tyranny where I looked for freedom, and intolerance where I expected enlightenment; but, if so, I recurred with tenfold enthusiasm to the career of the soldier, whose glories were ever before me. That noble path had not deceived me—far from it. Its wild and whirlwind excitement, its hazardous enterprise, its ever-present dangers, were stimulants I loved and gloried in. All the chances and changes of a peaceful life were poor and mean compared to the hourly vicissitudes of war. I knew not then, it is true, how much of enjoyment I derived from forgetfulness, how many of my springs of happiness flowed from that preoccupation which prevented my dwelling on the only passion that ever stirred my heart—my love for one whose love was hopeless.

How thoroughly will the character of an early love tinge the whole of a life! Our affections are like flowers, they derive their sweetness and their bloom from the soil in which they grow—some, budding in joy and gladness, amid the tinkling plash of a glittering fountain, live on ever bright and beautiful; others, struggling on 'mid thorns and wild weeds, overshadowed by gloom, preserve their early impressions to the last—their very sweetness tells of sadness.

To conquer the memory of this hopeless passion I tried a hundred ways. I endeavored, by giving myself up to the duties of a country gentleman, to become absorbed in all the cares and pursuits which had such interest for my neighbors. Failing in this, I became a sportsman. I kept horses and dogs, and entered, with all the zest mere determination can impart, upon that life of manly exertion, so full of pleasure to thousands; but here again without succeeding.

I went into society, but soon retired from it, on finding that, among the class of my equals, the prestige of my early life had still tracked me. I was, in their eyes, a rebel, whose better fortune had saved him from the fate of his companions. My youth had given no guarantee for my manhood; and I was not trusted. Baffled in every endeavor to obliterate my secret grief, I recurred to it now, as though privileged by fate, to indulge a memory nothing could efface. I abandoned all the petty appliances by which I sought to shut out the past, and gave myself up in full abandonment to the luxury of my melancholy.

Living entirely within the walls of my demesne, never seen by my neighbors, not making nor receiving visits, I appeared to many a heartless recluse, whose misanthropy sought indulgence in solitude. Others, less harshly, judged me as one whose unhappy entrance on life had unfitted him for the station to which fortune had elevated him. By both I was soon forgotten.

The peasantry were less ungenerous, and more just. They saw in me one who felt acutely for the privations they were suffering; yet never gave them that cheap, delusive hope, that legislative changes will touch social evils—that the acts of a parliament will penetrate the thousand tortuous windings of a poor man's destiny. They found in me a friend and an adviser. They only wondered at one thing—how any man could feel for the poor and not hate the rich. So long had the struggle lasted between affluence and misery, they could not understand a compromise. Bitter as their poverty had been, it never extinguished the poetry of their lives. They were hungry and naked; but they held to their ancient traditions, and they built on them great hopes for the future. The old family names—the time-honored memories of place—the famous deeds of ancestors, made an ideal existence, powerful enough to exclude the pressure of actual daily evils; and they argued from what had been to what might be, with a persistency of hope it seemed almost cruel to destroy. So deeply were these thoughts ingrained into their natures, they felt him but half their friend who ventured to despise them. The relief of present poverty—the succor of actual suffering, became in their eyes an effort of mere passing kindness. They looked to some great amelioration of condition—some wondrous change—some restoration to an imaginary standard of independence and comfort, which all the efforts of common interference fell sadly short of; and thus they strained their gaze to a government, a ruling power, for a boon undefined, unknown, and illimitable.

To expectations like these, advice and slight assistance are as the mere drop of water to the parched tongue of thirst, and so I found it. I could neither encourage them in their hopes of such legislative changes as would greatly ameliorate their condition, nor flatter them in the delusion that none of their misfortunes were of

home origin; and thus, if they felt gratitude for many kindnesses, they reposed no confidence in my opinion. The trading patriot, who promised much, while he pocketed their hard-earned savings; the rabid newspaper writer, who libeled the government and denounced the landlord, were their standards of sympathy, and he who fell short of either was not their friend.

In a word, the social state of the people was rotten to its very core. Their highest qualities, degraded by the combined force of poverty, misrule, and superstition, had become sources of crime and misery. They had suffered so long and so much, their patience was exhausted, and they preferred the prospect of any violent convulsion which might change the face of the land, whatever dangers it might come with, to a slow and gradual improvement of condition, however safe and certain.

To win their confidence at the only price they would accord it I never could consent to, and without it I was almost powerless for good. Here again, therefore, did I find closed against me another avenue for exertion, and the only one of all, I could have felt a fitting sphere for my labor. The violence of their own passionate natures, the headlong impulses by which they suffered themselves to be swayed, left them no power of judgment regarding those whose views were more moderate and temperate. They could understand the high Tory landlord, whom they invested with every attribute of tyranny, as their open, candid opponent. They could see a warm friend in the violent mob-orator of the day; but they recognized no trait of kindness in him who would rather see them fed than flattered, and behold them in the enjoyment of comfort sooner than in the ecstasy of triumph.

From "Darby the Blast," for he was now a member of my household, I learned the light in which I was regarded by the people, and heard the dissatisfaction they expressed that one who "sarved Boney" should not be ready to head a rising, if need be. Thus was I in a false position on every side. Mistrusted by all, because I would neither enter into the exaggerations of party, nor become blind to the truth my senses revealed before me, my sphere of utility was narrowed to the discharge of the mere duties of common charity and benevolence, and my presence among my tenantry no more productive of benefit than if I had left my purse as my representative.

Years rolled on, and in the noiseless track of time I forgot its flight. I now had grown so wedded to the habits of my solitary life, that its very monotony was a source of pleasure. I had intrenched myself within a little circle of enjoyments, and among my books and in my walks my days went pleasantly over.

For a long time I did not dare to read the daily papers, nor learn the great events which agitated Europe. I tried to think that an interval of repose would leave me indifferent to their mention, and so rigidly did I abstain from indulging my curiosity, that the burning of Moscow and the commencement of the dreadful retreat which followed was the first fact I read of.

From the moment I gave way, the passion for intelligence from France became a perfect mania. Where were the different corps of the "Grand Army?" Where the Emperor himself? By what great stroke of genius would he emerge from the difficulties around him, and deal one of his fatal blows on the enemy? were the questions which met me as I awoke, and tortured me during the day.

Each movement of that terrible retreat I followed in the gazettes with an anxiety verging on insanity. I tracked the long journey on the map, and as I counted towns and villages, dreary deserts of snow, and vast rivers to be traversed, my heart grew faint to think how many a brave soldier would never reach that fair France for whose glory he had shed his best blood.

Disaster followed disaster, and as the news reached England, came accounts of those great defections which weakened the force of the "Grand Army," and deranged the places formed for its retiring movements.

They who can recall to mind the time I speak of, will remember the effect produced in England by the daily accounts from the seat of war, how heavily fell the blows of that altered fortune which once rested on the eagles of France—how each new bulletin announced another feature of misfortune, some shattered remnant of a great corps d'armée cut off by Cossacks, some dreadful battle engaged against superior numbers, and fought with desperation, not for victory, but the liberty to retreat. Great names were mentioned among the slain, and the proudest chivalry of Gaul left to perish on the far-off steppes of Russia.

Such were the fearful tales men read of that terrible campaign; and the joy in England was great, to hear that the most powerful of her enemies had at length experienced the full bitterness of defeat. While men vied with each other in stories of the misfortunes of the Emperor—when each post added another to the long calalogue of disasters to the "Grand Army,"

I sat in my lonely house, in a remote part of Ireland, brooding over the sad reverses of him who still formed my ideal of a hero.

I thought how, amid the crumbling ruins of his splendid force, his great soul would survive the crash, that made all others despair—that each new evil would suggest its remedy, as it arose, and the mind that never failed in expedient would shine out more brilliantly through the gloom of darkening fortune, than even it had done in the noonday splendor of success. When all others could only see the tremendous energy of despair, I thought I could recognize those glorious outbursts of heroism by which a French army sought and won the favor of their Emperor. The routed and straggling bodies which hurried along in seeming disorder, I gloried to perceive could assume all the port and bearing of soldiers at the approach of danger, and form their ranks at the wild "houra" of the Cossack, as steadily as in the proudest day of their prosperity.

The retreat continued. The horrible suffering of a Russian winter added to the carnage of a battle-tide, which flowed on unceasingly, from the ruined walls of the Kremlin to the banks of the Vistula. The battle of Borisow and the passage of the Berezina followed fast on each other; and now we heard that the Emperor had surrendered the chief command to Murat, and was hastening back to France with lightning speed, for already the day of his evil fortune had thrown its shadow over the capital. No longer reckoned by tens of thousands, that vast army had now dwindled down to divisions of a few hundred men. The Old Guard scarce exceeded one thousand; and of twenty entire regiments of cavalry, Murat mustered a single squadron as a body-guard. Crowds of wounded and mutilated men dragged their weary limbs along over the hardened snow, or through dense pine forests, where no villages were to be met with—a fatuous determination to strive to reach France the only impulse surviving amid all their sufferings.

With the defections of D'York and Massenbach then began that new feature of disaster which was so soon to burst forth with all the fell fury of long pent up hatred. The nationality of Germany—so long—so cruelly insulted—now saw the day of retribution arrive. Misfortune hastened misfortune, and defeat engendered treason in the ranks of the Emperor's allies. Murat, too, the favorite of Napoleon, the king of his creation, deserted him now, and fled ignominiously from the command of the army.

"The Elbe! the Elbe!" was now the cry amid the shattered ranks of that army, which but a year before saw no limit to its glorious path. The Elbe was the only line remaining which promised a moment's repose from the fatigues and privations of months long. Along that road the army could halt, and stem the tide of pursuit, however hotly it pressed. The Prussians had already united with the Russians—the defection of Austria could not be long distant. Saxony was appealed to, as a member of the German family, to join in arms against the tyrant; and the wild "houra" of the Cossack now blended with the loud "Vorwärts" of injured Prussia.

"Where shall he seek succor now? What remains to him in this last eventful struggle? How shall the Emperor call back to life the legions by whose valor his great victories were gained, and Europe made a vassal at the foot of his throne?" Such was the thought that never left me day or night. Ever present before me was his calm brow, and his face paler, but not less handsome than its wont. I could recall his rapid glance—the quick and hurried motion of his hand—his short and thick utterance, as words of command fell from his lips—and his smile, as he heard some intelligence with pleasure.

I could not sleep—scarcely could I eat. A feverish excitement burned through my frame, and my parched tongue and hot hand told how the very springs of health were dried up within me. I walked with hurried steps from place to place, now muttering the words of some dispatch—now fancying that I was sent with orders for a movement of troops. As I rode, I spurred my horse to a gallop, and in my heated imagination believed I was in presence of the enemy, and preparing for the fray. Great as my exhaustion frequently was, weariness brought no rest. Often I returned home at evening, overcome by fatigue, but a sleepless night, tortured with anxieties, and harassed with doubts and fears, followed, and I awoke to pursue the same path, till in my weakened frame and hectic cheek the signs of illness could no longer be mistaken.

Terrified at the ravages a few weeks had made in my health, and fearful what secret malady was preying upon me, Darby, without asking any leave from me, left the house one morning at daybreak, and returned with the physician of the neighboring town. I was about to mount my horse, when I saw them coming up the avenue,

and immediately guessed the object of the visit. A moment was enough to decide me as to the course to pursue; for, well knowing how disposed the world ever is to stamp the impress of wandering intellect on any habit of mere eccentricity, I resolved to receive the doctor as though I was glad of his coming, and consult with him regarding my state. This would at least refute such a scandal, by enlisting the physician among the allies of my cause.

By good fortune Dr. Clibborn was a man of shrewd common sense, as well as a physician of no mean skill. In the brief conversation we held together, I perceived that while he paid all requisite attention to any detail which implied the existence of malady, his questions were more pointedly directed to the possibility of some mental cause of irritation—the source of my ailment. I could see, however, that his opinion inclined to the belief that the events of the trial had left their indelible traces on my mind, which, inducing me to adopt a life of isolation and retirement, had now produced the effects he witnessed.

I was not sorry at this mistake on his part. By suffering him to indulge in this delusive impression, I saved myself all the trouble of concealing my real feelings, which I had no desire to expose before him. I permitted him, therefore, to reason with me on the groundless notions he supposed I had conceived of the world's feeling regarding me, and heard him patiently, as he detailed the course of public duty, by fulfilling which I should occupy my fitting place in society, and best consult my own health and happiness.

"There are," said he, "certain fixed impressions, which I would not so combat. It was but yesterday, for instance, I yielded to the wish of an old general officer, who has served upward of half a century, and desires once more to put himself at the head of his regiment. His heart was bent on it. I saw that though he might consent to abandon his purpose, I was not so sure his mind might bear the disappointment, for the intellect will sometimes go astray in endeavoring to retrace its steps. So I thought it better to concede what might cost more in the refusal."

The last words of the doctor remained in my head long after he took his leave, and I could not avoid applying them to my own case. Was not *my* impression of this nature? Were not *my* thoughts all centered on one theme as fixedly as the officer's of whom he spoke? Could I, by any effort of my reason or my will, control my wandering fancies, and call them back to the dull realities amongst which I lived?

These were ever recurring to me, and always with the same reply. It is in vain to struggle against an impulse which has swallowed up all other ambitions. My heart is among the glittering ranks and neighing squadrons of France. I would be there once more. I would follow that career which first stirred the proudest hopes I ever cherished.

That same evening the mail brought the news that Eugène Beauharnais had fallen back on Magdebourg, and sent repeated dispatches to the Emperor, entreating his immediate presence among the troops, whom nothing, but Napoleon himself in the midst of them, could restore to their wonted bravery and determination. The reply of Napoleon was briefly,

"I am coming; and all who love me, follow me."

How the words rang in my ears—"*Tous ceux qui m'aiment!*" I heard them in every rustling of the wind and motion of the leaves against the window. They were whispered to my sense by every avenue of my brain, and I sat no longer occupied in reading as usual, but with folded arms, repeating word by word the brief sentence.

It was midnight. All was still and silent through the house. No servant stirred, and the very wind was hushed to a perfect calm. I was sitting in my library when the words I have repeated seemed spoken in a low, clear voice beside me. I started up—the perspiration broke over my forehead and fell upon my cheek with terror, for I knew I was alone; and the fearful thought flashed on me—this may be madness! For a second or two the agony of the idea was almost insupportable—then came a resolve as sudden. I opened my desk and took from it all the ready money I possessed. I wrote a few hurried lines to my agent, and then, making my way noiselessly to the stable, I saddled my horse and led him out.

In two hours I was nearly twenty miles on my way to Dublin. Day was breaking as I entered the capital. I made no delay there, but, taking fresh horses, started for Skerries, where I knew the fishermen of the coast resorted.

"One hundred pounds to the man who will land me on the coast of France or Holland," said I to a group that were preparing their nets on the shore.

A look of incredulity was the only reply. A very few words, however, settled the bargain. Ere half an hour I was on board. The wind freshened, and we stood out to sea.

"Let the breeze keep to this," said the skipper, "and we'll make the voyage quickly."

Both wind and tide were in our favor. We held down Channel rapidly, and I saw the blue hills grow fainter and fainter, till the eye could but detect a gray cloud on the horizon, which at last disappeared in the bright sun of noon, and a wide waste of blue water lay on every side.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

THE LAST CAMPAIGN.

THE snow, half melted with the heavy rains, lay still deeply on the roads, and a dark, lowering sky stretched above, as I hurried onward, with all the speed I could, toward the east of France.

Already the allies had passed the Rhine. Schwartzenberg in the south, Blücher in the east, and Bernadotte on the Flemish frontier, were conveying their vast armies to bear down on him whom, singly, none had dared to encounter. All France was in arms, and every step was turned eastward. Immense troops of conscripts, many scarce of the age of boyhood, crowded the highways. The veterans themselves were enrolled once more, and formed battalions for the defense of their native land. Every town and village was a garrison. The deep-toned rolling of ammunition wagons, and the heavy tramp of horses, sounded through the nights long. War, terrible war, spoke from every object around. Strongholds were strengthening, regiments brigading, cavalry organizing on all sides. No longer, however, did I witness the wild enthusiasm which I so well remembered among the soldiers of the army. Here were no glorious outbreaks of that daring spirit which so marked the Frenchman, and made him almost irresistible in arms. A sad and gloomy silence prevailed: a look of fierce, but hopeless, determination was over all. They marched like men going to death, but with the step and bearing of heroes.

I entered the little town of Verviers. The day was breaking, but the troops were under arms. The Emperor had but just taken his departure for Châlons-sur-Marne. They told me of it as I changed horses; not with that fierce pride which a mere passing glance at the great Napoleon would once have evoked. They spoke of him without emotion. I asked if he were paler or thinner than his wont: they did not know. They said that he traveled post, but that his staff were on horseback. From this I gathered that he was either ill, or in that frame of mind in which he preferred to be alone. While I was yet speaking, an officer of engineers came up to the carriage, and called out,

"Unharness these horses, and bring them down to the barracks. These, sir," said he, turning toward me, "are not times to admit of ceremony. We have eighteen guns to move and want cattle."

"Enough, sir," said I. "I'm not here to retard your movements, but, if I can, to forward them. Can I, as a volunteer, be of any service at this moment?"

"Have you served before? Of course you have, though. In what arm?"

"As a Hussar of the Guard for some years."

"Come along with me: I'll bring you to the general at once."

Re-entering the inn, the officer preceded me up-stairs, and, after a moment's delay, introduced me into the presence of General Letort, then commanding a cavalry brigade.

"I have heard your request, sir. Where is your commission? Have you got it with you?"

I handed it to him in silence. He examined it rapidly, and then turning the reverse, read the few lines inscribed by the minister of war.

"I could have given you a post this day, sir, this very hour," said he, "but for a blunder of our commissariat people. There's a troop here waiting for a re-mount, but the order has not come down from Paris, and our officials here will not advance the money till it arrives, as if these were times for such punctilio. They are to form part of General Kellermann's force, which is sadly deficient. Remain here, however, and perhaps by to-morrow—"

"How much may the sum be, sir?" asked I, interrupting.

The general almost started with surprise at the abruptness of my question, and in a tone of half reproof answered,

"The amount required is beside the matter, sir; unless," added he, sarcastically, "you are disposed to advance it yourself."

"Such was the object of my question," said I, calmly, and determining not to notice the manner he had assumed.

"*Parbleu!*" exclaimed he, "that is very different. Twenty thousand francs, however, is a considerable sum."

"I have as much, and something more,

if need be, in my carriage—if English gold be no objection."

"No, *pardieu*, that it is not," cried he, laughing; "I only wish we saw more of it. Are you serious in all this?"

The best reply to his question was to hasten down-stairs and return with two small canvas bags in my hands.

"Here are one thousand guineas," said I, laying them on the table.

While one of the general's aides-de-camp was counting and examining the gold, I repeated, at his request, the circumstances which brought me once again to France, to serve under the banner of the Emperor.

"And your name, sir," said he, as he seated himself to write, "is Thomas Burke, *ci-devant* captain of the Eighth Hussars of the Guard. Well, I can promise you the restoration of your old grade. Meanwhile, you must take command of these fellows—they are mere partisan troops, hurriedly raised, and ill organized; but I'll give you a letter to General Damrémont, at Châlons, and he'll attend to you."

"It is not a position for myself I seek, general," said I. "Wherever I can best serve the Emperor, there only I desire to be."

"I have ventured to leave that point to General Damrémont," said he, smiling. "Your motives do not require much explanation. Let us to breakfast now, and by noon we shall have everything in readiness for your departure."

Thus rapidly, and as it were by the merest accident, was I again become a soldier of the Emperor, and that same day was once more at the head of a squadron, on my way to Châlons. My troop were, indeed, very unlike the splendid array of my old Hussars of the Guard. They were hurriedly raised, and not over well equipped, but still they were stout-looking, hardy peasants, who, whatever deficiency of drill they might display, I knew well would exhibit no lack of courage before an enemy.

On reaching Châlons, I found that General Damrémont had left with the staff for Vitry only a few hours before, and so I reported myself to the officer commanding the town, and was ordered by him to join the cavalry brigade then advancing on Vitry.

Had I time at this moment, I could not help devoting some minutes to an account of that strange and motley mass which then were brigaded as Imperial cavalry. Dragoons of every class, heavy and light-armed, grenadiers à cheval and hussars, cuirassiers, carbineers, and lancers, were all, pell-mell, mixed up confusedly together, and hurried onward, some to join their respective corps, if they could find them, but all prepared to serve wherever their sabres might be called for. It was confusion to the last degree, but a tumult without enthusiasm or impulse. The superior officers, who were well acquainted with the state of events, made no secret of their gloomy forebodings. The juniors lacked energy in a cause where they saw no field for advancement, and the soldiers, always prepared to imbibe their feelings from their officers, seemed alike sad and dispirited. What a change was this from the wild and joyous spirit which once animated every grade and class—from the generous enthusiasm that once warmed each bold heart, and made every soldier a hero! Alas! the terrible consequences of long defeat were on all;—the tide of battle that rolled disastrously from the ruined walls of the Kremlin still swept along toward the great palace of the Tuileries. Germany had witnessed the destruction of two mighty armies—the third and last was now awaiting the eventful struggle on the very soil of their country. The tide of fugitives, which preceded the retiring columns of Victor and Ney, met the advancing bodies of the conscripts, and spread dismay and consternation as they went. The dejection was but the shadow of the last approaching disaster.

On the night of the 27th January, the cavalry brigade with which I was received orders to march by the Forest of Bar on Brienne, where Blücher was stationed, in no expectation of being attacked.

The movement, notwithstanding the heavy roads, was made with great rapidity, and by noon on the following day we came up with the main body of the army in full march against the enemy. Then, once more, did I recognize the old spirit of the army. Joyous songs and gay cheers were heard from the different corps we passed. The announcement of a speedy meeting with the Prussians had infused new vigor among the troops. We were emerging frm the deep shade of the wood into a valley, where a light infantry regiment were bivouacked. Their fires were formed in a wide circle, and the cooking went merrily on, amid the pleasant song and jocund cries. Our own brief halt was just concluded, when the bugles sounded to resume the march, and I stood for a moment admiring the merry gambols of the infantry, when an air I well remembered was chanted forth in full chorus; but my memory was not left long in doubt as to where

and how these sounds were first heard. The wild uproar at once recalled both, as they sang out,

"Hurrah for the Faubourg of St. Antoine!"

No sooner did I hear the words, than I spurred my horse forward and rode down toward them.

"What regiment's yours, comrade?" said I to a fellow hurrying to the ranks.

"The Fifth, *mon officier*," said he—"Voltigeurs of the line."

"Have you a certain François, a maître d'armes, still among you?"

"Yes, that we have. There he is, yonder, beating time to the roulade."

I looked in the direction he pointed, and there stood my old friend. He was advanced in front of a company, and with the air of a tambour-major he seemed as if he was giving the time to the melody.

"Ah, *sacré* conscripts that ye are!" cried he, as with his fist clenched he gesticulated fiercely toward them. "Can't ye keep the measure? Once, now, and all together. Picardy first, and then—"

"Holloa! Maître François, can you remember an old friend?"

The little man turned suddenly, and, bringing his hand to the salute, remained stiff and erect, as if on parade.

"*Connais pas, mon capitaine*," was his answer, after a considerable pause.

"What! not know me!—me, whom you made one of your own gallant company, calling me 'Burke of Ours?'"

"Ah, *par la barbe de St. Pierre!* is this my dear comrade of the Eighth? Why, where have you been? They said you left us for ever and aye?"

"I tried it, François, but it wouldn't do."

"*Mille bombes!*" said he, "but you're back in pleasant times—to see the Cossacks learning to drink champagne, and leave us to pay the score. Come along, however—take your old place here. You are free to choose now, and needn't be a dragoon any longer; not but that your old general will be glad to see you again."

"General D'Auvergne—where is he now?"

"With the light cavalry brigade, in front. I saw him pass here two hours since."

"And how looks he, François?"

"A little stooped, or so, more than you knew him; but his seat in the saddle seems just as firm. *Ventrebleu!* if he'd been a voltigeur, he'd be a good man these ten years to come."

Delighted to learn that I was so near my dearest and oldest friend in the world, I shook François's hand, and parted; but not without a pledge that, whenever I joined the infantry, the Fifth Voltigeurs of the Line were to have the preference.

As we advanced toward Brienne the distant thunder of large guns was heard, which gradually grew louder and more sustained, and betokened that the battle had already begun. The roads, blocked up with dense masses of infantry and long trains of wagons, prevented our rapid advance; and when we tried the fields at either side, the soil, cut up with recent rains, made us sink to the very girths of our horses. Still, order after order came for the troops to press forward, and every effort was made to obey the command.

It was five o'clock as we debouched into the plain, and beheld the fields whereon the battle had been contested; for already the enemy were retiring, and the French troops in eager pursuit. Behind, however, lay the town of Brienne, still held by the Russians, but now little better than a heap of smoking ruins, the tremendous fire of the French artillery having reduced the place to ashes. Conspicuous above all rose the dismantled walls of the ancient military college—the school where Napoleon had learned his first lesson in war—where first he essayed to point those guns which now with such fearful havoc he turned against itself.

What a strange, sad subject of contemplation for him who now gazed on it! On either side the fire of the artillery continued till nightfall; but the Russians still held the town. A few straggling shots closed the combat, and darkness now spread over the wide plain, save where the watch-fires marked out the position of the French troops. A sudden flash of lurid flame, however, threw its gleam over the town, and a wild cheer was heard rising above the clatter of musketry. It was a surprise party of grenadiers, who had forced their way into the grounds of the old château, where Blücher held his head-quarters. Louder and louder grew the firing, and a red glare in the dark sky told how the battle was raging.

Up that steep street, at the top of which the venerable château stood, poured the infantry columns in a run. The struggle was short. The dull sound of the Russian drum soon proclaimed a retreat; and a rocket darting through the black sky announced to the Emperor that the position had been won.

The next day the Emperor fixed his head-quarters at the château, and a battalion of the guard bivouacked in the park around

it. I had sent forward the letter to General Damrémont, and was wondering when, and in what terms, the reply might come, when the general himself rode up, accompanied by a single aide-de-camp.

"I have had the opportunity, sir, to speak of your conduct in the proper quarter," said he, courteously, "and the result is, your appointment as major of the Tenth Hussars, or, if you prefer it, the staff."

"Wherever, sir, my humble services can best be employed. I have no other wish."

"Then take the regimental rank," said he; "your brigade will see enough of hot work ere long. And now push forward to Mézières, where you'll find your regiment. They have received orders to march to-morrow, early."

I was not sorry to be relieved from the command of my irregular horse, who went by the title of "brigands" in the army generally; though, if truth were to be told, the reproach, on the score of honesty, came ill from those who conferred it. Still, it was a more gratifying position to hold a rank in a regiment of regular cavalry, and one whose reputation was second to none in the service.

"I wish to present myself to the colonel in command, sir," said I, addressing an officer, who, with two or three others, stood chatting at the door of a cottage.

"You'll find him here, sir," said he, pointing to the hut. But, as he spoke, the clank of a sabre was heard, and at the same instant a tall, soldier-like figure stooped beneath the low doorway, and came forth.

"The Colonel of the Tenth, I presume?" said I, handing the dispatch from General Damrémont.

"What! my old college friend and companion!" cried the Colonel, as he stepped back in amazement; "have I such good fortune as to see you in my regiment?"

"Can it be really so?" said I, in equal astonishment. "Are you Tascher?"

"Yes, my dear friend, the same Tascher you used to disarm so easily at college—a colonel at last. But why are you not at the head of a regiment long since? Oh! I forgot, though," said he, in some confusion; "I heard all about it. But, come in here—I've no better quarters to offer you, but, such as it is, make it yours."

My old companion of the Polytechnique was, indeed, little altered by time—careless, inconsiderate, and good-hearted as ever. He told me that he had only gained the command of the regiment a few weeks before; "and," added he, "if matters mend not soon, I am scarcely like to hold it much longer. The dispatches just received tell that the allies are concentrating at Trannes, and if so, we shall have a battle against overwhelming odds. No matter, Burke, you have got into a famous corps—they fight splendidly; and my excellent uncle, his majesty, loves to indulge their predilection."

I passed the day with Tascher, chatting over our respective fortunes; and in discussing the past and the future the greater part of the night went over. Before dawn, however, we were on the march toward Chaumière, whither the army was directed, and the Emperor himself then stationed.

It was the 1st of February, and the weather was dark, lowering, and gloomy. A cold wind drove the snowdrift in fitful gusts before it, and the deep roads made our progress slow and difficult. As our line of advance, however, was not that by which the other divisions were marching, it was already past noon before we knew that the enemy was but three leagues distant.

On advancing further, we heard the faint sounds of a cannonade, and then they grew louder and louder, till the whole air seemed tremulous with the concussion.

"A heavy fire, colonel," said a veteran officer of the regiment. "I should guess there are not less than eighty or a hundred guns engaged."

"Press on, men, press on!" cried Tascher. "When his majesty provides such music, it's scarcely polite to be late."

At a quick trot we came on, and about three o'clock debouched in the plain behind Oudinot's battalions of reserve, which were formed in two dense columns, about a hundred yards apart.

"Hussars to the front!" cried an aide-de-camp, as he galloped past, and waved his cap in the direction of the space between the columns.

In separate squadrons we penetrated through the defile, and came out on an open plain behind the center of the first line.

The ground was sufficiently elevated here, so that I could overlook the front line; but all I could see was a dense, heavy smoke, which intervened between the two positions, in the midst of which, and directly in front, a village lay. Toward this, three columns of infantry were converging, and around, the sounds of battle were raging. This was La Giberie. The hamlet formed the key of the French position, and had been twice carried by, and twice regained from, the allies. As I looked, the supporting columns halted, wheeled, and retired, while a tremendous shower of grape was poured upon them from the village, which now seemed to have been retaken by the allies.

"Cavalry to the front!" was now the order; and a force of six thousand sabres advanced from between the battalions, and formed for attack. It was Nansouty who led them, and his heavy cuirassiers were in the van; and then came the grenadiers à cheval; ours was the third, in column. As each regiment debouched, the word "Charge!" rang out, and forward we went. The snow drifting straight against us, we could see nothing, nor was I conscious of any check to our course, till the shaking of the vast column in front, and then the opening of the squadrons, denoted resistance, when suddenly a flash flared out, and a hurricane of cannon-shot tore through our dense files. Then I knew that we were attacking a battery of guns, and not till then. Mad cheers, and cries of wounded men, burst forth upon the air, with the clashing din of sabres and small-arms. The mass of cavalry appeared to heave and throb like some great monster in its agony. The trumpet to retreat sounded, and we galloped back to our lines, leaving about five hundred dead behind us, on a field where I had not yet seen the enemy. Meanwhile the Russians were assembling a mighty force around the village, for now the cannonade opened with tenfold vigor in front, and fresh guns were called up to reply to the fire. Hitherto all was shrouded in the blue smoke of the artillery, and the dense flakes of the snowdrift, when suddenly a storm of wind swept past, carrying with it both sleet and smoke, and now, within less than five hundred yards, we beheld the allied armies in front of us. Two of the three villages, which formed our advanced position, already had been carried, and toward the third, La Rothière, they were advancing quickly.

Ney's corps, ordered up to its defense, rushed boldly on, and the clattering musketry announced that they were engaged, while twelve guns were moved up, in full gallop, to their support, and opened their fire at once. Scarce had they done so, when a wild hurrah was heard, and, like a whirlwind, a vast mass of cavalry, the cossacks of the Don and the Uhlans of the South, commingled and mixed, bear down on the guns. The struggle is for life or death. No quarter given. Ney recalls his columns, and the guns are lost.

"Who shall bring the Emperor the tidings?" said Tascher, as his voice trembled with excitement. "I'd rather storm the battery single-handed than do it."

"He has seen worse than that already to-day," said an aide-de-camp at our side. "He has seen Lahorie's squadrons of the Dragoons of the Guard cut to pieces by the Russian horse."

"The Guard! the Guard!" repeated Tascher, in accents where doubt and despair were blended.

"There goes another battalion to certain death," muttered the aide-de-camp, as he pointed to a column of grenadiers emerging from the front line. "See, I knew it well, they are moving on La Rothière. But here comes the Emperor."

Before I could detect the figure among the crowd, the staff tore rapidly past, followed by a long train of cavalry moving toward the left.

"His favorite stroke," said Tascher: "an infantry advance, and a flank movement with cavalry."

And as the words escaped him, we saw the horsemen bearing down at top speed toward the village. But now we could look no longer; our brigade was ordered to support the attack, and we advanced at a trot. The enemy saw the movement, and a great mass of cavalry were thrown out to meet it.

"Here they come!" was the cry repeated by three or four together, and the earth shook as the squadrons came down. Our column dashed forward to meet them, when suddenly through the drift we beheld a mass of fugitives, scattered and broken, approaching. They were our own cavalry, routed in the attempt on the flank, now flying to the rear broken and disordered.

Before we could cover their retreat, the enemy were upon us. The shock was dreadful, and for some minutes carried all before it; but then rallying, the brave horsemen of France closed up and faced the foe. How vain all the efforts of the redoubted warrior of the Dnieper and the Wolga against the stern soldier of Napoleon. Their sabres flashed like lightning glances, and as fatally bore down on all before them; and as the routed squadrons fell back, the wild cheers of *Vive l'Empereur!* told that one great moment of success at least atoned for the misfortunes of the day.

"His majesty saw your charge, colonel," said a general officer to Tascher, as he rode back at the head of a squadron. "So gallant a thing as that never goes unrewarded."

Tascher's cheek flushed as he bowed in acknowledgment of the praise, but I heard him mutter to himself the same instant: "Too late—too late!" Fatal words they were—the presage of the mishap they threatened!

A great attack on La Rothière was now preparing. It was to be made by Napoleon's favorite maneuver of cavalry, artillery, and infantry combined, each supporting and

sustaining the other. Eighteen guns, with three thousand sabres, and two columns of infantry, numbering four thousand each, were drawn up in readiness for the moment to move. Ney received orders to lead them, and now they issued forth into the plain.

Our own impatience at not being of the number was quickly merged in intense anxiety for the result. It was a gorgeous thing, indeed, to see that mighty mass unraveling itself. The guns galloping madly to the front, supported on either flank by cavalry; while, masked behind, marched the black columns of infantry, their tall shakos nodding like the tree-tops of a forest. The snow was now falling fast, and the figures grew fainter and fainter, and all that remained within our view was the tail of the columns which were only disengaging themselves from the lines. A deafening cannonade opened from the allied artillery on the advance, unreplied to by our guns, which were ordered not to fire until withing half range of the enemy. Suddenly a figure is seen emerging from the heavy snowdrift at the full speed of his horse. Another and another follow him in quick succession. They make for the position of the Emperor. "What can it be?" cries each, in horrible suspense. "See! the columns have halted." Dreadful tidings! The guns are imbedded in the soft ground—the horses cannot stir them—one-half of the distance is scarcely won—and there they are beneath the withering cannonade of the allied guns, powerless and immovable. Cavalry are dismounted, and the horses harnessed to the teams—all in vain—the wheels sink deeper in the miry earth; and now the enemy have found out the range, and their shot are sweeping through the dense mass with frightful slaughter. Again the aides-de-camp hasten to the rear for orders; but Ney can wait no longer. He launches his cavalry at the foe, and orders up the infantry to follow. Meanwhile a great cloud of cavalry issues from the allied lines, and directs its course toward the flank of the column. The Emperor sees the danger, and dispatches one of his staff to prepare them to receive cavalry. Too late! too late! The snowdrift has concealed the advance, and the wild horsemen of the desert ride down on the brave ranks. Disorder and confusion ensue. The column breaks and scatters. The lancers pursue the fugitives through the plain, and before the very eyes of the Emperor, the Guard—*his* Guard—are sabred and routed.

"What is to become of our cavalry?" is now the cry; "for they have advanced unsupported against the village!" Dreadful moment of suspense! None can see them. The guns lie deserted, alike by friend and foe. Who dares approach them now? "They are cheering yonder," exclaimed an officer. "I hear them again."

"Hussars, to the front!" calls out Damrémont; "to your comrades' rescue! Men, yonder!" and he points in the direction of the village.

Like an eagle on the swoop, the swift squadrons skim the plain, and mount the slope beyond it. The drift clears, and what a spectacle is before us! The cavalry are dismounted; their horses, dead or dying, cumber the ground; the men, sabre in hand, have attacked the village by assault. Two of the enemy's guns are taken, and turned against them; and the walls are won in many places.

An opening in the inclosure of a farmyard admits our leading squadron; and in an instant we have taken them in flank and rear.

The Russians will neither retreat nor surrender; and the carnage is awful: for, though overpowered by numbers, they still continue the slaughter, and deal death while dying. The chief farm-house of the village has been carried by our troops; but the enemy still holds the garden. The low hedge offers a slight obstacle, and over it we dash, and down upon them ride the gallant Tenth with cheers of victory.

At this instant the crashing sound of cannon-shot among masonry is heard. It is the allied artillery, which, regardless of their own troops, has opened on the village. Every discharge tells; the range is at quarter distance; and whole files fall at every fire. The trumpet sounds a retreat; and I am endeavoring to collect my scattered followers, when my eye falls on the aiguillette of a general officer among the heap of dead; and at the same time I perceive that some old and gallant officer has fallen sword in hand, for his long white hair is strewn loosely across his face. I spring down from my horse and push back the snowy locks, and with a shriek of horror I recognize the friend of my heart, General d'Auvergne. I lift him in my arms, and search for the wound. Alas! a grape-shot had torn through his chest and cut asunder that noble heart, whose every beat was honor. Though still warm, no ray of life remained. The hand I had so often grasped in friendship, I wrung now in the last energy of despair, and fell upon the corpse in the agony of my grief.

The night was falling fast; all was still

around me; none remained near; the village was deserted by both. The deafening din of the cannonade continued; and at times some straggling shot crashed through the crumbling walls, and brought them thundering to the earth—but all had fled. By the pale crescent of a new moon I dug a grave beneath the ruined wall of the farm-house. The labor was long and tedious; but my breaking heart took no note of time. My task completed, I sat down beside the grave, and taking his now cold hand in mine, pressed it to my lips. Oh! could I have shared that narrow bed of clay, what rapture would it have brought to my sorrowing soul. I lifted the body and laid it gently in the earth; and as I arose, I found that something had entangled itself in my uniform, and held me. It seemed a locket, which he wore by a ribbon round his neck. I detached it from its place, and put it in my bosom. One lock of the snowy hair I severed from his noble head, and then covered up the grave.

"Adieu forever!" I muttered, as I wandered from the spot. It was the death of a true D'Auvergne—"on the field of battle."

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

THE BRIDGE OF MONTEREAU.

Ere I left the village, a shower of shells was thrown into it from the French lines, and in a few minutes the whole blazed up in a red flame, and threw a wide glare over the battle-field. Spurring my horse to his speed, I galloped onward, and now discovered that our troops were retiring in all haste. The allies had won the battle, and we were falling back on Brienne.

Leaving seventy-three guns in the hands of the enemy, above one thousand prisoners, and six thousand killed in battle, Napoleon drew off his shattered forces, and marched through the long darkness of a winter's night. Thus ended the battle of Arcis-sur-Aube, the most fatal for the hopes of the Emperor since the dreadful day of Leipzic.

From that hour fortune seemed to frown on those whose arms she had so often crowned with victory; and he himself, the mighty leader of so many conquering hosts, stood at the window of the château at Brienne the whole night long, dreading lest the enemy should be on his track. He whose battles were wont to be the ovations of a conqueror, now beheld with joy his masses retiring unpursued.

Why should I dwell on a career of disaster, or linger on the expiring moments of a mighty empire? Of what avail now are the reinforcements which arrived to our aid—the veteran legions of the Peninsula? The cry is ever—"Too late! too late!" Dreadful words, heard at every moment! —sad omens of an army devoted and despairing! From Brienne we retreat to Troyes—from thence to Bar-sur-Aube—ever nearer and nearer to that capital to which the allies tend with wild shouts of triumph. On the last day of February, our head-quarters are at Nogent—not thirty leagues from Paris—Nogent, with the great forest of Fontainebleau on its left, and Meaux, the ancient bishopric of the monarchy, on its right, and, behind that screen, Paris! Leaving Bourmont in command of the line which holds the Austrians in check, the Emperor himself hastens to oppose Blücher, the most intrepid and the most daring of all his enemies.

A cross-march in the depth of winter, with the ground covered with half-frozen snow, will bring him on the flank of the Prussian army. It is dared. Dangers and difficulties beset every step—the artillery are almost lost—the cavalry exhausted. But the cry of "The enemy!" rouses every energy; they debouch on the plain of Champ-Aubert, to fall on the moving column of the Russians under Alsufief. Glorious stroke of fate! Victory again caresses the spoiled child of fortune. The enemy is routed, and retires on Montmirail and Châlons. The advanced army of the Prussians hear the cannonade, and fall back to support the allies on Montmirail; but the Emperor already awaits them with the battalions of the old Old Guard, and another great battle ends in victory. Arcola and Rivoli were again remembered, and recalled by victories not less glorious, and once more hope returned to the ranks it seemed to have quitted forever. Another dreadful blow is aimed at Blücher's columns, and Marmont attacks them at Vaux-Champs, and the army of Silesia falls back beaten; and now the Emperor hastens toward Nogent, where he has left Bourmont, in front of the Austrians, "Too late! too late!" is again the cry. The columns of Oudinot and Victor are already in retreat. Schwartzenberg, with a force triple their own, advances on the plains of the Seine. The Cossacks bivouac in the forest of Fontainebleau. Staff-officers hurry onward with the news that the Emperor is approaching; the victorious army which had subdued Blücher is on the march, reinforced by the veteran cavalry of Spain and the

tried legions of the Peninsula. They halt, and form in battle. The allies arrest their steps at Nangis, and again are beaten. Nangis becomes another name of glory to the ears of Frenchmen.

Let me rest one instant in this rapid recital of a week whose great deeds not even Napoleon's life can show the equal of—the last flash of the lamp of glory ere it darkened forever. Three days had elapsed from the sad hour in which I laid my dearest friend in his grave, ere I opened the locket I had taken from his bosom. The wild work of war mingled its mad excitement in my brain with thoughts of deep sorrow, and I lived in a kind of fevered dream, and hurried from the affliction which beset me into the torrent of danger.

The gambler who cares not to win rarely loses—so he that seeks death in battle comes unscathed through every danger. Each day I threw myself headlong into some post where escape seemed scarcely possible, but recklessness has its own armor of safety.

On the field of Montmirail I was reported to the Emperor; and for an attack on the Austrian rear-guard at Melun made colonel of a cuirassier regiment on the field of battle. Such promotions reigned on every side. Hundreds were falling each day. Many regiments were commanded by officers of twenty-three or twenty-four years of age. Few expected to carry their new epaulettes beyond the engagement they gained them in. None believed the Empire itself could survive the struggle. Each played for a mighty stake. Few cared to outlive the game itself. The Emperor showered down favors on the heads which each battle-field laid low.

It was on the return from Melun I first opened the locket, which I continued to wear around my neck. In the full expansion of a momentary triumph, to see myself at the head of a regiment, I thought of him who would have participated in my pride. I was sitting in the doorway of a little cabaret on the roadside, my squadrons picketed around me, for a brief halt; and as my thoughts recurred to the brave D'Auvergne, I withdrew the locket from my bosom. It was a small oval case of gold, opening by a spring. I touched this, and, as I did so, the locket sprang open, and displayed before me a miniature of Marie de Meudon. Yes, beautiful as I had seen her in the forest of Versailles, her dark hair clustering around her noble brow, and her eyes, so full of tender loveliness, were there, shadowed by their deep fringes, as I remembered them. The lips were half parted, as though the artist had caught the speaking expression; and, as I gazed, I could fancy that voice, so musically sweet, still ringing in my ears. I could not look on it enough. The features recalled the scenes when first I met her, and the strong current of love against which so long I struggled and contended flowed on with tenfold force once more. Should we ever meet again—and how? were the questions which rushed to my mind, and to which hope and fear dictated the replies. The locket was a present from the Empress to the general—at least, so I interpreted an inscription on the back—and this—shall I confess it?—brought pleasure to my heart.

Like one whose bosom bore some wondrous amulet—some charm against the approach of danger—I now rode at the head of my gallant band. Life had grown dearer to me, without death becoming more dreaded. Her image next my heart made me feel as if I should combat beneath her very eyes; and I burned to acquit myself as became one who loved her. A wild, half frantic joy animated me as I went, and was caught by the gay companions around me.

At midnight a dispatch reached me, ordering me to hasten forward by a forced march to Montereau, the bridge of which town was a post of the greatest importance, and must be held against the Austrians till Victor could come up. We lost not a moment. It was a calm frosty night, with a bright moon, and we hastened along without halting. About an hour before daybreak we were met by a cavalry patrol, who informed us that Gérard and Victor had both arrived, but too late. Montereau was held by the Wurtemberg troops, who garrisoned the village, and defended the bridge with a strong force of artillery. Twice the French troops had been beaten back with tremendous loss, and all looked for the morrow, to renew the encounter. We continued our journey; and as the sun was rising, discovered, at a distance on the road beside the river, the mass of an infantry column. It was the Emperor himself, come up with the Guard, to attack the position.

Already the preparations for a fierce assault were in progress. A battery of twelve guns was posted on a height to command the bridge. Another, somewhat more distant, overlooked the village itself. Different bodies of infantry and cavalry were disposed wherever shelter presented itself, and ready for the command to move forward. The approach to the bridge was by a wide road, which lay for some distance along the river bank, and this was deeply channeled

by the enemy's artillery, which, stationed on and above the bridge, seemed to defy any attempt to advance.

Never, indeed, did an enterprise seem more full of danger. Every house which looked on the bridge was crenelated for small-arms, and garrisoned by sharpshooters—the fierce Jäger of Germany, whose rifles are the boast of the Vaterland. Cannon bristled along the heights, their wide mouths pointed to that devoted spot—already the grave of hundreds. Withdrawn under cover of a steep hill, my regiment was halted, with two other heavy cavalry corps, awaiting orders, and from the crest of the ridge I could observe the first movements of the fight.

As usual, a fierce cannonade was opened from either side, which, directed mainly against the artillery itself, merely resulted in dismantling a stray battery here and there, without further damage. At last the hoarse roll of a drum was heard, and the head of an infantry column was seen advancing up the road. They passed beneath a rock, on which a little group of officers were standing, and, as they went, a cheer of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" broke from them. I strained my eyes toward the place, for now I knew the Emperor himself was there. I could not, however, detect him in the crowd, who all waved their hats in encouragement to the troops.

On they went, descending a steep declivity of the high-road to the bridge. Suddenly the cannonade redoubles from the side of the enemy; the shot whistles through the air, while ten thousand muskets peal forth together. I rivet my eyes to watch the column, but what is my horror to perceive that none appear upon the ridge: the masses move up—they mount the ascent—they disappear behind it—and then are lost to sight forever. Not one escapes the dreadful havoc of the guns, which, from a distance of less than two hundred yards, enfilades the bridge.

But still they moved up. I could hear, from where I lay, the commands of the officers, as they gave the word to their companies. No fear nor hesitation there, they went to death. In less than fifteen minutes twelve hundred fell, dead or wounded, and at last the signal to fall back was given, and the shattered fragment of a column reeled back behind the ridge. Again the cannonade opened, and increasing on both sides, was maintained for above an hour, without intermission. During this, our guns did tremendous execution on the village, but without effecting anything of importance respecting the bridge.

The Grenadiers of the Guard had reached the scene of combat, by forced marches, from Nangis, and after a brief time to recruit their strength, were now ordered up. What a splendid force that massive column, conspicuous by their scarlet shoulder-knots and tall shakos of black bearskin! With what confidence they move! They halt beneath the rock—the Emperor is there too—and see, the officer who stands beside him descends from the height, and puts himself at the head of the column: it is Guyot, the colonel of the battalion—he waves his plumed hat in answer to the Emperor. That salute is the last he shall ever give on earth. The drums roll out; but the hoarse shout of "*En avant!*" drowns their tumult. On they rush—they are over the height—they disappear down the descent—and see! there they are on the bridge! "*Vive la Garde!*" shout ten thousand of their comrades, who watch them from the heights—"*Vive la Garde!*" is echoed from the tall cliffs beyond the river. The column moves on, and already reaches the middle of the bridge, when eighteen guns throw their fire into it; the blue smoke rolls down the rocky heights and settles on the bridge, broken here and there by flashes, like the forked gleam of lightning; the cloud passes over; the bridge is empty, save of dead and dying: the Grenadiers of the Guard are no more!

"What heart is his who gives his fellow-men to death like this!" was my exclamation as I witnessed this terrible struggle.

"The Cuirassiers and Carbineers of the Guard to form by threes in column of attack," shouted an aide-de-camp, as he rode up to where I lay; and no more thought had I of *his* motives, who now opened the path of glory to myself.

The squadrons were arrayed under cover of the ridge; the shot and shells from the enemy's batteries flew thickly over us—a presage of the storm we were about to meet.

The order to mount was given; and, as the men sprang into their saddles, a group of horsemen galloped rapidly round the angle of the cliff, and approached. One glance showed me it was the Emperor and his staff.

"Cuirassiers of the Guard," said he, as with raised chapeau he saluted his brave followers, "I have ordered two battalions to carry that bridge. They have failed. Let those who never fail advance to the storm. Montereau shall be inscribed on your helmets, men, when I see you on yonder heights. Go forward."

"Forward! forward!" shouted the

mailed ranks, half maddened by the exciting presence of Napoleon.

The force was formed in four separate columns of attack, the First Cuirassiers leading, followed by the Carbineers of the Guard, then my own regiment; and lastly, the Fourth, the corps of poor Pioche. What would I have given to know he was there; but there was not time for such inquiry now. The squadrons were ready, awaiting the moment to dash on A loud detonation of nigh twenty guns shook the earth; and in the smoke that rolled from them the bridge was concealed from view. A trumpet sounded, and the cry of "Charge!" followed. The mass sprang forth. What a cheer was theirs as they swept past! The cannonade opens again—the whole ground trembles. The musketry follows; and the clatter of a thousand sabres mingles with the war-cries of the combatants. It is but brief—the tumult is already subsiding; and now comes the order for the carbineers to move up. The cuirassiers have been cut to pieces. A few, mangled and bleeding, have reeled back behind the hill, but the regiment is gone.

"Where are the troops of Wagram and Eylau?" said the Emperor, in bitterness, as he saw the one broken squadron, sole remnant of a gallant corps, reeling, blood-stained and dying, to the rear. "Where is that cavalry that carried the Russian battery at Moskowa? You are not what you once were!"

This cruel taunt, at the very moment when the earth was steeped in the blood of his brave soldiers, was heard in mournful silence. None spoke a word, but with clenched lip and clasped hand sat waiting the command to charge. It came; but no cheer followed. The carbineers dashed on, prepared to die. What death so dreadful as the cold irony of Napoleon!

"*En avant!* cuirassiers of the 10th," called out the Emperor, as the last squadrons of the carbineers went by; "support your comrades. Follow up there, men of the Fourth. I must have that bridge."

And now the whole line moved up. As we turned the cliff in full trot, the scene of combat lay before us. The terrible bridge now actually choked up with dead and wounded—the very battlements strewn with corpses. In an instant the carbineers were upon it; and struggling through the mass of carnage, they rode onward. Like men goaded to despair, they pressed on, and actually reached the archway beyond, which, defended by a strong gate, closed up the way. Whole files now fell at every discharge; but others took their places, to fall as rapidly beneath the murderous musketry.

"A petard to the gate!" is now the cry—"a petard, and the bridge is won!"

Quick as lightning four Sappers of the Guard rush across the road and gain the bridge. They carry something between them, but soon are lost in the dense masses of the horse. The enemy's fire redoubles, the bridge crashes beneath the cannonade, when a loud shout is raised—

"Let the cavalry fall back."

A cheer of triumph breaks from the town as they behold the retiring squadrons. They know not that the petard is now attached to the gate, and that the horsemen are merely withdrawn for the explosion.

The bridge is cleared, and every eye is turned to watch the discharge which shall break the strong door, and leave the passage open. But unhappily the fuze has missed, and the great engine lies inert and inactive. What is to be done? The cavalry cannot venture to approach the spot, which at any moment may explode with ruin on every side; and thus the bridge is rendered impregnable by our own fault.

"Fatality upon fatality!" is the exclamation of Napoleon, as he heard the tidings. "This to the man who puts a match to the fuze!" said he, as he detaches the great cross of the Legion from his breast, and holds it aloft.

With one spring I jump from my saddle, and dash at the burning match a gunner is holding near me; a rush is made by several others; but I am fleetest of foot, and before they reach the road I am on the bridge. The enemy has not seen me, and I am half way across before a shot is aimed at me. Even then a surprise seems to arrest their fire, for it is a single ball whizzes past. I see the train; I kneel down; the fuze is faint and I stoop to blow it, and then my action is perceived, and a shattering volley sweeps the bridge. The high projecting parapet protects me, and I am unhurt. But the fuze will not take. Horrible moment of agonizing suspense—the powder is clotted with blood, and will not ignite. I remember that my pistols are in my belt, and, detaching one, I draw the charge, and scatter the fresh powder along the line. My shelter still saves me, though the balls are crashing like hail around me. It takes, it takes, the powder spits and flashes, and a loud cry from my comrades burst out, "Come back! come back!"

Forgetting everything in the intense anxiety of the moment, I spring to my legs; but scarce is my head above the parapet

when a bullet strikes me in the chest. I fall covered with blood.

"Save him!—save him!" is the cry of a thousand voices; and a rush is made upon the bridge. The musketry opens on these brave fellows, and they fall back wounded and discouraged. Crouching beneath the parapet, I try to stanch my wound, but the blood is gushing in torrents, my senses are reeling, the objects around grow dimmer, the noise seems fainter; but suddenly I feel a hand upon my neck, and at the same instant a flask is pressed to my lips. I drink, and the wine rallies me; the bleeding is stopped, my eyes open again, and dare I trust their evidence? Who is it that now shelters beneath the parapet beside me? Minette the Vivandière! her handsome face flushed, her eyes wild with excitement, and her brown hair in great tangled masses on her back and shoulders.

"Minette, is it indeed thee?" said I, pressing her hand to my lips.

"I knew you at the head of your regiment, some days ago, and I thought we should meet ere long. But lie still; we are safe here. The fire slackens too; they have fallen back since the gate was forced."

"Is the gate forced, Minette?"

"Ay, the petard has done its work, but the columns are not come up. Lie still till they pass."

"Dear, dear girl, what a brave heart is thine!" said I, gazing on her beautiful features, tenfold handsomer from the expression which her heroism had lent them.

"You would surely adventure as much for me," said she, half timidly, as she pressed her handkerchief against the wound, which still oozed blood.

The action entangled her fingers in a ribbon. She tried to extricate them, and the locket fell out, opening by accident at the same moment. With a convulsive energy she clasped the miniature in both hands, and riveted her eyes upon it. The look was wild as that of madness itself, and her features grew stiff as she gazed, while the pallor of death overspread them. It was scarce the action of a second; in another, she flung back the picture from her and sprang to her feet. One glance she gave me, fleeting as the lightning flash, but how full of storied sorrow! The moment after she was in the middle of the bridge. She waved her cap wildly above her head, and beckoned to the column to come on. A cheer answered her. The mass rushed forward, the fire again pealed forth, a shriek pierced the din of all the battle, and the leading files halt. Four grenadiers fall back to the rear, carrying a body between them. It is the corpse of Minette the Vivandière, who has received her death-wound.

The same evening saw me the occupant of a bed in the ambulance of the Guard. Dreadful as the suffering of my wound was, I carried a deeper one within my heart.

"The Emperor has given you his own cross of the Legion, sir," said the surgeon, endeavoring to rally me from a dejection whose source he knew not.

"He has made him a general of brigade, too," said a voice behind him.

It was General Letort who spoke; he had that moment come from the Emperor with the tidings. I buried my head beneath my hands, and felt as though my heart was bursting.

"That was a gallant girl, that vivandière," said the rough old General. "She must have had a soldier's heart within that corsage. *Parbleu!* I'd rather not have another such in my brigade, though, after what happened this evening."

"What is it you speak of?" said I, faintly.

"They gave her a military funeral this evening, the Fourth Cuirassiers. The Emperor gave his permission, and sent General Degeon of the staff to be present. And when they placed her in the grave, one of the soldiers, a corporal I believe, kneeled down to kiss her, before they covered in the earth, and when he had done so he lay slowly down on his face on the grass. 'He has fainted,' said one of his comrades; and they turned him on his back. *Morbleu!* it was worse than that—he was stone dead! One of the very finest fellows of the regiment."

"Yes—yes, I know him," muttered I, endeavoring to smother my emotion.

The General looked at me, as if my mind was wandering, and briefly added:

"And so they laid them in the same grave, and the same fusillade gave the last honors to both."

"Your story has affected my patient over much, general," said the doctor. "We must leave him to himself for some time."

CHAPTER LXXXV.

FONTAINEBLEAU.

An order from Berthier, written at the command of the Emperor, admitted me into the ancient palace of Fontainebleau, where I lay for upward of two months under my wound. Twice had fever nearly

brought me to the grave; but youth and unimpaired health succored me, and I rallied through all. A surgeon of the staff accompanied me, and by his kind companionship, not less than by his skill, did I recover from an illness where sorrow had made an iron inroad not less deep than disease.

In my little chamber, which looked out upon the court-yard of the palace, I passed my days, thinking over the past and all its vicissitudes. Each day we learned some intelligence either from the seat of war or from Paris—defeat in one, treason and disaffection in the other, were rapidly hastening the downfall of the mightiest empire the genius of man had ever constructed. Champ-Aubert, Montmirail, and Montereau, great victories as they were, retarded not the current of events. "The week of glory" brought not hope to a cause predestined to ruin.

It was the latter end of March. For some days previous the surgeon had left me to visit an outpost ambulance near Melun, and I was alone. My strength, however, enabled me to sit up at my window; and even in this slight pleasure my wearied senses found enjoyment, after the tedious hours of a sick-bed. The evening was calm, and, for the season, mild and summer-like. The shrubs were putting forth their first leaves, and around the marble fountains the spring flowers were already showing signs of blossom. The setting sun made the tall shadows of the ancient beech-trees stretch across the wide court, where all was still as at midnight. No inhabitant of the palace was about—not a servant moved, not a footstep was heard. It was a moment of such perfect stillness as leads the mind to reverie; and my thoughts wandered away to that distant time when gay cavaliers and stately dames trod those spacious terraces; when tales of chivalry and love mingled with the plashing sounds of those bright fountains, and the fair moon looked down on more lovely forms than even those graceful marbles around.

I fancied the time when the horn of the chasseur was heard echoing through those vast courts, its last notes lost in the merry voices of the *cortége* round the monarch. And then I called up the brilliant group, with caracoling steeds and gay housings, proudly advancing up that great avenue to the royal entrance, and pictured the ancient ceremonial that awaited his coming—the descendant of a long line of kings. The frank and kingly Francis, the valiant Henry IV., the "Grand Monarch" himself—all passed in review before my mind as once they lived, and moved, and spoke in that stately pile.

The sun had set, the mingled shadows threw their gloom over the wide court, and one wing of the palace was in deep shade, when suddenly I heard the roll of wheels and the tramp of horses on the distant road. I listened attentively. They were coming near. I could hear the tread of many together; and my practiced ear could detect the clank of dragoons, as their sabres and sabretasches jingled against the horses' flanks. "Some hurried news from the Emperor," thought I; "perhaps some marshal wounded, and about to be conveyed to the palace." The same instant the guard at the distant entrance beat to arms, and an equipage drawn by six horses dashed in at full gallop. A second followed as fast, with a peloton of dragoons at the side. My anxiety increased. "What if it were the Emperor himself!" thought I; but as the idea flashed across me, it yielded at once, on seeing that the carriages did not draw up at the grand stair, but passed on to a low and private door at the distant wing of the palace.

The bustle of the *cortége* arriving was but a moment's work. The carriages moved rapidly away, the dragoons disappeared, and all was as still as before, leaving me to ponder over the whole, and actually ask myself could it have been reality? I opened my door to listen, but not a sound awoke the echo of the long corridors. One could have fancied that no living thing was beneath that wide roof, so silent was all around.

A strange feeling of anxiety—the dread of something undefined, I knew not what, or whence coming—was over me, and my nerves, long irritable from illness, became now jarringly sensitive, and banished all thought of sleep. Wild fancies and incoherent ideas crossed my mind, and made me restless and uneasy. I felt, too, as if the night were unusually close and sultry, and I opened my window to admit the air. Scarcely had I drawn the curtain aside, when my eye rested on a long line of light, that, issuing from a window on the ground-floor of the palace, threw its bright gleam far across the court-yard.

It was in the same wing where the carriages drew up: it must be so—some officer of rank, wounded in a late battle, was brought there. "Poor fellow!" thought I, "what suffering may he be enduring amid all the peacefulness and calm of this tranquil spot! Who can it be?" was the ever-recurring question to my mind; for

my impression had already strengthened itself to a conviction.

The hours went on, the light shone steadily as at first, and the stillness was unbroken. Wearied with thinking, and half forgetful of my weakness, I tottered along the corridor, descended the grand stair, and passed out into the court. How refreshing did the night air feel—how sweet the fair odors of the spring, as, wafted by the motion of the *jet d'eau*, they were diffused around. The first steps of recovery from severe sickness have a strange thrill of youthfulness about them. Our senses seem once more to revel in the simple enjoyments of early days, and to feel that their greatest delight lies in the associations which gave pleasure to childhood. Weaned from the world's contentions, we seem to have been lifted, for the time, above the meaner cares and ambitions of life, and love to linger a little longer in that ideal state of happiness calm thoughts bestow; and thus the interval that brings back health to the body restores freshness to the heart; and, purified in thought, we come forth, hoping for better things, and striving for them with all the generous ardor of early years.

How happy was I as I wandered in that garden—how full of gratitude to feel the current of health once more come back in all my veins—the sense of enjoyment which flows from every object of the fair world restored to me, after so many dangers and escapes. As I moved slowly through the terraced court, my eye was constantly attracted to the small and star-like light which glimmered through the darkness; and I turned to it at last, impelled by a feeling of undefinable sympathy. Following a narrow path, I drew near to a little garden, which once contained some rare flowers. They had been favorites of poor Josephine in times past; but the hour was over in which that gave them a claim to care and attention; and now they were wild grown and tangled, and almost concealed the narrow walk which led to the doorway. I reached this at length; and as I stood, the faint moonlight, slanting beneath a cloud, fell upon a bright and glistening object almost at my feet. I stepped back, and looked fixedly at it. It was the figure of a man sleeping across the entrance of the porch. He was dressed in Mameluke fashion; but his gay trappings and rich costume were travel-stained and splashed. His unsheathed scimitar lay grasped in one hand, and a Turkish pistol seemed to have fallen from the other.

Even by the imperfect light I recognized Rustan, the favorite Mameluke of the Emperor, who always slept at the door of his tent and his chamber—his chosen body-guard. Napoleon must then be here. His equipage it was which arrived so hurriedly—his the light which burned through the stillness of the night. As these thoughts followed fast on each other, I almost trembled to think how nearly I had ventured on his presence, where none dared to approach unbidden. To retire quickly and noiselessly was now my care; but my first step entangled my foot. I stumbled. The noise awoke the sleeping Turk; and with a loud cry for the guard he sprang to his feet.

"*La garde!*" called he a second time, forgetting in his surprise that none was there; but then with a spring he seized me by the arm, and, as his shining weapon gleamed above my head, demanded who I was, and for what purpose there.

The first words of my reply were scarcely uttered when a small door was opened within the vestibule, and the Emperor appeared. Late as was the hour, he was dressed, and even wore his sword at his side.

"What means this—who are you, sir?" was the quick, sharp question he addressed to me.

A few words—the fewest in which I could convey it—told my story, and expressed my sorrow that, in the sick man's fancy of a moonlight walk, I should have disturbed his majesty.

"I thought, sire," added I, "that your majesty was many a league distant with the army—"

"There is no army, sir," interrupted he, with a rapid gesture of his hand; "to-morrow there will be no emperor. Go, sir, go, while it is yet the time. Offer your sword and your services where so many others, more exalted than yourself, have done. This is the day of desertion—see that you take advantage of it."

"Had my name and rank been less humble, they would have assured your majesty how little I merited this reproach."

"I am sorry to have offended you," replied he, in a voice of inexpressible softness. "You led the assault at Montereau? I remember you now. I should have given you your brigade, had I—" He stopped here suddenly while an expression of suffering passed across his pale features; he rallied from it, however, in an instant, and resumed: "I should have known you earlier—it is too late! Adieu!"

He inclined his head slightly as he spoke, and extended his hand. I pressed it fer-

vently to my lips, and would have spoken, but I could not. The moment after he was gone.

It is too late!—too late!—the same terrible words which were uttered beneath the blackened walls of Moscow, repeated at every new disaster of that dreadful retreat, now spoken by him whose fortune they predicted. Too late!—the exclamation of the proud marshal, harassed by unsuccessful efforts to avert the destiny he saw inevitable. Too late!—the cry of the wearied soldier. Too late!—the fatal expression of the Czar when the brave and faithful Macdonald urged the succession of the King of Rome and the regency of the Empress.

Wearied with a wakeful night, I fell into a slumber toward morning, when I started suddenly at the roll of drums in the court beneath. In an instant I was at my window. What was my astonishment to perceive that the court-yard was filled with troops. The Grenadiers of the Guard were ranged in order of battle, with several squadrons of the *chasseurs*, and the horse-artillery; while a staff of general officers stood in the midst, among whom I recognized Belliard, Montesquieu, and Turenne—great names, and worthy to be recorded for an act of faithful devotion. The Duc de Bassano was there too, in deep mourning; his pale and care-worn face attesting the grief within his heart. The roll of the drums continued—the deep, unbroken murmur of the salute went on from one end of the line to the other. It ceased, and ere I could question the reason, the various staff-officers became uncovered, and stood in attitudes of respectful attention, and the Emperor himself slowly, step by step, descended the wide stair of the "Cheval Blanc," as the grand terrace was styled, and advanced toward the troops. At the same instant the whole line presented arms, and the drums beat the salute. They ceased, and Napoleon raised his hand to command silence, and throughout that crowded mass not a whisper was heard.

I could perceive that he was speaking, but the words did not reach me. Eloquent and burning words they were, and to be recorded in history to the remotest ages. I now saw that he had finished, as General Petit sprang forward with the eagle of the First Regiment of the Guards, and presented it to him. The Emperor pressed it fervently to his lips, and then threw his arms around Petit's neck, while suddenly disengaging himself, he took the tattered flag that waved above him and kissed it twice. Unable to bear up any longer, the worn, hard-featured veterans sobbed aloud like children, and turned away their faces to conceal their emotion. No cry of *Vive l'Empereur* resounded now through those ranks where each had willingly shed his heart's blood for him. Sorrow had usurped the place of enthusiasm, and they stood overwhelmed by grief.

A tall and soldier-like figure, with head uncovered, approached the Emperor, and said a few words. Napoleon waved his hand toward the troops, and from the ranks many rushed toward him, and fell on their knees before him. He passed his hand across his face and turned away. My eyes grew dim, a misty vapor shut out every object, and I felt as though the very lids were bursting. The great tramp of horses startled me, and then came the roll of wheels. I looked up; an equipage was passing from the gate, a peloton of dragoons escorted it; a second followed at full speed; the colonels formed their men, the word to march was given, the drums beat out, the grenadiers moved on, the chasseurs succeeded, and last the artillery rolled heavily up; the court was deserted, not a man remained—all, all were gone. The Empire was ended, and the Emperor, the mighty genius who created it, on his way to exile.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

THE CONCLUSION.

FRANCE never appeared to less advantage in the eyes of Europe than at the period I speak of. Scarcely had the proud star of Napoleon set, when the whole current of popular favor flowed along with those whom, but a few days before, they accounted their greatest enemies. The Russians and the Prussians, whom they lampooned and derided, they now flattered and fawned on. They deemed no adulation servile enough to lay at the feet of their conquerors—not esteeming the exaltation of their victors sufficient, unless purchased at the sacrifice of their own honor as a nation.

The struggle was no longer who should be first in glory, but who foremost in desertion of him and his fortunes whose word had made them. The marshals he had created, the generals he had decorated, the ministers and princes he had endowed with wealth and territory, now turned from him in his hour of misfortune, to court the favor of one, against whom every act of their former lives was directed.

These men, whose very titles recalled the fields of glory to which he led them, now

hastened to the Tuileries to proffer an allegiance to a monarch they neither loved nor respected. Sad and humiliating spectacle! The long pent-up hatred of the royalists found a natural vent in this moment of triumphant success. Chateaubriand, Constant, and Madame de Staël led the way to those declarations of the press, which denounced Napoleon as the greatest of earthly tyrants, and inveighed even against his greatness and his genius, as though malevolence could produce oblivion.

All Paris was in a fervent of excitement; not the troubled agitation of a people whose capital owned the presence of a conquering army, but the tumultuous joy of a nation intoxicated with pleasure. Fêtes and balls, gay processions, and public demonstrations of rejoicing, met one everywhere; and ingenuity was taxed to invent flatteries for the very nations whom, but a week past, they scoffed at as barbarians and Scythians.

Sickened and disgusted with the fickleness of mankind, I knew not where to turn. My wound had brought on a low, lingering fever, accompanied by extreme debility, increased, in all likelihood, by the harassing reflections every object around suggested. I could not venture abroad without meeting some evidence of that exuberant triumph by which treachery hopes to cover its own baseness; besides, the reputation of being a Napoleonist was now a mark for insult and indignity, from those who never dared to avow an opinion until the tide of fortune had turned in their favor. The white cockade had replaced the tricolor, every emblem of the Empire was abolished, and that uniform, to wear which was once a mark of honorable distinction, was now become a signal for insult.

I was returning one evening from a solitary ramble in the neighborhood of Paris—for, by some strange fatality, I could not tear myself away from the scenes to which the most eventful portions of my life were attached—and at length reached the Boulevard Montmartre, just as the leading squadrons of a cavalry regiment were advancing up the wide thoroughfare. I had hitherto avoided every occasion of witnessing any military display which should recall the past; but now the rapid gathering of the crowd to see the soldiers pass prevented my escape, and I was obliged to wait patiently until the cortége should move forward.

They came on in dense column, the brave Chasseurs of the Guard—the bronzed warriors of Jena and Wagram—but to my eyes they seemed sterner and sadder than their wont, and heeded not the loud vivas of the mob around them. Where were their eagles? Alas! the white banner that floated over their heads was a poor substitute for the proud ensign they had so often followed to victory.

And here were the dragoons—old Kellermann's brave troopers: their proud glances were changed to a mournful gaze upon that crowd whose cheers they once felt proud of; and there, the artillery, that glorious corps which he loved so well, did not the roll of their guns sound sorrowfully on the ear! They passed, and then came on a strange cortége of mounted cavaliers, old and withered men, in uniforms of quaint antique fashion; their chapeaux decorated with great cockades of white ribbon, and their sword-knots garnished with similar ornaments. The order of St. Louis glittered on each breast, and in their bearing you might read the air of men who were enjoying a long-wished-for and long-expected triumph. These were the old seigneurs of the monarchy, and truly they were not wanting in that look of nobility their ancient blood bestowed. Their features were proud; their glance elated. Their very port and bearing spoke that consciousness of superiority, to crush which had cost all the horrors and bloodshed of a terrible revolution. How strange! it seemed as if many of their faces were familiar to me. I knew them well. But where and how, my memory could not trace. Yes, now I could recall it: they were the frequenters of the old "Pension of the Rue de Mi-Carême," the same men I had seen in their day of adversity, bearing up with noble pride against the ills of fortune. There they were, reveling in the long-sought-after restoration of their former state. Were they not more worthy of admiration in their hour of patient and faithful watching, than in this the period of their triumph?

The pressure of the crowd obliged the cavalcade to halt; and now the air resounded with the cries of "*Vive le Roi!*" the long-forgotten cheer of loyalty. Thousands re-echoed the shout, and the horsemen waved their hats in exultation. "*Vive le Roi!*" cried the mob, as though the voices had not called "*Vive l'Empereur!*" but yesterday.

"Down with the Napoleonist—down with him!" screamed a savage-looking fellow, who, jammed up in the crowd, pointed toward me, as I stood a mere spectator of the scene.

"Cry *Vive le Roi!* at once," whispered a voice near me, "or the consequences may be serious. The mob is ungovernable at a moment like this."

A dozen voices shouted out at the same time, "Down with him! Down with him!"

"Off with your hat, sir," said a rude-looking fellow beside me, as he raised his hand to remove it.

"At your peril!" said I, as I clenched my hand, and prepared to strike him down the moment he should touch me. The words were not well uttered, when the crowd closed on me, and a hundred arms were stretched out to attack me. In vain all my efforts to resist. My hat was torn from my head, and, assailed on every side, I was dragged into the middle of the street, amid wild cries of vengeance and taunting insults. It was then, as I lay overcome by numbers, that a loud cry to fall back issued from the cavalcade, and a horseman, sword in hand, dashed upon the mob, slashing on every side as he went, mounted on a high-mettled horse. He cleared the dense mass with the speed of lightning, and drove back my assailants.

"Catch my horse's mane," said he hurriedly. "Hold fast for a few seconds, and you are safe."

Following the advice, I held firmly by the long mane of his charger, while clearing away the mob on either side, he protected me by his drawn sabre above my head.

"Safe this time!" said he, as we arrived within the ranks; and then turning round, so as to face me, added, "Safe! and my debt acquitted. You saved my life once, and though the peril seemed less imminent now, trust me, yours had not escaped the fury of that multitude without me."

"What! Henri de Beauvais—do we meet again?"

"Yes; but with altered fortune, Burke. Our king, as the words of our *Garde Ecossaise* song says, our king has 'got his own again.' The day of loyalty has again dawned on France, and a grateful people may carry their enthusiasm for the restoration, even as far as vengeance on their opponents, and yet not merit much reproach. But no more of this. We can be friends now; or if not, it must be your fault."

"I am not too proud, De Beauvais, either to accept or acknowledge a favor at your hands."

"Then we are friends," said he, joyfully; "and in the name of friendship, let me beg of you to place this *cordon* in your hat." And so saying, he detached the cockade of white ribbon he wore from his own, and held it toward me. "Well, then, at least remove the tricolor. It can but expose you to insult. Remember, Burke, its day is over."

"I am not likely to forget it," replied I sadly.

"Monsieur le Colonel, his royal highness wishes to speak with you," said an aide-de-camp, riding up beside De Beauvais's horse.

"Take care of this gentleman for me," said De Beauvais, pointing to me; and then, wheeling round his horse, he galloped at full speed to the rear.

"I will spare you all trouble on my account, sir," said I. "My way lies yonder, and at present I see no obstacle to my pursuing it."

"Let me at least send an escort with you."

I thanked him, and declined the offer, and leaving the ranks of the procession, mingled with the crowd, and in a few minutes after reached my hotel without further molestation.

The hour was come, I saw plainly, in which I must leave France. Not only was every tie which bound me to that land severed, but to remain was only to oppose myself singly to the downward current of popular opinion which now threatened to overturn every landmark and vestige of the Empire. Up to this moment, I never confessed to my heart with what secret hope I had prolonged each day of my stay—how I cherished within me the expectation that I should once again, though but for an instant, see her who lived in all my thoughts, and, unknown to myself, formed the mainspring of all my actions.

This hope only became confessed when about to leave me forever.

As I busied myself in the preparations for departure, a note arrived from De Beauvais, stating that he desired particularly to see and confer with me that same evening, and requesting me on no account to be from home, as his business was most pressing. I felt little curiosity to know to what he might allude, and saw him enter my room some hours later without a single particle of anxiety as to his communication.

"I am come, Burke," said he, after a few common-places had been exchanged between us—"I am come, Burke, on a mission which I hope you will believe the sincerest regard for you has prompted me to undertake, and which, whatever objections it may meet with from you, none can arise, I am certain, on the score of his fidelity who now makes this proposition to you. To be brief. The Count d'Artois has sent me to offer you your grade and rank in the army of his Majesty Louis XVIII. Your last gazette was as colonel; but there is a rumor you should have received your ap-

pointment as general of brigade. There will be little difficulty in arranging your brevet on that understanding; for your services, brief as they were, have not been unnoticed. Marshal Ney himself bears testimony to your conduct at Montereau; and your name twice occurs on the list of the minister of war for promotion. Strange claims these, you will say, to recompense from the rightful sovereign of France, gained as they were in the service of the usurper; but it is the prerogative of legitimacy to be great and nobleminded, and to recognize true desert wherever it occurs. Come, what say you? Does this proposal meet your wishes?"

"If to surpass my expectations, and flatter my pride, were to convince my reason, and change my estimation of what is loyal and true, I should say, 'Yes, De Beauvais, the proposition does meet my wishes.' But not so. I wore these epaulettes first in my admiration of him whose fortunes I have followed to the last. My pride—my glory, were to be his soldier. That can be no longer, and the sword I drew in his cause shall never be unsheathed in another's."

"Are you ignorant that such arguments apply with equal force to all those great men who have, within these few weeks past, sworn allegiance to his majesty? What say you to the list of marshals, not one of whom has refused the graciously offered favor of his majesty? Are Ney, Soult, Augereau, Macdonald, and Marmont, nothing as examples?"

"I will not say so, De Beauvais—but this I will say, they had had both more respect and esteem from me had they done otherwise. If they were true to the Emperor, they can scarce be loyal to the king."

"Can you not distinguish between the forced services exacted by a tyrant and the noble duty rendered to a rightful sovereign?"

"I can better estimate the fascinations which lead men to follow a hero, than to be the parade-soldier around the gilded gates of a palace."

De Beauvais's cheek flashed scarlet, and his voice was agitated, as he replied,

"The nobles of France, sir, have shown themselves as high in deeds of chivalry and heroism as they have ever been in the accomplishments of true-born gentlemen."

"Pardon me, De Beauvais. I meant no imputation of them and their motives. There is every reason why you and your gallant companions should enjoy the favors of that crown your efforts have placed upon the head of the King of France. Your true and fitting station is around the throne your bravery and devotion have restored. But as for us—we who have fought and marched—have periled limb and life to raise the fortune and elevate the glory of him who was the enemy of that sovereign—how can we be participators in the triumph we labored to avert, and rejoice in a consummation we would have died rather than witnessed?"

"But it has come. The fates have decided against you. The cause you would serve is not merely unfortunate—it is extinct. The Empire has left no banner behind it. Come, then, and rally round one whose boast it is to number among its followers the high-born and the noble—to assert the supremacy of rank and worth above the claim of the base and low."

"I cannot—I must not."

"At least, you will wait on the Count d'Artois. You must see his royal highness, and thank him for his gracious intentions."

"I know what that means, De Beauvais. I have heard that few can resist the graceful fascinations of the prince's manner. I shall certainly not fear to encounter them, however dangerous to my principles."

"But not to refuse his royal highness," said he, quickly. "I trust you will not do that."

"You would not have me yield to the flattery of a prince's notice what I refuse to the solicitations of a friend—would you?"

"And such is your intention—your fixed intention?"

"Undoubtedly it is."

De Beauvais turned away impatiently, and leaned on the window for some minutes. Then, after a pause, and in a slow and measured voice, added,

"You are known to the Court, Burke, by other channels than those I have mentioned. Your prospects of advancement would be most brilliant, if you accept this offer. I scarcely know to what they may not aspire. Reflect for a moment or two. There is no desertion—no falling off here. Remember that the Empire was a vision, and like a dream it has passed away. Where there is no cause there can be no fealty."

"It is but a sorry memory, De Beauvais, that only retains while there are benefits to receive. Mine is a more tenacious one."

"Then my mission is ended," cried he, taking up his hat. "I may mention to his royal highness that you intend returning to England—that you are indisposed to service at present. It is unnecessary to state more accurately the views you entertain?"

"I leave the matter completely to your discretion."

"Adieu, then. Our roads lie widely apart, Burke; and I for one regret it deeply. It only remains that I should give you this note, which I promised to deliver into your hands in the event of your declining to accept the prince's offer."

He blushed deeply, as he placed a small sealed note in my fingers; and, as if anxious to get away, pressed my hand hurriedly, and left the room.

My curiosity to learn the contents of the billet made me tear it open at once; but it was not before I had perused it several times that I could credit the lines before me. They were but few, and ran thus:

"DEAR SIR,—May I request the honor of a visit from you this evening at the Hôtel de Grammont. Truly yours,

"MARIE D'AUVERGNE,
née DE MEUDON.

"Colonel Burke."

How did I read these lines over again and again—now interpreting them as messengers of future hope, now fearing they might exclude every ray of it forever. One solution recurred to me at every moment, and tortured me to the very soul. Her family had all been royalists. The mere accidents of youth had thrown her brother into the army and herself into the Court of the Empire, where personal devotion and attachment to the Empress had retained her. What if she should exert her influence to induce me to accept the prince's offer? How could I resist a request, perhaps an entreaty, from her? The more I reflected over it, the more firmly this opinion gained ground with me, and the more deeply did I grieve over a position environed by such difficulty; and, ardently as I longed for the moment of meeting her once more, the desire was tempered by a fear that the meeting should be our last.

The eventful moment of my destiny arrived, and found me at the door of the Hôtel de Grammont. A valet in waiting for my arrival conducted me to a *salon*, saying the countess would appear in a few moments.

What an anxious interval was that. I tried to occupy myself with the objects around, and distract my attention from the approaching interview; but every sound startled me, and I turned at each instant toward the door by which I expected her to enter.

The time appeared to drag heavily on; minutes became like hours; and yet no one appeared. My impatience had reached its climax, when I heard my name spoken in a low, soft voice. I turned, and she was before me.

She was dressed in deep mourning, and looked paler, perhaps thinner, than I had ever seen her—but not less beautiful. Whether prompted by her own feelings at the moment, or called up by my unconsciously fixed look, she blushed deeply as our eyes met.

"I was about to leave France, colonel," said she, as soon as we were seated, "when I heard from my cousin, De Beauvais, that you were here, and delayed my departure to have the opportunity of seeing you."

She paused here, and drew a deep breath to continue; but, leaning her head on her hand, she seemed to have fallen into a reverie for some minutes, from which she started suddenly, by saying—

"His royal highness has offered you your grade in the service, I understand?"

"Yes, madame; so my friend De Beauvais informs me."

"And you have refused—is it not so?"

"Even so, madame."

"How is this, sir? Are you so weary of a soldier's life that you would leave it thus early?"

"This was not the reason, madame."

"You loved the Emperor, sir," said she, hastily, and with a tone of almost passionate eagerness, "even as I loved my dear, kind mistress; and you felt allegiance to be too sacred a thing to be bartered at a moment's notice. Is this the true explanation?"

"I am proud to say, you have read my motives—such were they."

"Why are there not many more to act thus?" cried she, vehemently; "why do not the great names *he* made glorious, become greater by fidelity than ever they were by heroism? There was one, sir, who, had he lived, had given this example to the world."

"True, most true, madame; but was not his fate happier than to have survived for this?"

A long pause, unbroken by a word on either side, followed; when at last she said,

"I had left with De Beauvais some few relics of my dear brother, hoping you would accept them for his sake. General d'Auvergne's sword—the same he wore at Jena—he desired might be conveyed to you, when you left the service. These, and this ring," said she, endeavoring to withdraw a rich brilliant from her finger, "are the few souvenirs I would ask you to

keep for their sakes, and for mine. You mean to return to England, sir?"

"Yes, madame; that is, I had intended —I know not now whither I shall go. Country has few ties for one like me."

"I, too, must be a wanderer," said she, half musingly, while still she endeavored to remove the ring from her finger. "I find," said she, smiling, "I must give you another keepsake — this will not leave me."

"Give it me, then, where it is," said I. "Yes, Marie, the devotion of a heart, wholly yours, should not go unrewarded. To you I owe all that my life has known of happiness; to memory of you, every high and noble hope. Let me not, after years of such affection, lose the guiding star of my existence—all that I have lived for—all that I love."

These words, poured forth with all the passionate energy which a last hope inspires, were followed by a story of my long-concealed love. I know not how incoherently the tale was told; I cannot say how often I interrupted my own recital by some appeal to the past—some half-uttered hope, that she had seen the passion which burned within me. I can but remember the bursting feeling of my bosom, as she placed her hand in mine, and said, "It is yours."

These words ended the story of a life whose trials were many, and encountered at an age in which few have braved the world's cares. The lessons I had learned, however, were acquired in that school—adversity—where few are taught in vain; and if the morning of my life broke in clouds and shadow, the noon has been not less peaceful and bright, and the evening, as it draws near, comes with an aspect of calm tranquillity, ample enough to recompense every vicissitude of those early days, when the waves of fortune were roughest.

"SAID SHE SMILING, "I MUST GIVE YOU ANOTHER KEEPSAKE—THIS WILL NOT LEAVE ME." "GIVE IT ME, THEN, WHERE IT IS," SAID I. (P. 628.)

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CHARLES O'MALLEY,

THE IRISH DRAGOON.

PREFACE.

THE success of Harry Lorrequer was the reason for writing Charles O'Malley. That I myself was in no wise prepared for the favor the public bestowed on my first attempt is easily enough understood. The ease with which I strung my stories together—and in reality the Confessions of Harry Lorrequer are little other than a note-book of absurd and laughable incidents—led me to believe that I could draw on this vein of composition without any limit whatever. I felt, or thought I felt, an inexhaustible store of fun and buoyancy within me, and I began to have a misty, half confused impression that Englishmen generally labored under a sad-colored temperament, took depressing views of life, and were proportionately grateful to any one who would rally them even passingly out of their despondency, and give them a laugh without much trouble for going in search of it.

When I set to work to write Charles O'Malley I was, as I have ever been, very low with fortune, and the success of a new venture was pretty much as eventful to me as the turn of the right color at *rouge et noir*. At the same time I had then an amount of spring in my temperament, and a power of enjoying life, which I can honestly say I never found surpassed. The world had for me all the interest of an admirable comedy, in which the part allotted myself, if not a high or a foreground one, was eminently suited to my taste, and brought me, besides, sufficiently often on the stage to enable me to follow all the fortunes of the piece. Brussels, where I was then living, was adorned at the period by a most agreeable English society. Some leaders of the fashionable world of London had come there to refit and recruit, both in body and estate. There were several pleasant and a great number of pretty people among them; and, so far as I could judge, the fashionable dramas of Belgrave Square and its vicinity were being performed in the Rue Royale and the Boulevard de Waterloo with very considerable success. There were dinners, balls, dejeuners and picnics in the Bois de Cambre, excursions to Waterloo, and select little parties to Bois-fort, a charming little resort in the forest, whose intense cockneyism became perfectly inoffensive as being in a foreign land, and remote from the invasion of home-bred vulgarity. I mention all these things to show the adjuncts by which I was aided, and the rattle of gayety by which I was as it were, "accompanied," when I next tried my voice.

The soldier element tinctured strongly our society, and I will say most agreeably. Amongst those whom I remember best, were several old Peninsulars. Lord Combermere was of this number, and another of our set was an officer who accompanied, if indeed he did not command, the first boat party who crossed the Douro. It is needless to say how I cultivated a society so full of all the storied details I was eager to obtain, and how generously disposed were they to give me all the information I needed. On topography especially were they valuable to me, and with such good result that I have been more than once complimented on the accuracy of my descriptions of places which I have never seen, and whose features I have derived entirely from the narratives of my friends.

When, therefore, my publishers asked me could I write a story in the Lorrequer vein, in which active service and military adventure could figure more prominently than mere civilian life, and where the achievements of a British army might

form the staple of the narrative? When this question was propounded me, I was ready to reply—Not one, but fifty. Do not mistake me, and suppose that any overweening confidence in my literary powers would have emboldened me to make this reply; my whole strength lay in the fact that I could not recognize anything like literary effort in the matter. If the world would only condescend to read that which I wrote precisely as I was in the habit of talking, nothing could be easier than for me to occupy them. Not alone was it very easy to me, but it was intensely interesting and amusing to myself, to be so engaged.

The success of Harry Lorrequer had been freely wafted across the German Ocean, but even in its mildest accents it was very intoxicating incense to me; and I set to work on my second book with a thrill of hope as regards the world's favor which—and it is no small thing to say it—I can yet recall.

I can recall, too, and I am afraid more vividly still, some of the difficulties of my task when I endeavored to form anything like an accurate or precise idea of some campaigning incident, or some passage of arms, from the narratives of two distinct and separate "eye-witnesses." What mistrust I conceived for all eye-witnesses from my own brief experience of their testimonies! What an impulse did it lend me to study the nature and the temperament of the narrator, as indicative of the peculiar coloring he might lend his narrative; and how it taught me to know the force of the French epigram that has declared how it was entirely the alternating popularity of Marshal Soult that decided whether he won or lost the battle of Toulouse.

While, however, I was sifting these evidences, and separating, as well as I might, the wheat from the chaff, I was in a measure training myself for what, without my then knowing it, was to become my career in life. This was not therefore altogether without a certain degree of labor, but so light and pleasant withal, so full of picturesque peeps at character, and humorous views of human nature, that it would be the very rankest ingratitude of me if I did not own that I gained all my earlier experiences of the world in very pleasant company—highly enjoyable at the time, and with matter for charming souvenirs long after.

That certain traits of my acquaintances found themselves embodied in some of the characters of this story, I do not seek to deny. The principle of natural selection adapts itself to novels as to nature, and it would have demanded an effort above my strength to have disabused myself at the desk of all the impressions of the dinner table, and to have forgotten features which interested or amused me.

One of the personages of my tale I drew, however, with very little aid from fancy. I would go so far as to say that I took him from the life, if my memory did not confront me with the lamentable inferiority of my picture to the great original it was meant to portray.

With the exception of the quality of courage, I never met a man who contained within himself so many of the traits of Falstaff, as the individual who furnished me with Major Monsoon. But the Major—I must call him so, though that rank was far beneath his own—was a man of unquestionable bravery. His powers as a story-teller were to my thinking unrivaled, the peculiar reflections on life which he would passingly introduce—the wise apothegms—were after a morality essentially of his own invention, that he would indulge in the unsparing exhibition of himself in situations such as other men would never have confessed to, all blended up with a racy enjoyment of life, dashed occasionally with sorrow that our tenure of it was short of patriarchal. All these, accompanied by a face redolent of intense humor, and a voice whose modulations were managed with the skill of a consummate artist, all these I say were above me to convey, nor indeed as I re-read any of the adventures in which he figures, am I other than ashamed at the weakness of my drawing and the poverty of my coloring.

That I had a better claim to personify him than is always the lot of a novelist—that I possessed, so to say, a vested interest in his life and adventures, I will relate a little incident in proof; and my accuracy, if necessary, can be attested by another actor in the scene who yet survives.

I was living a bachelor life at Brussels, my family being at Ostende for the bathing during the summer of 1840. The city was comparatively empty; all the so-called society being absent at the various spas or baths of Germany. One member of the British Legation, who remained at his post to represent the mission, and myself making common cause of our desolation and ennui, spent much of our time together, and dined *tête-à-tête* every day.

It chanced that one evening, as we were hastening through the park on our way to dinner, we espied the Major—for as Major I must speak of him—lounging along with that half careless, half observant air we

had both of us remarked as indicating a desire to be somebody's, anybody's guest, rather than surrender himself to the homeliness of domestic fare.

"There's that confounded old Monsoon," cried my diplomatic friend. "It's all up if he sees us, and I can't endure him."

Now I must remark that my friend, though very far from insensible to the humoristic side of the Major's character, was not always in the vein to enjoy it, and when so indisposed he could invest the object of his dislike with something little short of antipathy. "Promise me," said he, as Monsoon came toward us, "promise me, you'll not ask him to dinner." Before I could make any reply, the Major was shaking a hand of either of us, and rapturously expatiating over his good luck at meeting us. "Mrs. M.," said he, "has got a dreary party of old ladies to dine with her, and I have come out here to find some pleasant fellow to join me, and take our mutton chop together."

"We're behind our time, Major," said my friend, "sorry to leave you so abruptly, but must push on. Eh, Lorrequer," added he, to evoke corroboration on my part.

"Harry says nothing of the kind," replied Monsoon, "he says, or he's going to say, 'Major, I have a nice bit of dinner waiting for me at home, enough for two, will feed three, or if there be a shortcoming, nothing easier than to eke out the deficiency by another bottle of Moulton; come along with us then, Monsoon, and we shall be all the merrier for your company.'"

Repeating his last words, "come along, Monsoon," etc., I passed my arm within his, and away we went. For a moment my friend tried to get free and leave me, but I held him fast and carried him along in spite of himself. He was, however, so chagrined and provoked that till the moment we reached my door he never uttered a word, nor paid the slightest attention to Monsoon, who talked away in a vein that occasionally made gravity all but impossible.

Our dinner proceeded drearily enough, the diplomatist's stiffness never relaxed for a moment, and my own awkwardness damped all my attempts at conversation. Not so, however, Monsoon, he ate heartily, approved of everything, and pronounced my wine to be exquisite. He gave us a perfect discourse on sherry, and Spanish wines in general, told us the secret of the Amontillado flavor, and explained that process of browning by boiling down wine, which some are so fond of in England. At last, seeing perhaps that the protection had little charm for us, with his accustomed tact, he diverged into anecdote. "I was once fortunate enough," said he, "to fall upon some of that choice sherry from the St. Lucas Luentas, which is always reserved for royalty. It was a pale wine, delicious in the drinking, and leaving no more flavor in the mouth than a faint dryness that seemed to say—another glass. Shall I tell you how I came by it?" And scarcely pausing for reply he told the story of having robbed his own convoy, and stolen the wine he was in charge of for safe conveyance.

I wish I could give any—even the weakest idea of how he narrated that incident, the struggle that he portrayed between duty and temptation, and the apologetic tone of his voice in which he explained that the frame of mind that succeeds to any yielding to seductive influences, is often in the main more profitable to a man than is the vain-glorious sense of having resisted a temptation. "Meekness is the mother of all the virtues," said he, "and there is no being meek without frailty." The story, told as he told it, was too much for the diplomatist's gravity, he resisted all signs of attention as long as he was able, and at last fairly roared out with laughter.

As soon as I myself recovered from the effects of his drollery I said, "Major, I have a proposition to make you: let me tell the story in print, and I'll give you five naps."

"Are you serious, Harry?" asked he. "Is this on honor?"

"On honor, assuredly," I replied.

"Let me have the money down, on the nail, and I'll give you leave to have me and my whole life, every adventure that ever befell me, aye, and, if you like, every moral reflection that my experiences have suggested."

"Done!" cried I, "I agree."

"Not so fast," cried the diplomatist, "we must make a protocol of this; the high contracting parties must know what they give and what they receive. I'll draw out the treaty."

He did so at full length on a sheet of that solemn blue tinted paper, so dedicated to dispatch purposes—he duly set forth the concession and the consideration. We each signed the document, he witnessed and sealed it, and Monsoon pocketed my five napoleons, filling a bumper to any success the bargain might bring me,

and of which I have never had reason to express deep disappointment.

This document, along with my University degree, my commission in a Militia regiment, and a vast amount of letters very interesting to me, were seized by the Austrian authorities on the way from Como to Florence in the August of 1847, being deemed part of a treasonable correspondence—probably purposely allegorical in form—and never restored to me. I fairly own that I'd give all the rest willingly to repossess myself of the Monsoon treaty, not a little for the sake of that quaint old autograph, faintly shaken by the quiet laugh with which he wrote it.

That I did not entirely fail in giving my Major some faint resemblance to the great original from whom I copied him, I may mention that he was speedily recognized in print by the Marquis of Londonderry, the well-known Sir Charles Stuart of the Peninsular campaign. "I know that fellow well," said he; "he once sent me a challenge, and I had to make him a very humble apology. The occasion was this: I had been out with a single aide-de-camp, to make a reconnaissance in front of Victor's division; and to avoid attracting any notice, we covered over our uniform with two common gray overcoats, which reached to the feet, and effectually concealed our rank as officers. Scarcely, however, had we topped a hill which commanded the view of the French, than a shower of shells flew over and around us. Amazed to think how we could have been so quickly noticed, I looked around me, and discovered, quite close in my rear, your friend Monsoon with what he called his staff, a popinjay set of rascals, dressed out in green and gold, and with more plumes and feathers than the general staff ever bosted. Carried away by momentary passion at the failure of my reconnaissance, I burst out with some insolent allusion to the harlequin assembly which had drawn the French fire upon us. Monsoon saluted me respectfully, and retired without a word; but I had scarcely reached my quarters when a 'friend' of his waited on me with a message, a very categorical message it was too, 'it must be a meeting or an ample apology.' I made the apology, a most full one, for the Major was right, and I had not a fraction of reason to sustain me in my conduct, and we have been the best of friends ever since."

I myself had heard the incident before this from Monsoon, but told amongst other adventures whose exact veracity I was rather disposed to question, and did not therefore accord it all the faith that was its due; and I admit that the accidental corroboration of this one event very often served to puzzle me afterward, when I listened to stories in which the Major seemed a second Munchausen, but might, like in this of the duel, have been amongst the truest and most matter-of-fact of historians. May the reader be not less embarrassed than myself is my sincere, if not very courteous, prayer.

I have no doubt myself, that often in recounting some strange incident, a personal experience it always was, he was himself more amused by the credulity of the hearers, and the amount of interest he could excite in them, than were they by the story. He possessed the true narrative gusto, and there was a marvelous instinct in the way in which he would vary a tale to suit the tastes of an audience; while his moralizings were almost certain to take the tone of a humoristic quiz on the company.

Though fully aware that I was availing myself of the contract that delivered him into my hands, and dining with me two or three days a week, he never lapsed into any allusion to his appearance in print, and the story had been already some weeks published before he asked me to lend him "that last thing—he forgot the name of it—I was writing."

Of Frank Webber I have said, in a former notice, that he was one of my earliest friends, my chum in college, and in the very chambers where I have located Charles O'Malley, in Old Trinity. He was a man of the highest order of abilities, and with a memory that never forgot, but ruined and run to seed by the idleness that came of a discursive, uncertain temperament. Capable of anything, he spent his youth in follies and eccentricities; every one of which, however, gave indications of a mind inexhaustible in resources, and abounding in devices and contrivances that none other but himself would have thought of. Poor fellow, he died young; and perhaps it is better it should have been so. Had he lived to a later day, he would most probably have been found a foremost leader of Fenianism, and from what I knew of him, I can say he would have been a more dangerous enemy to English rule than any of those dealers in the petty larceny of rebellion we have lately seen amongst us.

I have said that of Mickey Free I had not one, but one thousand—types. Indeed, I am not quite sure that in my last visit to Dublin, I did not chance on a liv-

ing specimen of the "Free" family, much readier in repartée, quicker with an apropos, and droller in illustration than my own Mickey. This fellow was "boots" at a great hotel in Sackville Street; and I owe him more amusement and some heartier laughs than it has been always my fortune to enjoy in a party of wits. His criticisms on my sketches of Irish character were about the shrewdest and the best I ever listened to; and that I am not bribed to this opinion by any flattery, I may remark that they were more often severe than complimentary, and that he hit every blunder of image, every mistake in figure, of my peasant characters, with an acuteness and correctness, which made me very grateful to know that his daily occupations were limited to blacking boots, and not polishing off authors.

I believe I have now done with my confessions, except I should like to own that this story was the means of according me a more heartfelt glow of satisfaction, a more gratifying sense of pride, than anything I ever have or ever shall write, and in this wise. My brother, at that time the rector of an Irish parish, once forwarded to me a letter from a lady unknown to him, but who had heard he was the brother of "Harry Lorrequer," and who addressed him, not knowing where a letter might be directed to myself. The letter was the grateful expression of a mother, who said "I am the widow of a field officer, and with an only son, for whom I obtained a presentation to Woolwich; but seeing in my boy's nature certain traits of nervousness and timidity, which induced me to hesitate on embarking him in the career of a soldier, I became very unhappy and uncertain which course to decide on.

"While in this state of uncertainty I chanced to make him a birthday present of 'Charles O'Malley,' the reading of which seemed to act like a charm on his whole character, inspiring him with a passion for movement and adventure, and spiriting him to an eager desire for a military life. Seeing that this was no passing enthusiasm, but a decided and determined bent, I accepted the cadetship for him, and his career has been not alone distinguished as a student, but one which has marked him out for an almost hare-brained courage, and for a dash and heroism that give high promise for his future.

"Thank your brother for me," wrote she, "a mother's thanks for the welfare of an only son, and say how I wish that my best wishes for him and his could recompense him for what I owe him."

I humbly hope that it may not be imputed to me as unpardonable vanity—the recording of this incident. It gave me an intense pleasure when I heard it; and now, as I look back on it, it invests this story for myself with an interest which nothing else that I have written can afford me.

I have now but to repeat what I have declared in former editions, my sincere gratitude for the favor the public still continues to bestow on me—a favor which probably associates the memory of this book with whatever I have since done successfully, and compels me to remember that to the popularity of "Charles O'Malley" I am indebted for a great share of that kindliness in criticism, and that geniality in judgment, which—for more than a quarter of a century—my countrymen have graciously bestowed on their faithful friend and servant,

CHARLES LEVER.

TRIESTE, 1872.

CHAPTER I.

DALY'S CLUB HOUSE.

THE rain was dashing in torrents against the window-panes, and the wind sweeping in heavy and fitful gusts along the dreary and deserted streets, as a party of three persons sat over their wine, in that stately old pile which once formed the resort of the Irish members, in College-green, Dublin, and went by the name of Daly's Club House. The clatter of falling tiles and chimney-pots—the jarring of the window-frames and howling of the storm without, seemed little to affect the spirits of those within, as they drew closer to a blazing fire, before which stood a small table covered with the remains of a dessert, and an abundant supply of bottles, whose characteristic length of neck indicated the rarest wines of France and Germany; while the portly magnum of claret—the wine *par excellence* of every Irish gentleman of the day—passed rapidly from hand to hand, the conversation did not languish, and many a deep and hearty laugh followed the stories which every now and then were told, as some reminiscence of early days was recalled, or some trait of a former companion remembered.

One of the party, however, was apparently engrossed by other thoughts than those of the mirth and merriment around; for, in the midst of all, he would turn suddenly from the others, and devote himself

to a number of scattered sheets of paper, upon which he had written some lines, but whose crossed and blotted sentences attested how little success had waited upon his literary labors. This individual was a short, plethoric-looking, white-haired man, of about fifty, with a deep, round voice, and a chuckling, smothering laugh, which, whenever he indulged, not only shook his own ample person, but generally created a petty earthquake on every side of him. For the present, I shall not stop to particularize him more closely; but, when I add, that the person in question was a well-known member of the Irish House of Commons, whose acute understanding and practical good sense were veiled under an affected and well-dissembled habit of blundering, that did far more for his party than the most violent and pointed attacks of his more accurate associates, some of my readers may anticipate me in pronouncing him to be Sir Harry Boyle. Upon his left sat a figure the most unlike him possible; he was a tall, thin, bony man, with a bolt-upright air, and a most saturnine expression; his eyes were covered by a deep green shade, which fell far over his face, but failed to conceal a blue scar that, crossing his cheek, ended in the angle of his mouth, and imparted to that feature, when he spoke, an apparently abortive attempt to extend toward his eyebrow; his upper lip was covered with a grizzly and ill-trimmed moustache, which added much to the ferocity of his look, while a thin and pointed beard on his chin gave an apparent length to the whole face that completed its rueful character. His dress was a single-breasted, tightly-buttoned frock, in one button-hole of which a yellow ribbon was fastened, the decoration of a foreign service, which conferred upon its wearer the title of Count; and though Billy Considine, as he was familiarly called by his friends, was a thorough Irishman in all his feelings and affections, yet he had no objection to the designation he had gained in the Austrian army. The Count was certainly no beauty, but, somehow, very few men of his day had a fancy for telling him so; a deadlier hand and a steadier eye never covered his man in the Phœnix; and though he never had a seat in the House, he was always regarded as one of the government party, who more than once had damped the ardor of an opposition member, by the very significant threat of "setting Billy at him." The third figure of the group was a large, powerfully-built, and handsome man, older than either of the others, but not betraying in his voice or carriage any touch of time. He was attired in the green coat and buff vest which formed the livery of the club; and in his tall, ample forehead, clear, well-set eye, and still handsome mouth, bore evidence that no great flattery was necessary at the time which called Godfrey O'Malley the handsomest man in Ireland.

"Upon my conscience," said Sir Harry, throwing down his pen with an air of ill-temper, "I can make nothing of it; I have got into such an infernal habit of making bulls, that I can't write sense when I want it."

"Come, come," said O'Malley, "try again, my dear fellow. If you can't succeed, I'm sure Billy and I have no chance."

"What have you written? Let us see," said Considine, drawing the paper toward him, and holding it to the light. "Why, what the devil is all this? you have made him 'drop down dead after dinner of a lingering illness brought on by the debate of yesterday.'"

"Oh, impossible!"

"Well, read it yourself; there it is; and, as if to make the thing less credible, you talk of his 'Bill for the Better Recovery of Small Debts.' I'm sure, O'Malley, your last moments were not employed in that manner."

"Come, now," said Sir Harry, "I'll set all to rights with a postscript. 'Any one who questions the above statement, is politely requested to call on Mr. Considine, 16 Kildare street, who will feel happy to afford him every satisfaction upon Mr. O'Malley's decease, or upon miscellaneous matters.'"

"Worse and worse," said O'Malley. "Killing another man will never persuade the world that I'm dead."

"But we'll wake you, and have a glorious funeral."

"And if any man doubt the statement, I'll call him out," said the Count.

"Or, better still," said Sir Harry, "O'Malley has his action at law for defamation."

"I see I'll never get down to Galway at this rate," said O'Malley, "and as the new election takes place on Tuesday week, time presses. There are more writs flying after me this instant, than for all the government boroughs."

"And there will be fewer returns, I fear," said Sir Harry.

"Who is the chief creditor?" asked the Count.

"Old Stapleton, the attorney in Fleet street, has most of the mortgages."

"Nothing to be done with him in this way?" said Considine, balancing the corkscrew like a hair trigger.

"No chance of it."

"May be," said Sir Harry, "he might come to terms if I were to call and say—You are anxious to close accounts, as your death has just taken place. You know what I mean."

"I fear so should he, were you to say so. No, no, Boyle, just try a plain, straightforward paragraph about my death. We'll have it in Falkner's paper to-morrow; on Friday the funeral can take place, and, with the blessing o' God, I'll come to life on Saturday at Athlone, in time to canvass the market."

"I think it wouldn't be bad if your ghost were to appear to old Timins the tanner, in Naas, on your way down; you know he arrested you once before."

"I prefer a night's sleep," said O'Malley; "but come, finish the squib for the paper."

"Stay a little," said Sir Harry, musing; "it just strikes me that, if ever the matter gets out, I may be in some confounded scrape. Who knows if it is not a breach of privilege to report the death of a member? And to tell you truth, I dread the Sergeant and the Speaker's warrant with a very lively fear."

"Why, when did you make his acquaintance?" said the Count.

"Is it possible you never heard of Boyle's committal?" said O'Malley; "you surely must have been abroad at the time; but it's not too late to tell it yet."

"Well, it's about two years since old Townsend brought in his Enlistment Bill, and the whole country was scoured for all our voters, who were scattered here and there, never anticipating another call of the House, and supposing that the session was just over. Among others, up came our friend Harry, here, and, the night he arrived, they made him a 'Monk of the Screw,' and very soon made him forget his senatorial dignities.

"On the evening after his reaching town, the bill was brought in, and at two in the morning the division took place—a vote was of too much consequence not to look after it closely—and a Castle messenger was in waiting in Exchequer street, who, when the debate was closing, put Harry, with three others, into a coach, and brought them down to the House. Unfortunately, however, they mistook their friends, voted against the bill, and, amid the loudest cheering of the opposition, the government party were defeated. The rage of the ministers knew no bounds, and looks of defiance and even threats were exchanged between the ministers and the deserters. Amid all this poor Harry fell fast asleep, and dreamed that he was once more in Exchequer street, presiding among the monks, and mixing another tumbler. At length he awoke and looked about him—the clerk was just at the instant reading out, in his usual routine manner, a clause of the new bill, and the remainder of the House was in dead silence. Harry looked again around on every side, wondering where was the hot water, and what had become of the whisky bottle, and above all, why the company were so extremely dull and ungenial. At length, with a half shake, he roused up a little, and giving a look of unequivocal contempt on every side, called out, 'Upon my soul, you're pleasant companions—but I'll give you a chant to enliven you.' So saying, he cleared his throat with a couple of short coughs, and struck up, with the voice of a Stentor, the following verse of a popular ballad:

"'And they nibbled away, both night and day,
Like mice in a round of Glo'ster;
Great rogues they were all, both great and small;
From Flood to Leslie Foster.
"'Great rogues all.'

"'Chorus, boys!'

If he was not joined by the voices of his friends in the song, it was probably because such a roar of laughing never was heard since the walls were roofed over. The whole House rose in a mass, and my friend Harry was hurried over the benches by the Sergeant-at-Arms, and left for three weeks in Newgate, to practice his melody."

"All true," said Sir Harry, "and worse luck to them for not liking music; but come now, will this do?—'It is our melancholy duty to announce the death of Godfrey O'Malley, Esq., late member for the county of Galway, which took place on Friday evening, at Daly's Club House. This esteemed gentleman's family—one of the oldest in Ireland, and among whom it was hereditary not to have any children——'"

Here a burst of laughter from Considine and O'Malley interrupted the reader, who with the greatest difficulty could be persuaded that he was again bulling it.

"The devil fly away with it," said he, "I'll never succeed."

"Never mind," said O'Malley; "the first part will do admirably; and let us now turn our attention to other matters."

A fresh magnum was called for, and over its inspiring contents all the details of

the funeral were planned; and, as the clock struck four, the party separated for the *night*, well satisfied with the result of their labors.

CHAPTER II.

THE ESCAPE.

WHEN the dissolution of Parliament was announced the following morning in Dublin, its interest in certain circles was manifestly increased by the fact that Godfrey O'Malley was at last open to arrest; for as, in olden times, certain gifted individuals possessed some happy immunity against death by fire or sword, so the worthy O'Malley seemed to enjoy a no less valuable privilege, and for many a year had passed, among the myrmidons of the law, as writ-proof. Now, however, the charm seemed to have yielded, and pretty much with the same feeling as a storming party may be supposed to experience on the day that a breach is reported as practicable, did the honest attorneys, retained in the various suits against him, rally round each other that morning in the Four Courts.

Bonds, mortgages, post-obits, promissory notes—in fact, every imaginable species of invention for raising the O'Malley exchequer for the preceding thirty years—were handed about on all sides, suggesting to the mind of an uninterested observer the notion that, had the aforesaid O'Malley been an independent and absolute monarch, instead of merely being the member for Galway, the kingdom over whose destinies he had been called to preside would have suffered not a little from a depreciated currency and an extravagant issue of paper. Be that as it might, one thing was clear: the whole estates of the family could not possibly pay one-fourth of the debt, and the only question was one which occasionally arises at a scanty dinner on a mail-coach road—who was to be the lucky individual to carve the joint, where so many were sure to go off hungry.

It was now a trial of address between these various and highly-gifted gentlemen who should first pounce upon the victim, and when the skill of their caste is taken into consideration, who will doubt that every feasible expedient for securing him was resorted to? While writs were struck against him in Dublin, emissaries were dispatched to the various surrounding counties to procure others in the event of his escape. *Ne exeats* were sworn, and water-bailiffs engaged to follow him on the high seas; and, as the great Nassau balloon did not exist in those days, no imaginable mode of escape appeared possible, and bets were offered at long odds that, within twenty-four hours, the late member would be enjoying his *otium cum dignitate* in his Majesty's gaol of Newgate.

Expectation was at the highest—confidence hourly increasing—success all but certain—when, in the midst of all this high-bounding hope, the dreadful rumor spread that O'Malley was no more. One had seen it just five minutes before in the evening edition of Falkner's paper—another heard it in the courts—a third overheard the Chief Justice stating it to the Master of the Rolls—and, lastly, a breathless witness arrived from College-green with the news that Daly's Club House was shut up, and the shutters closed. To describe the consternation the intelligence caused on every side is impossible; nothing in history equals it, except, perhaps, the entrance of the French army into Moscow, deserted and forsaken by its former inhabitants. While terror and dismay, therefore, spread amid that wide and respectable body who formed O'Malley's creditors, the preparations for his funeral were going on with every rapidity; relays of horses were ordered at every stage of the journey, and it was announced that, in testimony of his worth, a large party of his friends were to accompany his remains to Portumna Abbey—a test much more indicative of resistance in the event of any attempt to arrest the body, than of anything like reverence for their departed friend.

Such was the state of matters in Dublin, when a letter reached me one morning at O'Malley Castle, whose contents will at once explain the writer's intention, and also serve to introduce my unworthy self to my reader. It ran thus:

"DEAR CHARLEY,—Your uncle Godfrey, whose debts [God pardon him] are more numerous than the hairs of his wig, was obliged to die here last night. We did the thing for him completely; and all doubts as to the reality of the event are silenced by the circumstantial detail of the newspaper 'that he was confined six weeks to his bed from a cold he caught, ten days ago, while on guard.' Repeat this, for it's better we had all the same story till he comes to life again, which, maybe, will not take place before Tuesday or Wednesday. At the same time, canvass the county for him, and say he'll be with his friends next week, and up in Woodford and the Scariff barony: say he died a true Catholic;

it will serve him on the hustings. Meet us in Athlone on Saturday, and bring your uncle's mare with you—he says he'd rather ride home; and tell Father McShane to have a bit of dinner ready about four o'clock, for the corpse can get nothing after he leaves Mount Mellick.—No more now, from yours, ever,

"HARRY BOYLE.

"Daly's, about eight in the evening.
"To Charles O'Malley, Esq.,
O'Malley Castle, Galway."

When this not over-clear document reached me, I was the sole inhabitant of O'Malley Castle, a very ruinous pile of incongruous masonry, that stood in a wild and dreary part of the county of Galway, bordering on the Shannon. On every side stretched the property of my uncle, or at least what had once been so; and, indeed, so numerous were its present claimants, that he would have been a subtle lawyer who could have pronounced upon the rightful owner. The demesne around the castle contained some well-grown and handsome timber, and, as the soil was undulating and fertile, presented many features of beauty; beyond it, all was sterile, bleak, and barren. Long tracts of brown heath-clad mountain, or not less unprofitable valleys of tall and waving fern, were all that the eye could discern, except where the broad Shannon, expanding into a tranquil and glassy lake, lay still and motionless beneath the dark mountains, a few islands, with some ruined churches and a round tower, alone breaking the dreary waste of water.

Here it was that I had passed my infancy and my youth, and here I now stood, at the age of seventeen, quite unconscious that the world contained aught fairer and brighter than that gloomy valley, with its rugged frame of mountains.

When a mere child, I was left an orphan to the care of my worthy uncle. My father, whose extravagance had well sustained the family reputation, had squandered a large and handsome property in contesting elections for his native county, and in keeping up that system of unlimited hospitality for which Ireland in general, and Galway more especially, was renowned. The result was, as might be expected, ruin and beggary. He died, leaving every one of his estates encumbered with heavy debts, and the only legacy he left to his brother was a boy of four years of age, entreating him, with his last breath, "Be anything you like to him, Godfrey, but a father, or at least such a one as I have proved."

Godfrey O'Malley, some short time previous, had lost his wife, and when this new trust was committed to him, he resolved never to remarry, but to rear me up as his only child, and the inheritor of his estates. How weighty and onerous an obligation this latter might prove, the reader can form some idea. The intention was, however, a kind one; and, to do my uncle justice, he loved me with all the affection of a warm and open heart.

From my earliest years his whole anxiety was to fit me for the part of a country gentleman, as he regarded that character—viz., I rode boldly with fox-hounds; I was about the best shot within twenty miles of us; I could swim the Shannon at Holy Island; I drove four-in-hand better than the coachman himself; and from finding a hare to hooking a salmon, my equal could not be found from Killaloe to Banagher. These were the staple of my endowments. Besides which, the parish priest had taught me a little Latin, a little French, and a little geometry, and a great deal of the life and opinions of St. Jago, who presided over a holy well in the neighborhood, and was held in very considerable repute.

When I add to this portraiture of my accomplishments that I was nearly six feet high, with more than a common share of activity and strength for my years, and no inconsiderable portion of good looks, I have finished my sketch, and stand before my reader.

It is now time I should return to Sir Harry's letter, which so completely bewildered me, that, but for the assistance of Father Roach, I should have been totally unable to make out the writer's intentions. By his advice, I immediately set out for Athlone, where, when I arrived, I found my uncle addressing the mob from the top of the hearse, and recounting his miraculous escapes as a new claim upon their gratitude.

"There was nothing else for it, boys; the Dublin people insisted on my being their member, and beseiged the club-house. I refused—they threatened—I grew obstinate—they furious. 'I'll die first,' said I. 'Galway or nothing!'" "Hurrah!" from the mob. "O'Malley forever!" "And ye see, I kept my word, boys—I did die; I died that evening at a quarter past eight. There, read it for yourselves; there's the paper; was waked and carried out, and here I am after all, ready to die in earnest for you—but never to desert you."

The cheers here were deafening, and my uncle was carried through the market, down to the mayor's house, who, being a friend of the opposite party, was complimented with three groans; then up the Mall to the chapel, beside which Father MacShane resided. He was then suffered to touch the earth once more, when, having shaken hands with all of his constituency within reach, he entered the house, to partake of the kindest welcome and best reception the good priest could afford him.

My uncle's progress homeward was a triumph; the real secret of his escape had somehow come out, and his popularity rose to a white heat. "An it's little O'Malley cares for the law—bad luck to it; it's himself can laugh at judge and jury. Arrest him—nabocklish—catch a weasel asleep," etc. Such were the encomiums that greeted him as he passed on toward home; while shouts of joy and blazing bonfires attested that his success was regarded as a national triumph.

The west has certainly its strong features of identity. Had my uncle possessed the claims of the immortal Howard—had he united in his person all the attributes which confer a lasting and an ennobling fame upon humanity—he might have passed on unnoticed and unobserved; but for the man that had duped a judge and escaped the sheriff, nothing was sufficiently flattering to mark their approbation. The success of the exploit was twofold; the news spread far and near, and the very story canvassed the county better than Billy Davern himself, the Athlone attorney.

This was the prospect now before us; and, however little my readers may sympathize with my taste, I must honestly avow that I looked forward to it with a most delighted feeling. O'Malley Castle was to be the center of operations, and filled with my uncle's supporters; while I, a mere stripling, and usually treated as a boy, was to be intrusted with an important mission, and sent off to canvass a distant relation, with whom my uncle was not upon terms, and who might possibly be approachable by a younger branch of the family, with whom he had never any collision.

CHAPTER III.

MR. BLAKE.

NOTHING but the exigency of the case could ever have persuaded my uncle to stoop to the humiliation of canvassing the individual to whom I was now about to proceed as envoy extraordinary, with full powers to make any, or every *amende*, provided only his interest, and that of his followers, should be thereby secured to the O'Malley cause. The evening before I set out was devoted to giving me all the necessary instructions how I was to proceed, and what difficulties I was to avoid.

"Say your uncle's in high feather with the government party," said Sir Harry, "and that he only votes against them as a *ruse de guerre*, as the French call it."

"Insist upon it that I am sure of the election without him; but that for family reasons he should not stand aloof from me; that people are talking of it in the country."

"And drop a hint," said Considine, "that O'Malley is greatly improved in his shooting."

"And don't get drunk too early in the evening, for Phil Blake has beautiful claret," said another.

"And be sure you don't make love to the red-headed girls," added a third; "he has four of them, each more sinfully ugly than the other."

"You'll be playing whist, too," said Boyle; "and never mind losing a few pounds. Mrs. B., long life to her, has a playful way of turning the king."

"Charley will do it all well," said my uncle; "leave him alone. And now let us have in the supper."

It was only on the following morning, as the tandem came round to the door, that I began to feel the importance of my mission, and certain misgivings came over me as to my ability to fulfill it. Mr. Blake and his family, though estranged from my uncle for several years past, had been always most kind and good-natured to me; and although I could not, with propriety, have cultivated any close intimacy with them, I had every reason to suppose that they entertained toward me nothing but sentiments of good-will. The head of the family was a Galway squire of the oldest and most genuine stock; a great sportsman, a negligent farmer, and most careless father; he looked upon a fox as an infinitely more precious part of the creation than a French governess; and thought that riding well with hounds was a far better gift than all the learning of a Porson. His daughters were after his own heart—the best tempered, least educated, most high-spirited, gay, dashing ugly girls in the country—ready to ride over a four-foot paling without a saddle, and to dance

the "Wind that shakes the barley," for four consecutive hours, against all the officers that their hard fate, and the Horse Guards, ever condemned to Galway.

The mamma was only remarkable for her liking for whist, and her invariable good fortune thereat; a circumstance the world were agreed in ascribing less to the blind goddess than her own natural endowments.

Lastly, the heir of the house was a stripling of about my own age, whose accomplishments were limited to selling spavined and broken-winded horses to the infantry officers, playing a safe game at billiards, and acting as jackal-general to his sisters at balls, providing them with a sufficiency of partners, and making a strong fight for a place at the supper-table for his mother. These fraternal and filial traits, more honored at home than abroad, had made Mr. Matthew Blake a rather well-known individual in the neighborhood where he lived.

Though Mr. Blake's property was ample, and, strange to say for his county, unincumbered, the whole air and appearance of his house and grounds betrayed anything rather than a sufficiency of means. The gate lodge was a miserable mud hovel, with a thatched and falling roof; the gate itself, a wooden contrivance, one-half of which was boarded, and the other railed; the avenue was covered with weeds, and deep with ruts, and the clumps of young plantation, which had been planted and fenced with care, were now open to the cattle, and either totally uprooted or denuded of their bark, and dying. The lawn, a handsome one of some forty acres, had been devoted to an exercise-ground for training horses, and was cut up by their feet beyond all semblance of its original destination; and the house itself, a large and venerable structure of above a century old, displayed every variety of contrivance, as well as the usual one of glass, to exclude the weather. The hall-door hung by a single hinge, and required three persons each morning and evening to open and shut it; the remainder of the day it lay pensively open; the steps which led to it were broken and falling; and the whole aspect of things without was ruinous in the extreme. Within, matters were somewhat better, for, though the furniture was old, and none of it clean, yet an appearance of comfort was evident; and the large grate, blazing with its pile of red-hot turf, the deep-cushioned chairs, the old black mahogany dinner-table, and the soft carpet, albeit deep with dust, were not to be despised on a winter's evening, after a hard day's run with the "Blazers." Here it was, however, that Mr. Philip Blake had dispensed his hospitalities for above fifty years, and his father before him; and here, with a retinue of servants as *gauches* and ill-ordered as all about them, was he accustomed to invite all that the county possessed of rank and wealth, among which the officers quartered in his neighborhood were never neglected, the Miss Blakes having as decided a taste for the army as any young ladies of the west of Ireland; and, while the Galway squire, with his cords and tops, was detailing the last news from Ballinasloe in one corner, the dandy from St. James's street might be seen displaying more arts of seductive flattery in another than his most accurate *insouciance* would permit him to practice in the elegant saloons of London or Paris; and the same man who would have "cut his brother," for a solecism of dress or equipage, in Bond street, was now to be seen quietly domesticated, eating family dinners, rolling silk for the young ladies, going down the middle in a country dance, and even descending to the indignity of long whist, at "tenpenny" points, with only the miserable consolation that the company were not honest.

It was upon a clear frosty morning, when a bright blue sky and a sharp but bracing air seem to exercise upon the feelings a sense no less pleasurable than the balmiest breeze and warmest sun of summer, that I whipped my leader short round, and entered the precincts of "Gurt-na-Morra." As I proceeded along the avenue, I was struck by the slight traces of repairs here and there evident; a gate or two that formerly had been parallel to the horizon, had been raised to the perpendicular; some ineffectual efforts at paint were also perceptible upon the palings; and, in short, everything seemed to have undergone a kind of attempt at improvement.

When I reached the door, instead of being surrounded, as of old, by a tribe of menials frieze-coated, bare-headed, and bare-legged, my presence was announced by a tremendous ringing of bells, from the hands of an old functionary, in a very formidable livery, who peeped at me through the hall-window, and whom, with the greatest difficulty, I recognized as my quondam acquaintance, the butler. His wig alone would have graced a king's counsel, and the high collar of his coat, and the stiff pillory of his cravat, denoted an eternal adieu to so humble a vocation as drawing a cork. Before I had time for any conjecture as to the altered circumstances about, the activity of my friend

at the bell had surrounded me with "four others worse than himself," at least, they were exactly similarly attired; and, probably, from the novelty of their costume, and the restraints of so unusual a thing as dress, were as perfectly unable to assist themselves or others, as the Court of Aldermen would be, were they to rig out in plate armor of the fourteenth century. How much longer I might have gone on conjecturing the reasons for the masquerade around, I cannot say; but my servant, an Irish disciple of my uncle's, whispered in my ear—"It's a red-breeches day, Master Charles—they'll have the hoith of company in the house." From the phrase, it needed little explanation to inform me that it was one of those occasions on which Mr. Blake attired all the hangers-on of his house in livery, and that great preparations were in progress for a more than usually splendid reception.

In the next moment I was ushered into the breakfast-room, where a party of above a dozen persons were most gayly enjoying all the good cheer for which the house had a well-deserved repute. After the usual shaking of hands, and hearty greetings were over, I was introduced in all form to Sir George Dashwood, a tall and singularly handsome man of about fifty, with an undress military frock and ribbon. His reception of me was somewhat strange, for, as they mentioned my relationship to Godfrey O'Malley, he smiled slightly, and whispered something to Mr. Blake, who replied, "Oh! no, no; not the least. A mere boy; and besides——" What he added I lost, for at that moment Nora Blake was presenting me to Miss Dashwood.

If the sweetest blue eyes that ever beamed beneath a forehead of snowy whiteness, over which dark brown and waving hair fell, less in curls than masses of locky richness, could only have known what wild work they were making of my poor heart, Miss Dashwood, I trust, would have looked at her teacup or her muffin rather than at me, as she actually did on that fatal morning. If I were to judge from her costume, she had only just arrived, and the morning air had left upon her cheek a bloom that contributed greatly to the effect of her lovely countenance. Although very young, her form had all the roundness of womanhood; while her gay and sprightly manner indicated all the *sans gêne* which only very young girls possess, and which, when tempered with perfect good taste, and accompanied by beauty and no small share of talent, forms an irresistible power of attraction.

Beside her sat a tall, handsome man, of about five-and-thirty, or perhaps forty years of age, with a most soldierly air, who, as I was presented to him, scarcely turned his head, and gave me a half-nod of very unequivocal coldness. There are moments in life, in which the heart is, as it were, laid bare to any chance or casual impression with a wondrous sensibility of pleasure or its opposite. This to me was one of those; and, as I turned from the lovely girl, who had received me with a marked courtesy, to the cold air, and repelling *hauteur* of the dark-browed Captain, the blood rushed throbbing to my forehead; and as I walked to my place at the table, I eagerly sought his eye, to return him a look of defiance and disdain, proud and contemptuous as his own. Captain Hammersley, however, never took further notice of me, but continued to recount, for the amusement of those about him, several excellent stories of his military career, which, I confess, were heard with every test of delight by all, save me. One thing galled me particularly—and how easy is it, when you have begun by disliking a person, to supply food for your antipathy—all his allusions to his military life were coupled with half hinted and ill-concealed sneers at civilians of every kind, as though every man not a soldier were absolutely unfit for common intercourse with the world—still more, for any favorable reception in ladies' society.

The young ladies of the family were a well-chosen auditory, for their admiration of the army extended from the Life Guards to the Veteran Battalion, the Sappers and Miners included; and, as Miss Dashwood was the daughter of a soldier, she, of course, coincided in many, if not all his opinions. I turned toward my neighbor, a Clare gentleman, and tried to engage him in conversation, but he was breathlessly attending to the Captain. On my left sat Matthew Blake, whose eyes were firmly riveted upon the same person, and heard his marvels with an interest scarcely inferior to that of his sisters. Annoyed, and in ill-temper, I ate my breakfast in silence, and resolved that, the first moment I could obtain a hearing from Mr. Blake, I would open my negotiation, and take my leave at once of "Gurt-na-Morra."

We all assembled in a large room, called, by courtesy, the library, when breakfast was over; and then it was that Mr. Blake, taking me aside, whispered, "Charley, it's right I should inform you that Sir George Dashwood there is the Commander of the Forces, and is come down here at this

moment to——." What for, or how it should concern me, I was not to learn; for, at that critical instant, my informant's attention was called off by Captain Hammersley asking if the hounds were to hunt that day.

"My friend Charley, here, is the best authority upon that matter," said Mr. Blake, turning toward me.

"They are to try the Priest's meadows," said I, with an air of some importance; "but, if your guests desire a day's sport, I'll send word over to Brackely to bring the dogs over here, and we are sure to find a fox in your cover."

"Oh, then, by all means," said the Captain, turning toward Mr. Blake, and addressing himself to him—"by all means; and Miss Dashwood, I'm sure, would like to see the hounds throw off."

Whatever chagrin the first part of his speech caused me, the latter set my heart a throbbing; and I hastened from the room to dispatch a messenger to the huntsman to come over to Gurt-na-Morra, and also another to O'Malley Castle, to bring my best horse and my riding equipments, as quickly as possible.

"Matthew, who is this Captain?" said I, as young Blake met me in the hall.

"Oh! he is the aide-de-camp of General Dashwood. A nice fellow, isn't he?"

"I don't know what you may think," said I, "but I take him for the most impertinent, impudent, supercilious——"

The rest of my civil speech was cut short by the appearance of the very individual in question, who, with his hands in his pockets and a cigar in his mouth, sauntered forth down the steps, taking no more notice of Matthew Blake and myself than the two fox terriers that followed at his heels.

However anxious I might be to open negotiations on the subject of my mission, for the present the thing was impossible; for I found that Sir George Dashwood was closeted closely with Mr. Blake, and resolved to wait till evening, when chance might afford me the opportunity I desired.

As the ladies had retired to dress for the hunt, and as I felt no peculiar desire to ally myself with the unsocial Captain, I accompanied Matthew to the stable to look after the cattle, and make preparations for the coming sport.

"There's Captain Hammersley's mare," said Matthew, as he pointed out a highly bred but powerful English hunter; "she came last night, for, as he expected some sport, he sent his horses from Dublin on purpose. The others will be here to-day."

"What is his regiment?" said I, with an appearance of carelessness, but in reality feeling curious to know if the Captain was a cavalry or infantry officer.

"The —th Light Dragoons," said Matthew.

"You never saw him ride?" said I.

"But his groom there says he leads the way in his own country."

"And where may that be?"

"In Leicestershire, no less," said Matthew.

"Does he know Galway?"

"Never was in it before; it's only this minute he asked Mosey Daly if the ox-fences were high here."

"Ox-fences! then he does not know what a wall is?"

"Devil a bit; but we'll teach him."

"That we will," said I, with as bitter a resolution to impart the instruction as ever schoolmaster did to whip Latin grammar into one of the great unbreeched.

"But I had better send the horses down to the Mill," said Matthew; "we'll draw that cover first."

So saying, he turned toward the stable, while I sauntered alone toward the road, by which I expected the huntsman. I had not walked half a mile before I heard the yelping of the dogs, and, a little farther on, I saw old Brackely coming along at a brisk trot, cutting the hounds on each side, and calling after the stragglers.

"Did you see my horse on the road, Brackely?" said I.

"I did, Misther Charles, and, troth, I'm sorry to see him; sure yerself knows better than to take out the Badger, the best steeple-chaser in Ireland, in such a country as this; nothing but awkward stone-fences, and not a foot of sure ground in the whole of it."

"I know it well, Brackely; but I have my reasons for it."

"Well, maybe you have; what cover will your honor try first?"

"They talk of the Mill," said I, "but I'd much rather try 'Morran-a-Gowl.'"

"Morran-a-Gowl! do you want to break your neck entirely?"

"No, Brackely, not mine."

"Whose then, alannah?"

"An English Captain's, the devil fly away with him; he's come down here to-day, and from all I can see is a most impudent fellow; so, Brackely——"

"I understand. Well, leave it to me, and, though I don't like the only deer-park wall on the hill, we'll try it this morning with the blessing; I'll take him down by Woodford, over the 'Devil's Mouth,'

—it's eighteen foot wide this minute with the late rains—into the four callows; then over the stone walls, down to Dangan; then take a short cast up the hill, blow him a bit, and give him the park wall at the top. You must come in then fresh, and give him the whole run home over Sleibhmich—the Badger knows it all, and takes the road always in a fly,—a mighty distressing thing for the horse that follows, more particularly if he does not understand a stony country. Well, if he lives through this, give him the sunk fence and the stone wall at Mr. Blake's clover-field, for the hounds will run into the fox about there; and though we never ride that leap since Mr. Malone broke his neck at it, last October, yet, upon an occasion like this, and for the honor of Galway——"

"To be sure, Brackely, and here's a guinea for you, and now trot on toward the house; they must not see us together, or they might suspect something. But, Brackely," said I, calling out after him, "if he rides at all fair, what's to be done?"

"Troth, then, myself doesn't know; there is nothing so bad west of Athlone; have ye a great spite again him?"

"I have," said I fiercely.

"Could ye coax a fight out of him?"

"That's true," said I; "and now ride on as fast as you can."

Brackely's last words imparted a lightness to my heart and my step, and I strode along a very different man from what I had left the house half an hour previously.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HUNT.

ALTHOUGH we had not the advantages of a "southerly wind and cloudy sky," the day, toward noon, became strongly overcast, and promised to afford us good scenting weather, and as we assembled at the meet, mutual congratulations were exchanged upon the improved appearance of the day. Young Blake had provided Miss Dashwood with a quiet and well-trained horse, and his sisters were all mounted, as usual, upon their own animals, giving to our turn-out quite a gay and lively aspect. I myself came to cover upon a hackney, having sent Badger with a groom, and longed ardently for the moment when, casting the skin of my great coat and overalls, I should appear before the world in my well-appointed "cords and tops." Captain Hammersley had not as yet made his appearance, and many conjectures were afloat as to whether "he might have missed the road or changed his mind," or, "forgot all about it," as Miss Dashwood hinted.

"Who, pray, pitched upon this cover?" said Caroline Blake, as she looked with a practiced eye over the country, on either side.

"There is no chance of a fox late in the day at the Mill," said the huntsman, inventing a lie for the occasion.

"Then of course you never intend us to see much of the sport, for, after you break cover, you are entirely lost to us."

"I thought you always followed the hounds," said Miss Dashwood, timidly.

"Oh, to be sure we do, in any common country; but here it is out of the question; the fences are too large for any one, and, if I am not mistaken, these gentlemen will not ride far over this. There, look yonder, where the river is rushing down the hill—that stream, widening as it advances, crosses the cover nearly midway; well, they must clear that; and then you may see these walls of large loose stones, nearly five feet in height; that is the usual course the fox takes, unless he heads toward the hills, and goes toward Dangan, and then there's an end of it; for the deer-park wall is usually a pull up to every one, except, perhaps, to our friend Charley yonder, who has tried his fortune against drowning more than once there."

"Look, here he comes," said Matthew Blake, "and looking splendidly too—a little too much in flesh, perhaps, if anything."

"Captain Hammersley!" said the four Miss Blakes, in a breath, "where is he?"

"No, it's the Badger I'm speaking of," said Matthew, laughing, and pointing with his finger toward a corner of the field where my servant was leisurely throwing down a wall about two feet high to let him pass.

"Oh, how handsome!—what a charger for a dragoon!" said Miss Dashwood.

Any other mode of praising my steed would have been much more acceptable. The word dragoon was a thorn in my tenderest part, that rankled and lacerated at every stir. In a moment I was in the saddle, and scarcely seated, when at once all the *mauvais honte* of boyhood left me, and I felt every inch a man. I often look back to that moment of my life, and, comparing it with many similar ones, cannot help acknowledging how purely is the self-possession which so often wins success the result of some slight and trivial association. My confidence in my horsemanship sug-

gested moral courage of a very different kind, and I felt that Charles O'Malley curvetting upon a thorough-bred, and the same man ambling upon a shelty, were two and very dissimilar individuals.

"No chance of the Captain," said Matthew, who had returned from a *reconnaissance* upon the road; "and after all it's a pity, for the day is getting quite favorable."

While the young ladies formed pickets to look out for the gallant *militaire*, I seized the opportunity of prosecuting my acquaintance with Miss Dashwood; and, even in the few and passing observations that fell from her, learned how very different an order of being she was from all I had hitherto seen of country belles. A mixture of courtesy with *naïveté*—a wish to please, with a certain feminine gentleness, that always flatters a man, and still more a boy that fain would be one—gained momentarily more and more upon me, and put me also on my mettle to prove to my fair companion that I was not altogether a mere uncultivated and unthinking creature, like the remainder of those about me.

"Here he is, at last," said Helen Blake, as she cantered across a field, waving her handkerchief as a signal to the Captain, who was now seen approaching at a brisk trot.

As he came along, a small fence intervened; he pressed his horse a little, and, as he kissed hands to the fair Helen, cleared it in a bound, and was in an instant in the midst of us.

"He sits his horse like a man, Misther Charles," said the old huntsman; "troth, we must give him the worst bit of it."

Captain Hammersley was, despite all the critical acumen with which I canvassed him, the very beau ideal of a gentleman rider; indeed, although a very heavy man, his powerful English thoroughbred, showing not less bone than blood, took away all semblance of overweight; his saddle, well fitting and well placed; his large and broad-reined snaffle; his own costume of black coat, leathers, and tops, was in perfect keeping, and even to his heavy-handled hunting whip I could find nothing to cavil at. As he rode up he paid his respects to the ladies in his usual free and easy manner, expressed some surprise, but no regret, at hearing that he was late, and never deigning any notice of Matthew or myself, took his place beside Miss Dashwood, with whom he conversed in a low and under tone.

"There they go," said Matthew, as five or six dogs, with their heads up, ran yelping along a furrow, then stopped, howled again, and once more set off together. In an instant all was commotion in the little valley below us. The huntsman, with his hand to his mouth, was calling off the stragglers, and the whipper-in following up the leading dogs with the rest of the pack. "They've found!—they're away!" said Matthew; and, as he spoke, a great yell burst from the valley, and in an instant the whole pack were off at full speed. Rather more intent that moment upon showing off my horsemanship than anything else, I dashed spurs into Badger's sides, and turned him toward a rasping ditch before me; over we went, hurling down behind us a rotten bank of clay and small stones, showing how little safety there had been in topping instead of clearing it at a bound. Before I was well seated again, the Captain was beside me. "Now for it, then," said I; and away we went. What might be the nature of his feelings I cannot pretend to state, but my own were a strange *mélange* of wild, boyish enthusiasm, revenge and recklessness. For my own neck I cared little—nothing; and, as I led the way by half a length, I muttered to myself, "Let him follow me fairly this day, and I ask no more."

The dogs had got somewhat the start of us, and, as they were in full cry, and going fast, we were a little behind. A thought therefore struck me that, by appearing to take a short cut upon the hounds, I should come down upon the river where its breadth was greatest, and thus, at one *coup*, might try my friend's mettle and his horse's performance at the same time. On we went, our speed increasing, till the roar of the river we were now approaching was plainly audible. I looked half around, and now perceived the Captain was standing in his stirrups, as if to obtain a view of what was before him; otherwise his countenance was calm and unmoved, and not a muscle betrayed that he was not cantering on a parade. I fixed myself firmly in my seat, shook my horse a little together, and with a shout whose import every Galway hunter well knows, rushed him at the river. I saw the water dashing among the large stones, I heard its splash, I felt a bound like the *ricochet* of a shot, and we were over, but so narrowly that the bank had yielded beneath his hind legs, and it needed a bold effort of the noble animal to regain his footing. Scarcely was he once more firm, when Hammersley flew by me, taking the lead, and sitting quietly in his saddle, as if racing. I know of little in all my after-life like the agony of that moment; for although I was far, very

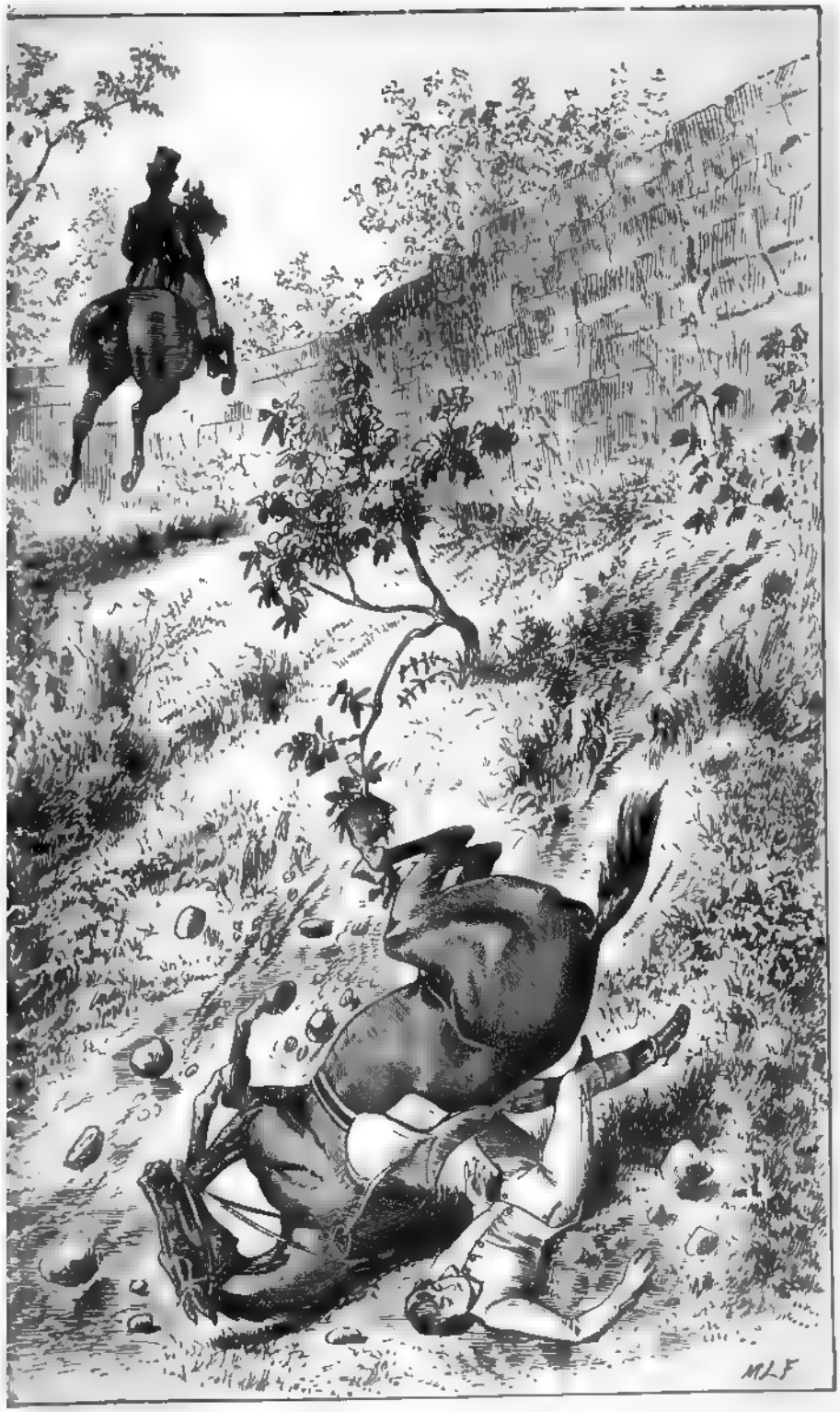
far, from wishing real ill to him, yet I would gladly have broken my leg or my arm if he could not have been able to follow me. And now, there he was, actually a length and a half in advance! and, worse than all, Miss Dashwood must have witnessed the whole, and doubtless his leap over the river was better and bolder than mine. One consolation yet remained, and while I whispered it to myself I felt comforted again. "His is an English mare—they understand these leaps—but what can he make of a Galway wall?" The question was soon to be solved. Before us, about three fields, were the hounds still in full cry; a large stone wall lay between, and to it we both directed our course together. "Ha!" thought I, "he is floored at last," as I perceived that the Captain held his horse rather more in hand, and suffered me to lead. "Now, then, for it!" So saying, I rode at the largest part I could find, well knowing that Badger's powers were here in their element. One spring, one plunge, and away we were, galloping along at the other side. Not so the Captain: his horse had refused the fence, and he was now taking a circuit of the field for another trial of it.

"Pounded, by Jove!" said I, as I turned round in my saddle to observe him. Once more she came at it, and once more baulked, rearing up at the same time, almost so as to fall backward.

My triumph was complete, and I again was about to follow the hounds, when, throwing a look back, I saw Hammersley clearing the wall in a most splendid manner, and taking a stretch of at least thirteen feet beyond it. Once more he was on my flanks, and the contest renewed. Whatever might be the sentiments of the riders (mine I confess to), between the horses it now became a tremendous struggle. The English mare, though evidently superior in stride and strength, was slightly overweighted, and had not, besides, that catlike activity an Irish horse possesses; so that the advantages and disadvantages on either side were about equalized. For about half an hour now the pace was awful. We rode side by side, taking our leaps exactly at the same instant, and not four feet apart. The hounds were still considerably in advance, and were heading toward the Shannon, when suddenly the fox doubled, took the hill-side, and made for Dangan. "Now, then, comes the trial of strength," I said, half aloud, as I threw my eye up a steep and rugged mountain, covered with wild furze and tall heath, around the crest of which ran, in a zig-zag direction, a broken and dilapidated wall, once the inclosure of a deer-park. This wall, which varied from four to six feet in height, was of solid masonry, and would, in the most favorable ground, have been a bold leap. Here, at the summit of a mountain, with not a yard of footing, it was absolutely desperation.

By the time that we reached the foot of the hill, the fox, followed closely by the hounds, had passed through a breach in the wall, while Matthew Blake, with the huntsmen and whipper-in, were riding along in search of a gap to lead the horses through. Before I put spurs to Badger, to face the hill, I turned one look toward Hammersley. There was a slight curl, half-smile, half-sneer upon his lip, that actually maddened me, and had a precipice yawned beneath my feet, I should have dashed at it after that. The ascent was so steep that I was obliged to take the hill in a slanting direction, and even thus, the loose footing rendered it dangerous in the extreme.

At length I reached the crest, where the wall, more than five feet in height, stood frowning above and seeming to defy me. I turned my horse full round, so that his very chest almost touched the stones, and, with a bold cut of the whip and a loud halloo, the gallant animal rose, as if rearing, pawed for an instant to regain his balance, and then, with a frightful struggle, fell backward, and rolled from top to bottom of the hill, carrying me along with him; the last object that crossed my sight, as I lay bruised and motionless, being the Captain, as he took the wall in a flying leap, and disappeared at the other side. After a few scrambling efforts to rise, Badger regained his legs and stood beside me; but such was the shock and concussion of my fall, that all the objects around seemed wavering and floating before me, while showers of bright sparks fell in myriads before my eyes. I tried to rise, but fell back helpless. Cold perspiration broke over my forehead, and I fainted. From that moment I can remember nothing, till I felt myself galloping along at full speed upon a level table-land, with the hounds about three fields in advance, Hammersley riding foremost, and taking all his leaps coolly as ever. As I swayed to either side upon my saddle, from weakness, I was lost to all thought or recollection, save a flickering memory of some plan of vengeance, which still urged me forward. The chase had now lasted above an hour, and both hounds and horses began to feel the pace at which they were going. As for me, I



THE GALLANT ANIMAL ROSE, AS IF REARING, PAWED FOR AN INSTANT TO REGAIN HIS BALANCE, AND THEN, WITH A FRIGHTFUL STRUGGLE, FELL BACKWARDS, AND ROLLED FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF THE HILL, CARRYING ME ALONG WITH HIM. (P. 644.)

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rode mechanically; I neither knew nor cared for the dangers before me. My eye rested on but one object; my whole being was concentrated upon one vague and undefined sense of revenge. At this instant the huntsman came alongside of me.

"Are you hurted, Misther Charles? did you fall?—your cheek is all blood, and your coat is torn in two; and, Mother o' God, his boot is ground to powder; he does not hear me. Oh, pull up—pull up, for the love of the Virgin; there's the clover field, and the sunk fence before you, and you'll be killed on the spot."

"Where?" cried I, with the cry of a madman, "where's the clover field?—where's the sunk fence? Ha! I see it—I see it now."

So saying, I dashed the rowels into my horse's flanks, and in an instant was beyond the reach of the poor fellow's remonstrances. Another moment, I was beside the Captain. He turned round as I came up; the same smile was upon his mouth—I could have struck him. About three hundred yards before us lay the sunk fence: its breadth was about twenty feet, and a wall of close brickwork formed its face. Over this the hounds were now clambering; some succeeded in crossing, but by far the greater number fell back howling into the ditch.

I turned toward Hammersley. He was standing high in his stirrups, and, as he looked toward the yawning fence, down which the dogs were tumbling in masses, I thought (perhaps it was but a thought) that his cheek was paler. I looked again, he was pulling at his horse; ha! it was true then, he would not face it. I turned round in my saddle—looked him full in the face, and, as I pointed with my whip to the leap, called out in a voice hoarse with passion, "Come on." I saw no more. All objects were lost to me from that moment. When next my senses cleared I was standing amid the dogs, where they had just killed. Badger stood blown and trembling beside me, his head drooping, and his flanks gored with spur marks. I looked about, but all consciousness of the past had fled; the concussion of my fall had shaken my intellect, and I was like one but half awake. One glimpse, short and fleeting, of what was taking place, shot through my brain, as old Brackely whispered to me, "By my soul ye did for the Captain there." I turned a vague look upon him, and my eyes fell upon the figure of a man that lay stretched and bleeding upon a door before me. His pale face was crossed with a purple stream of blood, that trickled from a wound beside his eyebrow; his arms lay motionless and heavily at either side. I knew him not. A loud report of a pistol aroused me from my stupor; I looked back. I saw a crowd that broke suddenly asunder, and fled right and left. I heard a heavy crash upon the ground; I pointed with my finger, for I could not utter a word.

"It is the English mare, yer honor; she was a beauty this morning, but she's broke her shoulder-bone, and both her legs, and it was best to put her out of pain."

CHAPTER V.

THE DRAWING-ROOM.

On the fourth day following the adventure detailed in the last chapter I made my appearance in the drawing-room; my cheek well blanched by copious bleeding, and my step tottering and uncertain. On entering the room I looked about in vain for some one who might give me an insight into the occurrences of the four preceding days, but no one was to be met with. The ladies, I learned, were out riding; Matthew was buying a new setter; Mr. Blake was canvassing; and Captain Hammersley was in bed. Where was Miss Dashwood?—in her room; and Sir George?—he was with Mr. Blake.

"What! canvassing too?"

"Troth, that same was possible," was the intelligent reply of the old butler, at which I could not help smiling. I sat down, therefore, in the easiest chair I could find, and, unfolding the county paper, resolved upon learning how matters were going on in the political world. But, somehow, whether the editor was not brilliant, or the fire was hot, or that my own dreams were pleasanter to indulge in than his fancies, I fell sound asleep.

How differently is the mind attuned to the active busy world of thought and action, when awakened from sleep by any sudden and rude summons to arise and be stirring, and when called into existence by the sweet and silvery notes of softest music, stealing over the senses, and while they impart awakening thoughts of bliss and beauty, scarcely dissipating the dreary influence of slumber! Such was my first thought as, with closed lids, the thrilling chords of a harp broke upon my sleep, and aroused me to a feeling of unutterable pleasure. I turned gently round in my chair, and beheld Miss Dashwood. She

was seated in a recess of an old-fashioned window; the pale yellow glow of a wintry sun at evening fell upon her beautiful hair and tinged it with such a light as I have often since then seen in Rembrandt's pictures; her head leaned upon the harp, and, as she struck its chords at random, I saw that her mind was far away from all around her. As I looked, she suddenly started from her leaning attitude, and, parting back her curls from her brow, she preluded a few chords, and then sighed forth, rather than sang, that most beautiful of Moore's Melodies,—

"She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps."

Never before had such pathos, such deep utterance of feeling, met my astonished sense; I listened breathlessly as the tears fell one by one down my cheek; my bosom heaved and fell; and, when she ceased, I hid my head between my hands and sobbed aloud. In an instant she was beside me, and placing her hand upon my shoulder, said,

"Poor dear boy, I never suspected you of being there, or I should not have sung that mournful air."

I started and looked up, and from what I know not, but she suddenly crimsoned to her very forehead, while she added in a less assured tone,

"I hope, Mr. O'Malley, that you are much better, and I trust there is no imprudence in your being here."

"For the latter I shall not answer," said I, with a sickly smile; "but already I feel your music has done me service."

"Then let me sing more for you."

"If I am to have a choice, I should say, sit down, and let me hear you talk to me. My illness and the doctor together have made wild work of my poor brain; but, if you will talk to me——"

"Well, then, what shall it be about? Shall I tell you a fairy tale?"

"I need it not: I feel I am in one this instant."

"Well, then, what say you to a legend, for I am rich in my stores of them?"

"The O'Malleys have their chronicles, wild and barbarous enough, without the aid of Thor and Woden."

"Then, shall we chat of every-day matters? Should you like to hear how the election and the canvass go on?"

"Yes, of all things."

"Well, then, most favorably. Two baronies, with most unspeakable names, have declared for us, and confidence is rapidly increasing among our party. This I learned by chance yesterday; for papa never permits us to know anything of these matters—not even the names of the candidates."

"Well, that was the very point I was coming to, for the government were about to send down some one just as I left home; and I am most anxious to learn who it is."

"Then am I utterly valueless; for I really can't say what party the government espouses, and only know of our own."

"Quite enough for me that you wish it success," said I, gallantly. "Perhaps you can tell me if my uncle has heard of my accident?"

"Oh yes; but somehow he has not been here himself, but sent a friend—a Mr. Considine, I think; a very strange person he seemed. He demanded to see papa, and, it seems, asked him if your misfortune had been a thing of his contrivance, and whether he was ready to explain his conduct about it; and, in fact, I believe he is mad."

"Heaven confound him," I muttered between my teeth.

"And then he wished to have an interview with Captain Hammersley; however, he is too ill; but as the doctor hoped he might be down-stairs in a week, Mr. Considine kindly hinted that he should wait."

"Oh, then, do tell me how is the Captain."

"Very much bruised, very much disfigured, they say," said she, half smiling; "but not so much hurt in body as in mind."

"As how, may I ask?" said I, with an appearance of innocence.

"I don't exactly understand it; but it would appear that there was something like rivalry among you gentlemen chasseurs on that luckless morning, and that while you paid the penalty of a broken head, he was destined to lose his horse and break his arm."

"I certainly am sorry—most sincerely sorry for any share I might have had in the catastrophe; and my greatest regret, I confess, arises from the fact that I should cause *you* unhappiness."

"*Me*—pray explain?"

"Why, as Captain Hammersley—"

"Mr. O'Malley, you are too young now to make me suspect you have an intention to offend; but, I caution you, never repeat this."

I saw that I had transgressed, but how, I most honestly confess, I could not guess; for though I certainly was the senior of my fair companion in years, I was most

down his spectacles from his forehead, and casting a half-angry look at Sir George, for what he had suspected to be a doubt of his veracity.

"The General does not know, maybe, what that is," said some one.

"It is the dead agent," says Mr. Blake, "who always provides substitutes for any voters that may have died since the last election. A very important fact in statistics may thus be gathered from the poll-books of this county, which proves it to be the healthiest part of Europe—a freeholder has not died in it for the last fifty years."

"The 'Kiltopher boys' won't come this time—they say there's no use trying to vote when so many were transported last assizes for perjury."

"They're poor-spirited creatures," said another.

"Not they—they are as decent boys as any we have—they're willing to wreck the town for fifty shillings' worth of spirits; besides, if they don't vote for the county, they will for the borough."

This declaration seemed to restore these interesting individuals to favor, and now all attention was turned towards Bodkin, who was detailing the plan of a grand attack upon the polling-booths, to be headed by himself. By this time all the prudence and guardedness of the party had given way—whisky was in the ascendant, and every bold stroke of election policy, every cunning artifice, every ingenious device, was detailed and applauded, in a manner which proved that self-respect was not the inevitable gift of "mountain dew."

The mirth and fun grew momentarily more boisterous, and Miles Bodkin, who had twice before been prevented proposing some toast, by a telegraphic signal from the other end of the table, now swore that nothing should prevent him any longer, and rising with a smoking tumbler in his hand, delivered himself as follows:

"No, no, Phil Blake, ye needn't be winkin' at me that way—it's little I care for the spawn of the ould serpent." [Here great cheers greeted the speaker, in which, without well knowing why, I heartily joined.] "I'm going to give a toast, boys—a real good toast—none of your sentimental things about wall-flowers, or the vernal equinox, or that kind of thing, but a sensible, patriotic, manly, intrepid toast; a toast you must drink in the most universal, laborious, and awful manner—do ye see now?" [Loud cheers.] "If any man of you here present doesn't drain this toast to the bottom—(here the speaker looked fixedly at me, as did the rest of the company)—then, by the great gun of Athlone, I'll make him eat the decanter, glass stopper and all, for the good of his digestion—d'ye see now?"

The cheering at this mild determination prevented my hearing what followed; but the peroration consisted in a very glowing eulogy upon some person unknown, and a speedy return to him as member for Galway. Amid all the noise and tumult at this critical moment, nearly every eye at the table was turned upon me; and, as I concluded that they had been drinking my uncle's health, I thundered away at the mahogany with all my energy. At length, the hip, hipping over, and comparative quiet restored, I rose from my seat to return thanks—but strange enough, Sir George Dashwood did so likewise; and there we both stood amid an uproar that might well have shaken the courage of more practiced orators; while from every side came cries of "Hear, hear"—"Go on, Sir George"—"Speak out, General"—"Sit down, Charley"—"Confound the boy"—"Knock the legs from under him," etc. Not understanding why Sir George should interfere with what I regarded as my peculiar duty, I resolved not to give way, and avowed this determination in no very equivocal terms. "In that case," said the General, "I am to suppose that the young gentleman moves an amendment to your proposition; and, as the etiquette is in his favor, I yield."—Here he resumed his place, amid a most terrific scene of noise and tumult, while several humane proposals, as to my treatment, were made around me, and a kind suggestion thrown out to break my neck, by a near neighbor. Mr. Blake at length prevailed upon the party to hear what I had to say—for he was certain I should not detain them above a minute. The commotion having in some measure subsided, I began: "Gentleman, as the adopted son of the worthy man whose health you have just drunk——" Heaven knows how I should have continued—but here my eloquence was met by such a roar of laughing as I never before listened to; from one end of the board to the other it was one continued shout, and went on, too, as if all the spare lungs of the party had been kept in reserve for the occasion. I turned from one to the other—I tried to smile, and seemed to participate in the joke, but failed; I frowned—I looked savagely about where I could see enough to turn my wrath thitherward; and, as it chanced, not in vain; for Mr. Miles Bodkin, with an intuitive perception of my wishes, most suddenly ceased his mirth, and, assuming a

look of frowning defiance that had done him good service upon many former occasions, rose and said:

"Well, sir, I hope you're proud of yourself—you've made a nice beginning of it, and a pretty story you'll have for your uncle. But if you'd like to break the news by a letter, the General will have great pleasure in franking it for you; for, by the rock of Cashel, we'll carry him in against all the O'Malleys that ever cheated the Sheriff."

Scarcely were the words uttered, when I seized my wine glass, and hurled it with all my force at his head; so sudden was the act, and so true the aim, that Mr. Bodkin measured his length upon the floor ere his friends could appreciate his late eloquent effusion. The scene now became terrific; for though the redoubted Miles was *hors de combat*, his friends made a tremendous rush at, and would infallibly have succeeded in capturing me, had not Blake and four or five others interposed. Amid a desperate struggle, which lasted for some minutes, I was torn from the spot, carried bodily up-stairs, and pitched headlong into my own room, where, having doubly locked the door on the outside, they left me to my own cool and not over-agreeable reflections.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FLIGHT FROM GURT-NA-MORRA.

It was by one of those sudden and inexplicable revulsions which occasionally restore to sense and intellect the maniac of years' standing, that I was no sooner left alone in my chamber than I became perfectly sober. The fumes of the wine—and I had drunk deeply—were dissipated at once; my head, which but a moment before was half wild with excitement, was now cool, calm, and collected; and, stranger than all, I, who had only an hour since entered the dining-room with all the unsuspecting freshness of boyhood, became, by a mighty bound, a man—a man in all my feelings of responsibility, a man who, repelling an insult by an outrage, had resolved to stake his life upon the chance. In an instant a new era in life had opened before me—the light-headed gayety which fearlessness and youth impart, was replaced by one absorbing thought—one all-engrossing, all-pervading impression, that if I did not follow up my quarrel with Bodkin, I was dishonored and disgraced; my little knowledge of such matters not being sufficient to assure me that I was now the aggressor, and that any further steps in the affair should come from his side.

So thoroughly did my own griefs occupy me, that I had no thought for the disappointment my poor uncle was destined to meet with in hearing that the Blake interest was lost to him, and the former breach between the families irreparably widened by the events of the evening. Escape was my first thought; but how to accomplish it?—the door, a solid one of Irish oak, doubly locked and bolted, defied all my efforts to break it open; the window was at least five-and-twenty feet from the ground, and not a tree near to swing into. I shouted, I called aloud, I opened the sash, and tried if any one outside were within hearing; but in vain. Weary and exhausted, I sat down upon my bed and ruminated over my fortunes. Vengeance—quick, entire, decisive vengeance—I thirsted and panted for; and every moment I lived under the insult inflicted on me, seemed an age of torturing and maddening agony. I rose with a leap; a thought had just occurred to me. I drew the bed toward the window, and fastening the sheet to one of the posts with a firm knot, I twisted it into a rope, and let myself down to within about twelve feet of the ground, when I let go my hold, and dropped upon the grass beneath, safe and uninjured. A thin misty rain was falling, and I now perceived, for the first time, that in my haste I had forgotten my hat; this thought, however, gave me little uneasiness, and I took my way toward the stable, resolving, if I could, to saddle my horse, and get on before any intimation of my escape reached the family.

When I gained the yard all was quiet and deserted; the servants were doubtless enjoying themselves below stairs; and I met no one in the way. I entered the stable, threw the saddle upon "Badger," and, before five minutes from my descent from the window, was galloping toward O'Malley Castle at a pace that defied pursuit, had any one thought of it.

It was about five o'clock on a dark wintry morning as I led my horse through the well-known defiles of out-houses and stables which formed the long line of offices to my uncle's house. As yet no one was stirring; and as I wished to have my arrival a secret from the family, after providing for the wants of my gallant gray, I lifted the latch of the kitchen door—no other fastening being ever thought necessary, even at night—and gently groped

my way toward the stairs: all was perfectly still, and the silence now recalled me to reflection as to what course I should pursue. It was all-important that my uncle should know nothing of my quarrel, otherwise he would inevitably make it his own, and, by treating me like a boy in the matter, give the whole affair the very turn I most dreaded. Then, as to Sir Harry Boyle, he would most certainly turn the whole thing into ridicule, make a good story, perhaps a song out of it, and laugh at my notions of demanding satisfaction. Considine, I knew, was my man; but then he was at Athlone—at least so my uncle's letter mentioned; perhaps he might have returned; if not, to Athlone I should set off at once. So resolving, I stole noiselessly up-stairs, and reached the door of the Count's chamber; I opened it gently, and entered; and, though my step was almost imperceptible to myself, it was quite sufficient to alarm the watchful occupant of the room, who, springing up in his bed, demanded gruffly "Who's there?"

"Charles, sir," said I, shutting the door carefully, and approaching his bed-side. "Charles O'Malley, sir. I'm come to have a bit of your advice and, as the affair won't keep. I have been obliged to disturb you."

"Never mind, Charley," said the Count; "sit down, there's a chair somewhere near the bed—have you found it? There—well now, what is it? What news of Blake?"

"Very bad; no worse. But it is not exactly *that* I came about; I've got into a scrape, sir."

"Run off with one of the daughters," said Considine. "By jingo, I knew what those artful devils would be after."

"Not so bad as that," said I, laughing. "It's just a row, a kind of squabble; something that must come—"

"Ay, ay," said the Count, brightening up; "say you so, Charley? Begad, the young ones will beat us all out of the field. Who is it with—not old Blake himself—how was it? tell me all."

I immediately detailed the whole events of the preceding chapter, as well as his frequent interruptions would permit, and concluded by asking what further step was now to be taken, as I was resolved the matter should be concluded before it came to my uncle's ears.

"There you are all right; quite correct, my boy. But there are many points I should have wished otherwise in the conduct of the affair hitherto."

Conceiving that he was displeased at my petulance and boldness, I was about to commence a kind of defense, when he added—

"Because, you see," said he, assuming an oracular tone of voice, "throwing a wine-glass, with or without wine, in a man's face, is merely, as you may observe, a mark of denial and displeasure at some observation he may have made, not in any wise intended to injure him, further than in the wound to his honor at being so insulted, for which, of course, he must subsequently call you out. Whereas, Charley, in the present case, the view I take is different; the expression of Mr. Bodkin, as regards your uncle, was insulting to a degree—gratuitously offensive, and warranting a blow. Therefore, my boy, you should, under such circumstances, have preferred aiming at him with a decanter—a cut-glass decanter, well aimed and low, I have seen do effective service. However, as you remark it was your first thing of the kind, I am pleased with you—very much pleased with you. Now, then, for the next step." So saying, he arose from his bed, and striking a light with a tinder-box, proceeded to dress himself as leisurely as if for a dinner party, talking all the while.

"I will just take Godfrey's tax-cart and the roan mare on to Meelish; put them up at the little inn—it is not above a mile from Bodkin's—and I'll go over and settle the thing for you; you must stay quiet till I come back, and not leave the house on any account. I've got a case of old broad barrels there that will answer you beautifully; if you were anything of a shot, I'd give you my own cross handles, but they'd only spoil your shooting."

"I can hit a wine-glass in the stem at fifteen paces," said I, rather nettled at the disparaging tone in which he spoke of my performance.

"I don't care sixpence for that: the wine-glass had no pistol in his hand. Take the old German, then; see now, hold your pistol thus: no finger on the guard there, these two on the trigger. They are not hair triggers; drop the muzzle a bit: bend your elbow a trifle more; sight your man outside your arm; outside, mind, and take him in the hip, and, if anywhere higher, no matter."

By this time the Count had completed his toilet, and, taking the small mahogany box which contained his peace-makers under his arm, led the way toward the stables. When we reached the yard, the only person stirring there was a kind of half-witted boy, who, being about the house, was employed to run of mes-

sages for the servants, walk a stranger's horse, or to do any of the many petty services that regular domestics contrive always to devolve upon some adopted subordinate. He was seated upon a stone step, formerly used for mounting, and though the day was scarcely breaking, and the weather severe and piercing, the poor fellow was singing an Irish song, in a low monotonous tone, as he chafed a curb chain between his hands with some sand. As we came near he started up, and, as he pulled off his cap to salute us, gave a sharp and piercing glance at the Count, then at me; then once more upon my companion, from whom his eyes were turned to the brass-bound box beneath his arm; when, as if seized with a sudden impulse, he started on his feet, and set off toward the house with the speed of a greyhound, not, however, before Considine's practiced eye had anticipated his plan; for, throwing down the pistol-case, he dashed after him, and in an instant had seized him by the collar.

"It won't do, Patsey," said the Count; "you can't double on me."

"Oh, Count, darlin', Mister Considine avick, don't do it, don't now," said the poor fellow, falling on his knees, and blubbering like an infant.

"Hold your tongue, you villain, or I'll cut it out of your head," said Considine.

"And so I will; but don't do it, don't for the love of—"

"Don't do what, you whimpering scoundrel? What does he think I'll do?"

"Don't I know very well what you're after, what you're always after too? oh, wirra, wirra!" Here he wrung his hands and swayed himself backward and forward, a true picture of Irish grief.

"I'll stop his blubbering," said Considine, opening the box, and taking out a pistol, which he cocked leisurely, and pointed at the poor fellow's head; "another syllable now, and I'll scatter your brains upon that pavement."

"And do, and divil thank you; sure, it's your trade."

The coolness of the reply threw us both off our guard so completely, that we burst out into a hearty fit of laughing.

"Come, come," said the Count, at last, "this will never do; if he goes on this way, we'll have the whole house about us. Come, then, harness the roan mare, and here's half-a-crown for you."

"I wouldn't touch the best piece in your purse," said the poor boy; "sure it's blood-money, no less."

The words were scarcely spoken, when Considine seized him by the collar with one hand, and by the wrist with the other, and carried him over the yard to the stable, where, kicking open the door, he threw him on a heap of stones, adding, "If you stir now, I'll break every bone in your body;" a threat that seemed certainly considerably increased in its terrors, from the rough gripe he had already experienced, for the lad rolled himself up like a ball and sobbed as if his heart were breaking.

Very few minutes sufficed us now to harness the mare in the tax-cart, and, when all was ready, Considine seized the whip and locking the stable-door upon Patsey, was about to get up, when a sudden thought struck him. "Charley," said he, "that fellow will find some means to give the alarm; we must take him with us." So saying, he opened the door, and taking the poor fellow by the collar, flung him at my feet in the tax-cart.

We had already lost some time, and the roan mare was put to her fastest speed to make up for it. Our pace became, accordingly, a sharp one; and, as the road was bad, and the tax-cart no "patent inaudible," neither of us spoke. To me this was a great relief: the events of the last few days had given them the semblance of years, and all the reflection I could muster was little enough to make anything out of the chaotic mass—love, mischief, and misfortune—in which I had been involved since my leaving O'Malley Castle.

"Here we are, Charley," said Considine, drawing up short at the door of a little country ale-house, or in Irish parlance, *shebeen*, which stood at the meeting of four bleak roads, in a wild and barren mountain tract, beside the Shannon. "Here we are, my boy! jump out and let us be stirring."

"Here, Patsey, my man," said the Count, unraveling the prostrate and doubly-knotted figure at our feet; "lend a hand, Patsey." Much to my astonishment, he obeyed the summons with alacrity, and proceeded to unharness the mare with the greatest dispatch. My attention was, however, soon turned from him to my own more immediate concerns, and I followed my companion into the house.

"Joe," said the Count to the host, "is Mr. Bodkin up at the house this morning?"

"He's just passed this way, sir, with Mr. Malowney of Tillnamuck, in the gig, on their way from Mr. Blake's. They stopped here to order horses to go over to O'Malley Castle, and the gossoon is gone to look for a pair."

"All right," said Considine; and added, in a whisper, "we've done it well, Charley,

to be beforehand, or the governor would have found it all out, and taken the affair into his own hands. Now, all you have to do is, to stay quietly here till I come back, which will not be above an hour at farthest. Joe, send me the pony—keep an eye on Patsey, that he doesn't play us a trick—the short way to Mr. Bodkin's is through Scariff—ay, I know it well, good-by, Charley—by the Lord, we'll pepper him."

These were the last words of the worthy Count as he closed the door behind him, and left me to my own not very agreeable reflections. Independently of my youth and perfect ignorance of the world, which left me unable to form any correct judgment on my conduct, I knew that I had taken a great deal of wine, and was highly excited when my unhappy collision with Mr. Bodkin occurred. Whether, then, I had been betrayed into anything which could fairly have provoked his insulting retort or not, I could not remember; and now my most afflicting thought was, what opinion might be entertained of me by those at Blake's table; and, above all, what Miss Dashwood herself would think, and what narrative of the occurrence would reach her. The great effort of my last few days had been to stand well in her estimation, to appear something better in feeling, something higher in principle, than the rude and unpolished squirearchy about me, and now here was the end of it! What would she, what could she, think, but that I was the same punch-drinking, rowing, quarreling bumpkin as those whom I had so lately been carefully endeavoring to separate myself from? How I hated myself for the excess to which passion had betrayed me, and how I detested my opponent as the cause of all my present misery. "How very differently," thought I, "her friend the Captain would have conducted himself. His quiet and gentlemanly manner would have done fully as much to wipe out any insult on his honor as I could do, and, after all, would neither have disturbed the harmony of a dinner table, nor made himself, as I shuddered to think I had, a subject of rebuke, if not of ridicule." These harassing, torturing reflections continued to press on me, and I paced the room with my hands clasped and the perspiration upon my brow. "One thing is certain,—I can never see her again," thought I; "this disgraceful business must, in some shape or other, become known to her, and all I have been saying these last three days rise up in judgment against this one act, and stamp me an impostor; I that decried—nay, derided—our false notion of honor. Would that Considine were come! What can keep him now?" I walked to the door: a boy belonging to the house was walking the roan before the door. "What had, then, become of Pat?" I inquired; but no one could tell. He had disappeared shortly after our arrival, and had not been seen afterward. My own thoughts were, however, too engrossing to permit me to think more of this circumstance, and I turned again to enter the house, when I saw Considine advancing up the road at the full speed of his pony.

"Out with the mare, Charley—be alive, my boy—all's settled." So saying, he sprang from the pony, and proceeded to harness the roan with the greatest haste, informing me in broken sentences as he went on with all the arrangements:

"We are to cross the bridge of Portumna. They won the ground, and it seems Bodkin likes the spot; he shot Peyton there three years ago. Worse luck now, Charley, you know: by all the rule of chance, he can't expect the same thing twice—never four by honors in two deals—didn't say that, though—a sweet meadow, I know it well; small hillocks, like molehills, all over it—caught him at breakfast; I don't think he expected the message to come from us, but said that it was a very polite attention, and so it was, you know."

So he continued to ramble on as we once more took our seats in the tax-cart, and set out for the ground.

"What are you thinking of, Charley?" said the Count, as I kept silent for some minutes.

"I'm thinking, sir, if I were to kill him, what I must do after."

"Right, my boy; nothing like that, but I'll settle all for you. Upon my conscience, if it wasn't for the chance of his getting into another quarrel and spoiling the election, I'd go back for Godfrey; he'd like to see you break ground so prettily. And you say you're no shot?"

"Never could do anything with the pistol to speak of, sir," said I, remembering his rebuke of the morning.

"I don't mind that: you've a good eye; never take it off him after you're on the ground—follow him everywhere. Poor Callaghan, that's gone, shot his man always that way. He had a way of looking, without winking, that was very fatal at a short distance; a very good thing to learn, Charley, when you have a little spare time."

Half an hour's sharp driving brought us to the river side, where a boat had been

provided by Considine to ferry us over. It was now about eight o'clock, and a heavy, gloomy morning. Much rain had fallen overnight, and the dark and louring atmosphere seemed charged with more. The mountains looked twice their real size, and all the shadows were increased to an enormous extent. A very killing kind of light it was, as the Count remarked.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DUEL.

As the boatmen pulled in toward the shore we perceived, a few hundred yards off, a group of persons standing, whom we soon recognized as our opponents. "Charley," said the Count, grasping my arm tightly, as I stood up to spring on the land—"Charley, although you are only a boy, as I may say, I have no fear for your courage; but, still, more than that is needful here. This Bodkin is a noted duelist, and will try to shake your nerve. Now, mind that you take everything that happens quite with an air of indifference; don't let him think that he has any advantage over you, and you'll see how the tables will be turned in your favor."

"Trust to me, Count," said I; "I'll not disgrace you."

He pressed my hand tightly, and I thought that I discerned something like a slight twitch about the corners of his grim mouth, as if some sudden and painful thought had shot across his mind; but in a moment he was calm, and stern-looking as ever.

"Twenty minutes late, Mr. Considine," said a short, red-faced little man, with a military frock and foraging cap, as he held out his watch in evidence.

"I can only say, Captain Malowney, that we lost no time since we parted; we had some difficulty in finding a boat; but, in any case, we are here *now*, and that, I opine, is the important part of the matter."

"Quite right—very just indeed. Will you present me to your young friend—very proud to make your acquaintance, sir; your uncle and I met more than once in this kind of way. I was out with him in '92—was it? no, I think it was '93—when he shot Harry Burgoyne, who, by-the-by, was called the crack shot of our mess; but, begad, your uncle knocked his pistol hand to shivers, saying in his dry way, 'He must try the left hand this morning.' Count, a little this side, if you please."

While Considine and the Captain walked a few paces apart from where I stood. I had leisure to observe my antagonist, who stood among a group of his friends, talking and laughing away in great spirits. As the tone they spoke in was not of the lowest, I could catch much of their conversation at the distance I was from them. They were discussing the last occasion that Bodkin had visited this spot, and talking of the fatal event which happened then.

"Poor devil," said Bodkin, "it wasn't his fault; but you see some of the —th had been showing white feathers before that, and he was obliged to go out. In fact, the Colonel himself said, 'Fight, or leave the corps.' Well, out he came: it was a cold morning in February, with a frost the night before going off in a thin rain: well, it seems he had the consumption or something of that sort, with a great cough and spitting of blood, and this weather made him worse, and he was very weak when he came to the ground. Now, the moment I got a glimpse of him, I said to myself, 'He's pluck enough, but as nervous as a lady;' for his eye wandered all about, and his mouth was constantly twitching. 'Take off your great-coat, Ned,' said one of his people, when they were going to put him up; 'take it off, man.' He seemed to hesitate for an instant, when Michael Blake remarked, 'Arrah, let him alone; it's his mother makes him wear it, for the cold he has.' They all began to laugh at this, but I kept my eye upon him. And I saw that his cheek grew quite livid, and a kind of gray color, and his eyes filled up. 'I have you now,' said I to myself, and I shot him through the lungs."

"And this poor fellow," thought I, "was the only son of a widowed mother." I walked from the spot to avoid hearing further, and felt, as I did so, something like a spirit of vengeance rising within me, for the fate of one so untimely cut off.

"Here we are, all ready," said Malowney, springing over a small fence into the adjoining field—"take your ground, gentlemen."

Considine took my arm and walked forward. "Charley," said he, "I am to give the signal; I'll drop my glove when you are to fire, but don't look at me at all. I'll manage to catch Bodkin's eye, and do you watch him steadily, and fire when he does."

"I think that the ground we are leaving behind us is rather better," said some one.

"So it is," said Bodkin; "but it might

be troublesome to carry the young gentleman down that way—here all is fair and easy."

The next instant we were placed, and I well remember the first thought that struck me was, that there could be no chance of either of us escaping.

"Now, then," said the Count, "I'll walk twelve paces, turn and drop this glove, at which signal you fire, and *together* mind. The man who reserves his shot falls by my hand." This very summary denunciation seemed to meet general approbation, and the Count strutted forth. Notwithstanding the advice of my friend, I could not help turning my eyes from Bodkin to watch the retiring figure of the Count. At length he stopped—a second or two elapsed — he wheeled rapidly round, and let fall the glove. My eye glanced toward my opponent, I raised my pistol and fired. My hat turned half round upon my head, and Bodkin fell motionless to the earth. I saw the people around me rush forward; I caught two or three glances thrown at me with an expression of revengeful passion; I felt some one grasp me round the waist, and hurry me from the spot, and it was at least ten minutes after, as we were skimming the surface of the broad Shannon, before I could well collect my scattered faculties to remember all that was passing, as Considine, pointing to the two bullet holes in my hat, remarked, "Sharp practice, Charley; it was the overcharge saved you."

"Is he killed, sir?" I asked.

"Not quite, I believe, but as good; you took him just above the hip."

"Can he recover?" said I, with a voice tremulous from agitation, which I vainly endeavored to conceal from my companion.

"Not if the doctor can help it," said Considine; "for the fool keeps poking about for the ball. But now let's think of the next step; you'll have to leave this, and at once too."

Little more passed between us. As we rowed toward the shore, Considine was following up his reflections, and I had mine, alas! too many and too bitter to escape from.

As we neared the land, a strange spectacle caught our eye. For a considerable distance along the coast crowds of country people were assembled, who, forming in groups, and breaking into parties of two and three, were evidently watching with great anxiety what was taking place at the opposite side. Now, the distance was at least a mile, and therefore any part of the transaction which had been enacting there must have been quite beyond their view. While I was wondering at this, Considine cried out suddenly, "Too infamous, by Jove; we're murdered men."

"What do you mean?" said I.

"Don't you see that?" said he, pointing to something black which floated from a pole at the opposite side of the river.

"Yes; what is it?"

"It's his coat they've put upon an oar to show the people he's killed, that's all. Every man here's his tenant, and look—there!—they're not giving us much doubt as to their intention." Here a tremendous yell burst forth from the mass of people along the shore, which, rising to a terrific cry, sunk gradually down to a low wailing, then rose and fell again several times as the Irish death-cry filled the air and rose to heaven, as if imploring vengeance on a murderer.

The appalling influence of the *keen*, as it is called, had been familiar to me from my infancy, but it needed the awful situation I was placed in to consummate its horrors. It was at once my accusation and my doom. I knew well—none better—the vengeful character of the Irish peasant of the west, and that my death was certain I had no doubt. The very crime that sat upon my heart quailed its courage and unnerved my arm. As the boatmen looked from us toward the shore, and again at our faces, they, as if instinctively, lay upon their oars, and waited for our decision as to what course to pursue.

"Rig the spritsail, my boys," said Considine, "and let her head lie up the river, and be alive, for I see they're bailing a boat below the little reef there, and will be after us in no time."

The poor fellows, who, although strangers to us, sympathizing in what they perceived to be our imminent danger, stepped the light spar which acted as mast, and shook out their scanty rag of canvas in a minute. Considine, meanwhile, went aft, and steadying her head with an oar, held the small craft up to the wind till she lay completely over, and, as she rushed through the water, ran dipping her gunnel through the white foam.

"Where can we make without tacking, boys?" inquired the Count.

"If it blows on as fresh, sir, we'll run you ashore within half a mile of the castle."

"Put an oar to leeward," said Considine, "and keep her up more to the wind, and I promise you, my lads, you will not go home fresh and fasting, if you land us where you say."

"Here they come," said the other boatman, as he pointed back with his finger toward a large yawl which shot suddenly from the shore, with six sturdy fellows pulling at their oars, while three or four others were endeavoring to get up their rigging, which appeared tangled and confused at the bottom of the boat; the white splash of water, which fell each moment beside her, showing that the process of baling was still continued.

"Ah, then, may I never—av it isn't the ould *Dolphin* they have launched for the cruise," said one of our fellows.

"What's the *Dolphin*, then?"

"An ould boat of the Lord's (Lord Clanricarde's) that didn't see water, except when it rained, these four years, and is sun-cracked from stem to stern."

"She can sail, however," said Considine, who watched, with a painful anxiety, the rapidity of her course through the water.

"Nabocklish, she was a smuggler's jolly-boat, and well used to it. Look how they're pulling. God pardon them; but they're in no blessed humor this morning."

"Lay out upon your oars, boys; the wind's failing us," cried the Count, as the sail flapped lazily against the mast.

"It's no use, your honor," said the elder; "we'll be only breaking our hearts to no purpose; they're sure to catch us."

"Do as I bade you, at all events. What's that ahead of us there?"

"The Oat Rock, sir. A vessel with grain struck there, and went down with all aboard, four years last winter. There's no channel between it and the shore—all sunk rocks, every inch of it. There's the breeze"—the canvas fell over as he spoke, and the little craft lay down to it till the foaming water bubbled over her lee bow—"keep her head up, sir; higher—higher still"—but Considine little heeded the direction, steering straight for the narrow channel the man alluded to. "Tear and ages, but you're going right for the cloch na quirka!"

"Arrah, an' the devil a taste I'll be drowned for your devarsion," said the other, springing up.

"Sit down there, and be still," roared Considine, as he drew a pistol from the case at his feet, "if you don't want some leaden ballast to keep you so. Here, Charley, take this, and if that fellow stirs hand or foot—you understand me."

The two men sat sulkily in the bottom of the boat, which now was actually flying through the water. Considine's object was a clear one; he saw that, in sailing, we were greatly over-matched, and that our only chance lay in reaching the narrow and dangerous channel between the Oat Rock and the shore, by which we should distance the pursuit, the long reef of rocks that ran out beyond requiring a wide berth to escape from. Nothing but the danger behind us could warrant so rash a daring. The whole channel was dotted with patches of white and breaking foam—the sure evidence of the mischief beneath—while here and there a dash of spurting spray flew up from the dark water, where some cleft rock lay hid below the flood. Escape seemed impossible; but who would not have preferred even so slender a chance with so frightful an alternative behind him! As if to add terror to the scene, Considine had scarcely turned the boat ahead of the channel when a tremendous blackness spread over all around; the thunder pealed forth, and, amid the crashing of the hail and the bright glare of lightning, a squall struck us, and laid us nearly keel uppermost for several minutes. I well remember we rushed through the dark and blackening water, our little craft more than half filled, the oars floating off to leeward, and we ourselves kneeling on the bottom planks for safety. Roll after roll of loud thunder broke, as it were, just above our heads; while, in the swift dashing rain that seemed to hiss around us, every object was hidden, and even the other boat was lost to our view. The two poor fellows! I shall never forget their expression. One, a devout Catholic, had placed a little leaden image of a saint before him in the bow, and implored its intercession with a torturing agony of suspense that wrung my very heart; the other, apparently less alive to such consolations as his church afforded, remained with his hands clasped, his mouth compressed, his brows knitted, and his dark eyes bent upon me with the fierce hatred of a deadly enemy; his eyes were sunken and bloodshot, and all told of some dreadful conflict within; the wild ferocity of his look fascinated my gaze, and amid all the terrors of the scene I could not look from him. As I gazed, a second and more awful squall struck the boat, the mast bent over, and, with a loud report like a pistol shot, smashed at the thwart, and fell over, trailing the sail along the milky sea behind us. Meanwhile, the water rushed clean over us, and the boat seemed settling. At this dreadful moment the sailor's eye was bent upon me, his lips parted, and he muttered, as if to himself, "This it is to go to sea with a murderer." O God! the agony of that moment—the heart-felt and accus-

ing conscience that I was judged and doomed—that the brand of Cain was upon my brow—that my fellow-men had ceased forever to regard me as a brother—that I was an outcast and a wanderer forever. I bent forward till my forehead fell upon my knees, and I wept. Meanwhile, the boat flew through the water, and Considine, who alone among us seemed not to lose his presence of mind, cut away the mast, and sent it overboard. The storm now began to abate, and, as the black mass of cloud broke from around us, we beheld the other boat, also dismasted, far behind us, while all on board of her were employed in baling out the water with which she seemed almost sinking. The curtain of mist that had hidden us from each other no sooner broke than they ceased their labors for a moment, and, looking toward us, burst forth into a yell so wild, so savage, and so dreadful, my very heart quailed as its cadence fell upon my ear.

"Safe, my boy," said Considine, clapping me on the shoulder, as he steered the boat forth from its narrow path of danger, and once more reached the broad Shannon —"safe, Charley; though we've had a brush for it." In a minute more we reached the land, and drawing our gallant little craft on shore, set out for O'Malley Castle.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RETURN.

O'MALLEY CASTLE lay about four miles from the spot we landed at, and thither accordingly we bent our steps without loss of time. We had not, however, proceeded far, when, before us on the road, we perceived a mixed assemblage of horse and foot, hurrying along at a tremendous rate. The mob, which consisted of some hundred country people, were armed with sticks, scythes, and pitchforks, and, although not preserving any very military aspect in their order of march, were still a force quite formidable enough to make us call a halt, and deliberate upon what we were to do.

"They've outflanked us, Charley," said Considine; "however, all is not yet lost. But see, they've got sight of us—here they come."

At these words, the vast mass before us came pouring along, splashing the mud on every side, and huzzaing like so many Indians. In the front ran a bare-legged boy, waving his cap to encourage the rest, who followed him at about fifty yards behind.

"Leave that fellow for me," said the Count, coolly examining the lock of his pistol; "I'll pick him out, and load again in time for his friends' arrival. Charley, is that a gentleman I see far back in the crowd? Yes, to be sure it is; he's on a large horse—now he's pressing forward, so let—no—oh—ay—it's Godfrey O'Malley himself, and these are our own people." Scarcely were the words out when a tremendous cheer arose from the multitude, who, recognizing us at the same instant, sprung from their horses and ran forward to welcome us. Among the foremost was the scarecrow leader, whom I at once perceived to be poor Patsey, who, escaping in the morning, had returned at full speed to O'Malley Castle, and raised the whole country to my rescue. Before I could address one word to my faithful followers I was in my uncle's arms.

"Safe, my boy, quite safe?"

"Quite safe, sir."

"No scratch anywhere?"

"Nothing but a hat the worse, sir," said I, showing the two bullet holes in my headpiece.

His lip quivered as he turned and whispered something into Considine's ear which I heard not; but the Count's reply was "Devil a bit, as cool as you see him this minute."

"And Bodkin, what of him?"

"This day's work's his last," said Considine; "the ball entered here; but come along, Godfrey; Charley's new at this kind of thing, and we had better discuss matters in the house."

Half an hour's brisk trot—for we were soon supplied with horses—brought us back to the Castle, much to the disappointment of our cortége, who had been promised a *scrimmage*, and went back in very ill-humor at the breach of contract.

The breakfast-room, as we entered, was filled with my uncle's supporters, all busily engaged over poll-books and booth tallies, in preparation for the eventful day of battle. These, however, were immediately thrown aside to hasten round me, and inquire all the details of my duel. Considine, happily for me, however, assumed all the dignity of an historian, and recounted the events of the morning so much to my honor and glory, that I, who only a little before felt crushed and bowed down by the misery of my late duel, began, amid the warm congratulations and eulogiums about me, to think I was no small hero; and, in fact, something very much resem-

bling "the man for Galway." To this feeling a circumstance that followed assisted in contributing: while we were eagerly discussing the various results likely to arise from the meeting, a horse galloped rapidly to the door, and a loud voice called out, "I can't get off, but tell him to come here." We rushed out and beheld Captain Malowney, Mr. Bodkin's second, covered with mud from head to foot, and his horse reeking with foam and sweat. "I am hurrying on to Athlone for another doctor; but I've called to tell you that the wound is not supposed to be mortal—he may recover yet." Without waiting for another word, he dashed spurs into his nag and rattled down the avenue at full gallop. Mr. Bodkin's dearest friend on earth could not have received the intelligence with more delight, and I now began to listen to the congratulations of my friends with a more tranquil spirit. My uncle, too, seemed much relieved by the information, and heard with great good temper my narrative of the few days at Gurt-na-Morra. "So then," said he, as I concluded, "my opponent is at least a gentleman; that is a comfort."

"Sir George Dashwood," said I, "from all I have seen, is a remarkably nice person, and I am certain you will meet with only the fair and legitimate opposition of an opposing candidate in him—no mean or unmanly subterfuge."

"All right, Charley. Well, now, your affair of this morning must keep you quiet here for a few days, come what will; by Monday next, when the election takes place, Bodkin's fate will be pretty clear, one way or the other, and, if matters go well, you can come into town; otherwise, I have arranged with Considine to take you over to the Continent for a year or so; but we'll discuss all this in the evening. Now, I must start on a canvass. Boyle expects to meet you at dinner to-day; he is coming from Athlone on purpose. Now, good-by!"

When my uncle had gone I sank into a chair, and fell into a musing fit over all the changes a few hours had wrought in me. From a mere boy, whose most serious employment was stocking the house with game, or inspecting the kennel, I had sprung at once into man's estate, was complimented for my coolness, praised for my prowess, lauded for my discretion, by those who were my seniors by nearly half a century; talked to in a tone of confidential intimacy by my uncle, and, in a word, treated in all respects as an equal—and such was all the work of a few hours. But so it is, the eras in life are separated by a narrow boundary—some trifling accident, some casual rencontre impels us across the Rubicon, and we pass from infancy to youth—from youth to manhood—from manhood to age—less by the slow and imperceptible step of time than by some one decisive act or passion, which, occurring at a critical moment, elicits a long latent feeling, and impresses our existence with a color that tinges it for many a long year. As for me, I had cut the tie which bound me to the careless gayety of boyhood with a rude gash. In three short days I had fallen deeply, desperately in love, and had wounded, if not killed, an antagonist in a duel. As I meditated on these things, I was aroused by the noise of horses' feet in the yard beneath. I opened the window and beheld no less a person than Captain Hammersley. He was handing a card to a servant, which he was accompanying by a verbal message: the impression of something like hostility on the part of the Captain had never left my mind, and I hastened down-stairs just in time to catch him as he turned from the door.

"Ah, Mr. O'Malley!" said he, in a most courteous tone, "they told me you were not at home."

I apologized for the blunder, and begged of him to alight and come in.

"I thank you very much; but, in fact, my hours are now numbered here. I have just received an order to join my regiment: we have been ordered for service, and Sir George has most kindly permitted my giving up my staff appointment. I could not, however, leave the country without shaking hands with you. I owe you a lesson in horsemanship, and I'm only sorry that we are not to have another day together."

"Then you are going out to the Peninsula?" said I.

"Why, we hope so: the Commander-in-Chief, they say, is in great want of cavalry, and we scarcely less in want of something to do. I'm sorry you are not coming with us."

"Would to Heaven I were!" said I, with an earnestness that almost made my brain start.

"Then, why not?"

"Unfortunately, I am peculiarly situated. My worthy uncle, who is all to me in this world, would be quite alone if I were to leave him; and although he has never said so, I know he dreads the possibility of my suggesting such a thing to him: so that, between his fears and mine,

the matter is never broached by either party, nor do I think ever can be."

"Devilish hard—but I believe you are right; something, however, may turn up yet to alter his mind, and, if so, and if you do take to dragooning, don't forget George Hammersley will be always most delighted to meet you; and so good-by, O'Malley, good-by."

He turned his horse's head and was already some paces off, when he returned to my side, and, in a lower tone of voice, said,

"I ought to mention to you that there has been much discussion on your affair at Blake's table, and only one opinion on the matter among all parties—that you acted perfectly right. Sir George Dashwood—no mean judge of such things—quite approves of your conduct, and I believe wishes you to know as much; and now, once more good-by."

CHAPTER X.

THE ELECTION.

THE important morning at length arrived, and, as I looked from my bedroom window at daybreak, the crowd of carriages of all sorts and shapes decorated with banners and placards; the incessant bustle; the hurrying hither and thither; the cheering as each new detachment of voters came up, mounted on jaunting-cars, or on horses whose whole caparison consisted in a straw rope for a bridle, and a saddle of the same frail material—all informed me that the election day was come. I lost no further time, but proceeded to dress with all possible dispatch. When I appeared in the breakfast-room, it was already filled with some seventy or eighty persons of all ranks and ages, mingled confusedly together, and enjoying the hospitable fare of my uncle's house, while they discussed all the details and prospects of the election. In the hall—the library—the large drawing-room, too, similar parties were also assembled, and, as new-comers arrived, the servants were busy in preparing tables before the door and up the large terrace that ran the entire length of the building. Nothing could be more amusing than the incongruous mixture of the guests, who, with every variety of eatable that chance or inclination provided, were thus thrown into close contact, having only this in common, the success of the cause they were engaged in. Here was the old Galway squire, with an ancestry that reached to Noah, sitting side by side with the poor cottier, whose whole earthly possession was what, in Irish phrase, is called a "potato garden," meaning the exactly smallest possible patch of ground out of which a very Indian-rubber conscience could presume to vote. Here sat the old simple-minded, farmer-like man, in close conversation with a little white-foreheaded, keen-eyed personage, in a black coat and eye-glass—a flash attorney from Dublin, learned in flaws of the registry, and deep in the subtleties of election law. There was an Athlone horse-dealer, whose habitual daily practices in imposing the halt, the lame, and the blind upon the unsuspecting, for beasts of blood and mettle, well qualified him for the trickery of a county contest. Then there were scores of squireen gentry, easily recognized on common occasions by a green coat, brass buttons, dirty cords, and dirtier top-boots, a lash-whip, and a half-bred fox-hound; but now, fresh-washed for the day, they presented something of the appearance of a swell mob, adjusted to the meridian of Galway. A mass of frieze-coated, brown-faced, bullet-headed peasantry filling up the large spaces, dotted here and there with a sleek, roguish-eyed priest, or some low electioneering agent, detailing, for the amusement of the company, some of those cunning practices of former times, which, if known to the proper authorities, would, in all likelihood, cause the talented narrator to be improving the soil of Sydney, or fishing on the banks of the Swan River; while, at the head and foot of each table, sat some personal friend of my uncle, whose ready tongue, and still readier pistol, made him a personage of some consequence, not more to his own people than to the enemy. While of such material were the company, the fare before them was no less varied: here some rubicund squire was deep in amalgamating the contents of a venison pasty with some of Sneyd's oldest claret; his neighbor, less ambitious, and less erudite in such matters, was devouring rashers of bacon, with liberal potations of potteen; some pale-cheeked scion of the law, with all the dust of the Four Courts in his throat, was sipping his humble beverage of black tea beside four sturdy cattle-dealers from Ballinasloe, who were discussing hot whisky punch and *spoleaion* (boiled beef) at the very primitive hour of eight in the morning. Amid the clank of decanters, the crash of knives and plates, the jingling of glasses, the laughter and voices of the guests were audibly increas-

ing, and the various modes of "running a buck" (anglicè, substituting a vote), or hunting a badger, were talked over on all sides, while the price of a *veal* (a calf) or a voter was disputed with all the energy of debate.

Refusing many an offered place, I went through the different rooms in search of Considine, to whom circumstances of late had somehow greatly attached me.

"Here, Charley," cried a voice I was very familiar with—"here's a place I've been keeping for you."

"Ah, Sir Harry, how do you do? Any of that grouse-pie to spare?"

"Abundance, my boy; but I'm afraid I can't say as much for the liquor: I have been shouting for claret this half-hour in vain—do get us some nutriment down here, and the Lord will reward you. What a pity it is," he added, in a lower tone, to his neighbor—"what a pity a quart bottle won't hold a quart; but I'll bring it before the House one of these days." That he kept his word in this respect, a motion on the books of the Honorable House will bear me witness.

"Is this it?" said he, turning toward a farmer-like old man, who had put some question to him across the table; "is it the apple-pie you'll have?"

"Many thanks to your honor—I'd like it, av it was wholesome."

"And why shouldn't it be wholesome?" said Sir Harry.

"Troth, then, myself does not know; but my father, I heerd tell, died of an apple-plexy, and I'm afeerd of it."

I at length found Considine, and learned that, as a very good account of Bodkin had arrived, there was no reason why I should not proceed to the hustings; but I was secretly charged not to take any prominent part in the day's proceedings. My uncle I only saw for an instant;—he begged me to be careful, avoid all scrapes, and not to quit Considine. It was past ten o'clock when our formidable procession got under way, and headed toward the town of Galway. The road was, for miles, crowded with our followers; banners flying and music playing, we presented something of the spectacle of a very ragged army on its march. At every cross-road a mountain-path re-enforcement awaited us, and, as we wended along, our numbers were momentarily increasing; here and there along the line, some energetic and not over-sober adherent was regaling his auditory with a speech in laudation of the O'Malleys since the days of Moses, and more than one priest was heard threatening the terrors of his church in aid of a cause to whose success he was pledged and bound. I rode beside the Count, who, surrounded by a group of choice spirits, recounted the various happy inventions by which he had, on divers occasions, substituted a personal quarrel for a contest. Boyle also contributed his share of election anecdote, and one incident he related, which, I remember, amused me much at the time.

"Do you remember Billy Calvert, that came down to contest Kilkenny?" inquired Sir Harry.

"What! ever forget him!" said Considine, "with his well-powdered wig, and his hessians. There never was his equal for lace ruffles and rings."

"You never heard, maybe, how he lost the election?"

"He resigned, I believe, or something of that sort."

"No, no," said another; "he never came forward at all; there's some secret in it, for Tom Butler was elected without a contest."

"Jack, I'll tell you how it happened. I was on my way up from Cork, having finished my own business, and just carried the day, not without a push for it. When we reached—Lady Mary was with me—when we reached Kilkenny, the night before the election, I was not ten minutes in town till Butler heard of it, and sent off express to see me; I was at my dinner when the messenger came, and promised to go over when I'd done; but, faith, Tom didn't wait, but came rushing up-stairs himself, and dashed into the room in the greatest hurry.

"'Harry,' says he, 'I'm done for; the corporation of free smiths, that were always above bribery, having voted for myself and my father before, for four pounds ten a man, won't come forward under six guineas and whiskey. Calvert has the money; they know it. The devil a farthing we have; and we've been paying all our fellows that can't read in Hennesy's notes, and you know the bank's broke this three weeks.'

"On he went, giving me a most disastrous picture of his cause, and concluded by asking if I could suggest anything under the circumstances.

"'You couldn't get a decent mob and clear the poll?'

"'I am afraid not,' said he, despondingly.

"'Then I don't see what's to be done, if you can't pick a fight with himself. Will he go out?'

"'Lord knows; they say he's so afraid

of that, that it has prevented him coming down till the very day. But he is arrived now; he came in the evening, and is stopping at Walsh's, in Patrick street.'

"'Then I'll see what can be done,' said I.

"'Is that Calvert, the little man that blushes when the Lady Lieutenant speaks to him?' said Lady Mary.

"'The very man.'

"'Would it be of any use to you if he could not come on the hustings to-morrow?' said she again.

"''Twould gain us the day; half the voters don't believe he's here at all, and his chief agent cheated all the people on the last election, and if Calvert didn't appear, he wouldn't have ten votes to register. But why do you ask?'

"'Why, that, if you like, I'll bet you a pair of diamond earrings he shan't show.'

"'Done,' said Butler; 'and I promise a necklace into the bargain, if you win, but I'm afraid you're only quizzing me.'

"'Here's my hand on it,' said she; 'and now let's talk of something else.'

"As Lady Mary never asked my assistance, and as I knew she was very well able to perform whatever she undertook, you may be sure I gave myself very little trouble about the whole affair, and, when they came, I went off to breakfast with Tom's committee, not knowing anything that was to be done.

"Calvert had given orders that he was to be called at eight o'clock, and so a few minutes before that time a gentle knock came to the door.

"'Come in,' said he, thinking it was the waiter, and covering himself up in the clothes, for he was the most bashful creature ever was seen—'come in.'

"The door opened, and what was his horror to find that a lady entered in her dressing gown, her hair on her shoulders, very much tossed and disheveled! The moment she came in she closed the door, and locked it, and then sat leisurely down upon a chair.

"Billy's teeth chattered, and his limbs trembled, for this was an adventure of a very novel kind for him. At last he took courage to speak.

"'I am afraid, madam,' said he, 'that you are under some unhappy mistake, and that you suppose this chamber is—'

"'Mr. Calvert's,' said the lady, with a solemn voice, 'is it not?'

"'Yes, madam, I am that person.'

"'Thank God,' said the lady, with a very impressive tone, 'here I am safe.'

"Billy grew very much puzzled at these words; but hoping that, by his silence, the lady would proceed to some explanation, he said no more. She, however, seemed to think that nothing further was necessary, and sat still and motionless, with her hands before her and her eyes fixed on Billy.

"'You seem to forget me, sir?' said she, with a faint smile.

"'I do, indeed, madam; the half-light, the novelty of your costume, and the strangeness of the circumstance altogether, must plead for me—if I appear rude enough.'

"'I am Lady Mary Boyle,' said she.

"'I do remember you, madam; but may I ask—?'

"'Yes, yes, I know what you would ask; you would say, why are you here? how comes it that you have so far outstepped the propriety of which your whole life is an example, that alone, at such a time, you appear in the chamber of a man whose character for gallantry—?'

"'Oh, indeed—indeed, my lady, nothing of the kind.'

"'Ah, alas! poor defenseless women learn, too late, how constantly associated is the retiring modesty which decries, with the pleasing powers which insure success—'

"Here she sobbed, Billy blushed, and the clock struck nine.

"'May I then beg, madam—'

"'Yes, yes, you shall hear it all; but my poor scattered faculties will not be the clearer by your hurrying me. You know, perhaps,' continued she, 'that my maiden name was Rogers?' He of the blankets bowed, and she resumed. 'It is now eighteen years since, that a young, unsuspecting, fond creature, reared in all the care and fondness of doting parents, tempted her first step in life, and trusted her fate to another's keeping. I am that unhappy person; the other, that monster in human guise that smiled but to betray, that won but to ruin and destroy, is he whom you know as Sir Harry Boyle.'

"Here she sobbed for some minutes, wiped her eyes, and resumed her narrative. Beginning at the period of her marriage, she detailed a number of circumstances, in which poor Calvert, in all his anxiety to come *au fond* at matters, could never perceive bore upon the question in any way; but, as she recounted them all with great force and precision, entreating him to bear in mind certain circumstances to which she should recur by-and-by, his attention was kept on the stretch, and it was only when the clock struck ten that he was fully aware how his morning was pass-

ing, and what surmises his absence might originate.

"'May I interrupt you for a moment, dear madam? Was it nine or ten o'clock which struck last?'

"'How should I know?' said she, frantically. 'What are hours and minutes to her who has passed long years of misery?'

"'Very true—very true,' replied he, timidly, and rather fearing for the intellects of his fair companion.

"She continued.

"The narrative, however, so far from becoming clearer, grew gradually more confused and intricate, and, as frequent references were made by the lady to some previous statement, Calvert was more than once rebuked for forgetfulness and inattention, where, in reality, nothing less than shorthand could have borne him through.

"'Was it in '93 I said that Sir Harry left me at Tuam?'

"'Upon my life, madam, I am afraid to aver; but it strikes me—'

"'Gracious powers! and this is he whom I fondly trusted to make the depository of my woes—cruel, cruel man.' Here she sobbed considerably for several minutes, and spoke not.

"A loud cheer of 'Butler for ever!' from the mob without, now burst upon their hearing, and recalled poor Calvert at once to the thought that the hours were speeding fast, and no prospect of the everlasting tale coming to an end.

"'I am deeply, most deeply grieved, my dear madam,' said the little man, sitting up in a pyramid of blankets, 'but hours, minutes, are most precious to me this morning. I am about to be proposed as member for Kilkenny.'

"At these words the lady straightened her figure out, threw her arms at either side, and burst into a fit of laughter, which poor Calvert knew at once to be hysterics. Here was a pretty situation: the bell-rope lay against the opposite wall, and, even if it did not, would he be exactly warranted in pulling it?

"'May the devil and all his angels take Sir Harry Boyle and his whole connection to the fifth generation,' was his sincere prayer, as he sat, like a Chinese juggler, under his canopy.

"At length the violence of the paroxysm seemed to subside, the sobs became less frequent, the kicking less forcible, and the lady's eyes closed, and she appeared to have fallen asleep.

"'Now is the moment,' said Billy; 'if I could only get as far as my dressing-gown.' So saying, he worked himself down noiselessly to the foot of his bed, looked fixedly at the fallen lids of the sleeping lady, and essayed one leg from the blankets. 'Now or never,' said he, pushing aside the curtain, and preparing for a spring. One more look he cast at his companion, and then leaped forth; but just as he lit upon the floor, she again roused herself, screaming with horror. Billy fell upon the bed, and, rolling himself in the bedclothes, vowed never to rise again till she was out of the visible horizon.

"'What is all this? what do you mean, sir?' said the lady, reddening with indignation.

"'Nothing, upon my soul, madam; it was only my dressing-gown!'

"'Your dressing-gown!' said she, with an emphasis worthy of Siddons; 'a likely story for Sir Harry to believe, sir; fie, fie, sir.'

"This last allusion seemed a settler; for the luckless Calvert heaved a profound sigh, and sunk down as if all hope had left him. 'Butler for ever!' roared the mob; 'Calvert for ever!' cried a boy's voice from without; 'Three groans for the runaway!' answered this announcement; and a very tender inquiry of, 'Where is he?' was raised by some hundred mouths.

"'Madam,' said the almost frantic listener—'madam, I must get up; I must dress. I beg of you to permit me.'

"'I have nothing to refuse, sir. Alas! disdain has long been my only portion. Get up, if you will.'

"'But,' said the astonished man, who was well-nigh deranged at the coolness of this reply—'but how am I to do so if you sit there?'

"'Sorry for any inconvenience I may cause you; but, in the crowded state of the hotel, I hope you see the impropriety of my walking about the passages in this costume?'

"'And, great God! madam, why did you come out in it?'

"A cheer from the mob prevented her reply being audible. One o'clock tolled out from the great bell of the cathedral.

"'There's one o'clock, as I live.'

"'I heard it,' said the lady.

"'The shouts are increasing. What is that I hear? *Butler is in.* Gracious mercy, is the election over?'

"The lady stepped to the window, drew aside the curtain, and said, 'Indeed, it would appear so. The mob are cheering Mr. Butler.' [A deafening shout burst from the street.] 'Perhaps you'd like to

see the fun, so I'll not detain you any longer. So, good-by, Mr. Calvert; and as your breakfast will be cold, in all likelihood, come down to No. 4, for Sir Harry's a late man, and will be glad to see you.'"

CHAPTER XI.

AN ADVENTURE.

As thus we lightened the road with chatting, the increasing concourse of people, and the greater throng of carriages that filled the road, announced that we had nearly reached our destination.

"Considine," said my uncle, riding up to where we were, "I have just got a few lines from Davern. It seems Bodkin's people are afraid to come in: they know what they must expect, and if so, more than half of that barony is lost to our opponent."

"Then he has no chance whatever."

"He never had, in my opinion," said Sir Harry.

"We'll see soon," said my uncle, cheerfully, and rode to the post.

The remainder of the way was occupied in discussing the various possibilities of the election, into which I was rejoiced to find that defeat never entered.

In the goodly days I speak of, a county contest was a very different thing indeed from the tame and insipid farce that now passes under that name; where a briefless barrister, bullied by both sides, sits as assessor—a few drunken voters—a radical O'Connellite grocer—a demagogue priest—a deputy grand purple something from the Trinity College lodge, with some half-dozen followers, shouting, "To the devil with Peel!" or "Down with Dens!" form the whole *corps de ballet*. No, no; in the times I refer to the voters were some thousands in number, and the adverse parties took the field, far less dependent for success upon previous pledge or promise made them, than upon the actual stratagem of the day. Each went forth, like a general to battle, surrounded by a numerous and well-chosen staff; one party of friends, acting as commissariat, attended to the victualing of the voters,—that they obtained a due, or rather undue allowance of liquor, and came properly drunk to the poll; others, again, broke into skirmishing parties, and, scattered over the country, cut off the enemy's supplies, breaking down their post-chaises, upsetting their jaunting-cars, stealing their poll-books, and kidnapping their agents. Then there were secret service people, bribing the enemy and enticing them to desert; and lastly, there was a species of sapper-and-miner force, who invented false documents, denied the identity of the opposite party's people, and, when hard pushed, provided persons who took bribes from the enemy, and gave evidence afterward on a petition. Amid all these encounters of wit and ingenuity, the personal friends of the candidate formed a species of rifle brigade, picking out the enemy's officers, and doing sore damage to their tactics, by shooting a proposer, or wounding a seconder—a considerable portion of every leading agent's fee being intended as compensation for the duels he might, could, would, should, or ought to fight during the election. Such, in brief, was a contest in the olden time; and, when it is taken into consideration that it usually lasted a fortnight or three weeks, that a considerable military force was always engaged (for our Irish law permits this), and which, when nothing pressing was doing, was regularly assailed by both parties—that far more dependence was placed in a bludgeon than a pistol—and that the man who registered a vote without a cracked pate was regarded as a kind of natural phenomenon, some faint idea may be formed how much such a scene must have contributed to the peace of the county, and the happiness and welfare of all concerned in it.

As we rode along, a loud cheer from a road that ran parallel to the one we were pursuing attracted our attention, and we perceived that the cortége of the opposite party was hastening on to the hustings. I could distinguish the Blakes' girls on horseback among a crowd of officers in undress, and saw something like a bonnet in the carriage-and-four which headed the procession, and which I judged to be that of Sir George Dashwood. My heart beat strongly as I strained my eyes to see if Miss Dashwood was there; but I could not discern her, and it was with a sense of relief that I reflected on the possibility of our not meeting under circumstances wherein our feelings and interests were so completely opposed. While I was engaged in making this survey, I had accidentally dropped behind my companions; my eyes were firmly fixed upon that carriage, and, in the faint hope that it contained the object of all my wishes, I forgot everything else. At length the cortége entered the town, and, passing beneath a heavy stone gateway, was lost to my view. I was still

lost in reverie, when an under-agent of my uncle's rode up.

"Oh! Master Charles," said he, "what's to be done? They've forgotten Mr. Holmes at Woodford, and we haven't a carriage, chaise, or even a car left to send for him."

"Have you told Mr. Considine?" inquired I.

"And sure you know yourself how little Mr. Considine thinks of a lawyer. It's small comfort he'd give me if I went to tell him: if it was a case of pistols or a bullet mold, he'd ride back the whole way himself for them."

"Try Sir Harry Boyle, then."

"He's making a speech this minute before the Court-house."

This had sufficed to show me how far behind my companions I had been loitering, when a cheer from the distant road again turned my eyes in that direction: it was the Dashwood carriage returning after leaving Sir George at the hustings. The head of the britska, before thrown open, was now closed, and I could not make out if any one were inside.

"Devil a doubt of it," said the agent, in answer to some question of a farmer who rode beside him; "will you stand to me?"

"Troth, to be sure I will."

"Here goes, then," said he, gathering up his reins and turning his horse toward the fence at the roadside; "follow me now, boys."

The order was well obeyed, for, when he had cleared the ditch, a dozen stout country fellows, well mounted, were beside him. Away they went at a hunting pace, taking every leap before them, and heading toward the road before us.

Without thinking further of the matter, I was laughing at the droll effect the line of frieze coats presented as they rode side by side, over the stone walls, when an observation near me aroused my attention.

"Ah, then, av they know anything, of Tim Finucane, they'll give it up peaceably: its little he'd think of taking the coach from under the judge himself."

"What are they about, boys?" said I.

"Goin' to take the chaise-and-four forninst ye, yer honor," said the man.

I waited not to hear more, but darting spurs into my horse's sides, cleared the fence in one bound. My horse, a strong-knit half-bred, was as fast as a racer for a short distance; so that when the agent and his party had come up with the carriage, I was only a few hundred yards behind. I shouted out with all my might, but they either heard not or heeded not, for scarcely was the first man over the fence into the road, when the postilion on the leader was felled to the ground, and his place supplied by his slayer; the boy on the wheeler shared the same fate, and, in an instant, so well managed was the attack, the carriage was in possession of the assailants. Four stout fellows had climbed into the box and the rumble, and six others were climbing to the interior, regardless of the aid of steps. By this time the Dashwood party had got the alarm, and returned in full force—not, however, before the other had laid whip to the horses, and set out in full gallop; and now commenced the most terrific race I ever witnessed.

The four carriage horses, which were the property of Sir George, were English thorough-breds of great value, and, totally unaccustomed to the treatment they experienced, dashed forward at a pace that threatened annihilation to the carriage at every bound. The pursuers, though well mounted, were speedily distanced, but followed at a pace that, in the end, was certain to overtake the carriage. As for myself, I rode on beside the road, at the full speed of my horse, shouting, cursing, imploring, execrating, and beseeching at turns, but all in vain—the yells and shouts of the pursuers and pursued drowned all other sounds except when the thundering crash of the horses' feet rose above all. The road, like most western Irish roads until the present century, lay straight as an arrow for miles, regardless of every opposing barrier, and, in the instance in question, crossed a mountain at its very highest point. Toward this pinnacle the pace had been tremendous; but, owing to the higher breeding of the cattle, the carriage party had still the advance, and when they reached the top they proclaimed the victory by a cheer of triumph and derision. The carriage disappeared beneath the crest of the mountain, and the pursuers halted, as if disposed to relinquish the chase.

"Come on, boys. Never give up," cried I, springing over into the road, and heading the party to which by every right I was opposed.

It was no time for deliberation, and they followed me with a hearty cheer that convinced me I was unknown. The next instant we were on the mountain top, and beheld the carriage half way down beneath us, still galloping at full stretch.

"We have them now," said a voice behind me; "they'll never turn Lurra Bridge, if we only press on."

The speaker was right: the road at the mountain foot turned at a perfect right angle, and then crossed a lofty one-arched bridge, over a mountain torrent that ran deep and boisterously beneath. On we went, gaining at every stride, for the fellows who rode postilion well knew what was before them, and slackened their pace to secure a safe turning. A yell of victory arose from the pursuers, but was answered by the others with a cheer of defiance. The space was now scarcely two hundred yards between us, when the head of the britska was flung down, and a figure that I at once recognized as the redoubted Tim Finucane, one of the boldest and most reckless fellows in the county, was seen standing on the seat, holding—gracious Heavens! it was true—holding in his arms the apparently lifeless figure of Miss Dashwood.

"Hold in!" shouted the ruffian, with a voice that rose high above all the other sounds. "Hold in! or, by the Eternal, I'll throw her, body and bones, into the Lurra Gash!" for such was the torrent called, that boiled and foamed a few yards before us.

He had by this time got firmly planted on the hind seat, and held the drooping form on one arm, with all the ease of a giant's grasp.

"For the love of God!" said I, "pull up. I know him well—he'll do it to a certainty if you press on."

"And we know you too," said a ruffianly fellow, with a dark whisker meeting beneath his chin, "and have some scores to settle ere we part—"

But I heard no more. With one tremendous effort I dashed my horse forward. The carriage turned an angle of the road—for an instant was out of sight—another moment I was behind it.

"Stop!" I shouted, with a last effort, but in vain. The horses, maddened and infuriated, sprang forward, and, heedless of all efforts to turn them, the leaders sprang over the low parapet of the bridge, and hanging for a second by the traces, fell with a crash into the swollen torrent beneath. By this time I was beside the carriage. Finucane had now clambered to the box, and, regardless of the death and ruin around, bent upon his murderous object, he lifted the light and girlish form above his head, bent backward, as if to give greater impulse to his effort, when, twining my lash around my wrist, I leveled my heavy and loaded hunting whip at his head; the weighted ball of lead struck him exactly beneath his hat, he staggered, his hands relaxed, and he fell lifeless to the ground: the same instant I was felled to the earth by a blow from behind, and saw no more.

CHAPTER XII.

MICKEY FREE.

NEARLY three weeks followed the event I have just narrated ere I again was restored to consciousness. The blow by which I was felled—from what hand coming it was never after discovered—had brought on concussion of the brain, and for several days my life was despaired of. As by slow steps I advanced toward recovery, I learned from Considine that Miss Dashwood, whose life was saved by my interference, had testified, in the warmest manner, her gratitude, and that Sir George had, up to the period of his leaving the country, never omitted a single day to ride over and inquire for me.

"You know, of course," said the Count, supposing such news was the most likely to interest me—"you know we beat them?"

"No. Pray tell me all. They've not let me hear anything hitherto."

"One day finished the whole affair. We polled man for man till past two o'clock, when our fellows lost all patience, and beat their tallies out of the town. The police came up, but they beat the police; then they got soldiers, but begad they were too strong for them, too. Sir George witnessed it all, and, knowing besides how little chance he had of success, deemed it best to give in; so that a little before five o'clock he resigned. I must say no man could behave better. He came across the hustings and shook hands with Godfrey; and, as the news of the *scrimmage* with his daughter had just arrived, said that he was sorry his prospect of success had not been greater, that, in resigning, he might testify how deeply he felt the debt the O'Malleys had laid him under."

"And my uncle, how did he receive his advances?"

"Like his own honest self; grasped his hand firmly; and upon my soul I think he was half sorry that he gained the day. Do you know, he took a mighty fancy to that blue-eyed daughter of the old General's. Faith, Charley, if he was some twenty years younger, I would not say but—— Come, come, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings; but I have been stay-

ing here too long. I'll send up Mickey to sit with you. Mind and don't be talking too much to him."

So saying, the worthy Count left the room, fully impressed that, in hinting at the possibility of my uncle's marrying again, he had said something to ruffle my temper.

For the next two or three weeks my life was one of the most tiresome monotony. Strict injunctions had been given by the doctors to avoid exciting me; and, consequently, every one that came in walked on tiptoe, spoke in whispers, and left me in five minutes. Reading was absolutely forbidden; and, with a sombre half-light to sit in, and chicken broth to support nature, I dragged out as dreary an existence as any gentleman west of Athlone.

Whenever my uncle or Considine were not in the room, my companion was my own servant, Michael, or, as he was better known, "Mickey Free." Now, had Mickey been left to his own free and unrestricted devices, the time would not have hung so heavily; for, among Mike's manifold gifts, he was possessed of a very great flow of gossiping conversation; he knew all that was doing in the county, and never was barren in his information wherever his imagination could come into play. Mickey was the best hurler in the barony, no mean performer on the violin, could dance the national bolero of "Tatter Jack Walsh" in a way that charmed more than one soft heart beneath a red woolsey bodice, and had, withal, the peculiar free-and-easy devil-may-care kind of off-hand Irish way, that never deserted him in the midst of his wiliest and most subtle moments, giving to a very deep and cunning fellow all the apparent frankness and openness of a country lad.

He had attached himself to me as a kind of sporting companion; and, growing daily more and more useful, had been gradually admitted to the honors of the kitchen and the prerogatives of cast clothes, without ever having been actually engaged as a servant; and while thus no warrant officer, as, in fact, he discharged all his duties well and punctually, was rated among the ship's company, though no one could say at what precise period he changed his caterpillar existence and became the gay butterfly, with cords and tops, a striped vest, and a most knowing jerry hat, who stalked about the stable-yard and bullied the helpers. Such was Mike. He had made his fortune, such as it was, and had a most becoming pride in the fact that he made himself indispensable to an establishment which, before he entered it, never knew the want of him. As for me, he was everything to me. Mike informed me what horse was wrong, why the chestnut mare couldn't go out, and why the black horse could. He knew the arrival of a new covey of partridges quicker than the *Morning Post* does of a noble family from the Continent, and could tell their whereabouts twice as accurately; but his talents took a wider range than field sports afford, and he was the faithful chronicler of every wake, station, wedding, or christening for miles round; and as I took no small pleasure in those very national pastimes, the information was of great value to me. To conclude this brief sketch, Mike was a devout Catholic, in the same sense that he was enthusiastic about anything; that is, he believed and obeyed exactly as far as suited his own peculiar notions of comfort and happiness. Beyond *that*, his scepticism stepped in and saved him from inconvenience; and though he might have been somewhat puzzled to reduce his faith to a rubric, still it answered his purpose, and that was all he wanted. Such, in short, was my valet, Mickey Free, and who, had not heavy injunctions been laid on him as to silence and discretion, would well have lightened my weary hours.

"Ah! then, Misther Charles," said he, with a half-suppressed yawn at the long period of probation his tongue had been undergoing in silence—"ah! then, but ye were mighty near it."

"Near what?" said I.

"Faith, then, myself doesn't well know. Some say it's purgathory; but it's hard to tell."

"I thought you were too good a Catholic, Mickey, to show any doubts on the matter?"

"May be I am—may be I ain't," was the cautious reply.

"Wouldn't Father Roach explain any of your difficulties for you, if you went over to him?"

"Faix, it's little I'd mind his explainings."

"And why not?"

"Easy enough. If you ax ould Miles there, without, what does he be doing with all the powther and shot, wouldn't he tell you he's shooting the rooks, and the magpies, and some other varmint? but myself knows he sells it to Widow Casey, at two-and-fourpence a pound: so belikes, Father Roach may be shooting away at the poor souls in purgathory, that all this time are enjoying the hoith of fine living in heaven, ye understand."

"And you think that's the way of it, Mickey?"

"Troth, it's likely. Anyhow, I know it's not the place they make it out."

"Why, how do you mean?"

"Well, then, I'll tell you, Misther Charles; but you must not be saying anything about it afther; for I don't like to talk about these kind of things."

Having pledged myself to the requisite silence and secrecy, Mickey began:

"Maybe you heard tell of the way my father, rest his soul wherever he is, came to his end. Well, I needn't mind particulars, but, in short, he was murdered in Ballinasloe one night, when he was baitin' the whole town with a blackthorn stick he had, more by token, a piece of a scythe was stuck at the end of it; a nate weapon, and one he was mighty partial to: but these murdering thieves, the cattle dealers, that never cared for diversion of any kind, fell on him and broke his skull.

"Well, we had a very agreeable wake, and plenty of the best of everything, and to spare, and I thought it was all over; but somehow, though I paid Father Roach fifteen shillings, and made him mighty drunk, he always gave me a black look wherever I met him, and when I took off my hat, he'd turn away his head displeased like.

"'Murder and ages,' says I, 'what's this for?' but as I've a light heart, I bore up, and didn't think more about it. One day, however, I was coming home from Athlone market, by myself on the road, when Father Roach overtook me. 'Devil a one a me 'ill take any notice of you now,' says I, 'and we'll see what'll come out of it.' So the priest rid up, and looked me straight in the face.

"'Mickey,' says he—'Mickey.'

"'Father,' says I.

"'Is it that way you salute your clargy,' says he, 'with your caubeen on your head?'

"'Faix,' says I, 'it's little ye mind whether it's an or aff, for you never take the trouble to say, "By your leave," or "Damn your soul," or any other politeness, when we meet.'

"'You're an ungrateful creature,' says he; 'and if you only knew, you'd be trembling in your skin before me, this minute.'

"'Devil a tremble,' says I, 'after walking six miles this way.'

"'You're an obstinate, hard-hearted sinner,' says he, 'and it's no use in telling you.'

"'Telling me what?' says I, for I was getting curious to make out what he meant.

"'Mickey,' says he, changing his voice, and putting his head down close to me—'Mickey, I saw your father last night.'

"'The saints be merciful to us!' said I, 'did ye?'

"'I did,' says he.

"'Tear an ages,' says I, 'did he tell you what he did with the new corduroys he bought in the fair?'

"'Oh! then, you are a could-hearted creature,' says he, 'and I'll not lose time with you.' With that he was going to ride away, when I took hold of the bridle.

"'Father, darling,' says I, 'God pardon me, but them breeches is goin' between me an' my night's rest; but tell me about my father?'

"'Oh! then, he's in a melancholy state!'

"'Whereabouts is he?' says I.

"'In purgathory,' says he; 'but he won't be there long.'

"'Well,' says I, 'that's a comfort, anyhow.'

"'I am glad you think so,' says he; 'but there's more of the other opinion.'

"'What's *that*?' says I.

"'That hell's worse.'

"'Oh! melia-murther,' says I, 'is that it?'

"'Ay, that's it.'

"Well, I was so terrified and frightened, I said nothing for some time, but trotted along beside the priest's horse.

"'Father,' says I, 'how long will it be before they send him where you know?'

"'It will not be long now,' says he, 'for they're tired entirely with him: they've no peace night or day,' says he. 'Mickey, your father is a mighty hard man.'

"'True for you, Father Roach,' says I to myself; 'av he had only the ould stick with the scythe in it, I wish them joy of his company.'

"'Mickey,' says he, 'I see you're grieved, and I don't wonder; sure, it's a great disgrace to a decent family.'

"'Troth, it is,' says I, 'but my father always liked low company. Could nothing be done for him now, Father Roach?' says I, looking up in the priest's face.

"'I'm greatly afraid, Mickey, he was a bad man, a very bad man.'

"'And ye think he'll go there?' says I.

"'Indeed, Mickey, I have my fears.'

"'Upon my conscience,' says I, 'I believe you're right; he was always a restless crayture.'

"'But it doesn't depind on him,' says the priest, crosely.

"'And, then, who then?' says I.

"'Upon yourself, Mickey Free,' says he; 'God pardon you for it, too.'

"'Upon me?' says I.

"'Troth, no less,' says he; 'how many masses was said for your father's soul?—how many aves?—how many paters?—answer me.'

"'Devil a one of me knows!—maybe twenty.'

"'Twenty, twenty—no, nor one.'

"'And why not?' says I; 'what for wouldn't you be helping a poor crayture out of trouble, when it wouldn't cost you more nor a handful of prayers?'

"'Mickey, I see,' says he, in a solemn tone, 'you're worse nor a haythen, but ye couldn't be other; ye never come to yer duties.'

"'Well, father,' says I, looking very penitent, 'how many masses would get him out?'

"'Now you talk like a sensible man,' says he. 'Now, Mickey, I've hopes for you. Let me see'—here he went countin' upon his fingers, and numberin' to himself for five minutes—'Mickey,' says he, 'I've a batch coming out on Tuesday week, and if you were to make great exertions, perhaps your father could come with them; that is, av they have made no objections.'

"'And what for would they?' says I; 'he was always the hoith of company, and av singing's allowed in them parts—'

"'God forgive you, Mickey, but yer in a benighted state,' says he, sighing.

"'Well,' says I, 'how'll we get him out on Tuesday week? for that's bringing things to a focus.'

"'Two masses in the morning, fastin',' says Father Roach, half loud, 'is two, and two in the afternoon is four, and two at vespers is six,' says he; 'six masses a day for nine days is close by sixty masses—say sixty,' says he; 'and they'll cost you—mind, Mickey, and don't be telling it again, for it's only to yourself I'd make them so cheap—a matter of three pounds.'

"'Three pounds!' says I; 'be-gorra ye might as well ax me to give you the rock of Cashel.'

"'I'm sorry for ye, Mickey,' says he, gatherin' up the reins to ride off—'I'm sorry for ye; and the time will come when the neglect of your poor father will be a sore stroke agin yourself.'

"'Wait a bit, your reverence,' says I—'wait a bit. Would forty shillings get him out?'

"'Av course it wouldn't,' says he.

"'Maybe,' says I, coaxing—'maybe, av you said that his son was a poor boy that lived by his industhry, and the times was bad—'

"'Not the least use,' says he.

"'Arrah, but it's hard-hearted they are,' thinks I. 'Well, see now, I'll give you the money, but I can't afford it all at on'st; but I'll pay five shillings a week—will that do?'

"'I'll do my endayvors,' says Father Roach; 'and I'll speak to them to treat him peaceably in the mean time.'

"'Long life to yer reverence, and do. Well, here now, here's five hogs to begin with; and, musha, but I never thought I'd be spending my loose change that way.'

"Father Roach put the six tinpinnies in the pocket of his black leather breeches, said something in Latin, bid me good-morning, and rode off.

"Well, to make my story short, I worked late and early to pay the five shillings a week, and I did do it for three weeks regular; then I brought four and fourpence—then it came down to one and tenpence halfpenny—then ninepence—and, at last, I had nothing at all to bring.

"'Mickey Free,' says the priest, 'ye must stir yourself; your father is mighty displeased at the way you've been doing of late; and av ye kept yer word, he'd be near out by this time.'

"'Troth,' says I, 'it's a very expensive place.'

"'By coorse it is,' says he; 'sure all the quality of the land's there. But, Mickey, my man, with a little exertion, your father's business is done. What are you jingling in your pocket there?'

"'It's ten shillings, your reverence, I have to buy seed potatoes.'

"'Hand it here, my son. Isn't it better your father would be enjoying himself in paradise, than if ye were to have all the potatoes in Ireland?'

"'And how do ye know,' says I, 'he's so near out?'

"'How do I know—how do I know, is it?—didn't I see him?'

"'See him! tear an ages, was you down there again?'

"'I was,' says he; 'I was down there for three-quarters of an hour yesterday evening, getting out Luke Kennedy's mother. Decent people the Kennedys—never spared expense.'

"'And ye seen my father?' says I.

"'I did,' says he; 'he had an ould flannel waistcoat on, and a pipe sticking out of the pocket av it.'

"'That's him,' says I. 'Had he a hairy cap?'

"'I didn't mind the cap,' says he, 'but

av coorse he wouldn't have it on his head in that place.'

"'Thrue for you,' says I. 'Did he speak to you?'

"'He did,' says Father Roach; 'he spoke very hard about the way he was treated down there, that they was always jibin' and jeerin' him about *drink*, and fightin', and the course he led up here, and that it was a queer thing, for the matter of ten-shillings, he was to be kept there so long.'

"'Well,' says I, taking out the ten shillings and counting it with one hand, 'we must do our best, anyhow; and ye think this'll get him out surely?'

"'I know it will,' says he; 'for when Luke's mother was leaving the place, and yer father saw the door open, he made a rush at it, and, be-gorra, before it was shut he got his head and one shoulder outside av it, so that, ye see, a thrifle more 'll do it.'

"'Faix, and yer reverence,' said I, 'you've lightened my heart this morning.' And I put my money back again in my pocket.

"'Why, what do you mean?' says he, growing very red, for he was angry.

"'Just this,' says I, 'that I've saved my money; for av it was my father you seen, and that he got his head and one shoulder outside the door, oh, then, by the powers!' says I, 'the devil a gaol or gaoler from hell to Connaught id hould him; so, Father Roach, I wish you the top of the morning.' And I went away laughing; and from that day to this I never heard more of purgathory; and ye see, Master Charles, I think I was right."

Scarcely had Mike concluded when my door was suddenly burst open, and Sir Harry Boyle, without assuming any of his usual precautions respecting silence and quiet, rushed into the room, a broad grin upon his honest features, and his eyes twinkling in a way that evidently showed me something had occurred to amuse him.

"By Jove, Charley, I musn't keep it from you, it's too good a thing not to tell you; do you remember that very essenced young gentleman who accompanied Sir George Dashwood from Dublin, as a kind of electioneering friend?"

"Do you mean Mr. Prettyman?"

"The very man; he was, you are aware, an under-secretary in some government department. Well, it seems that he had come down among us poor savages as much from motives of learned research and scientific inquiry, as though we had been South Sea Islanders; report had gifted us humble Galwayans with some very peculiar traits, and this gifted individual resolved to record them. Whether the election week might have sufficed his appetite for wonders I know not, but he was peaceably taking his departure from the west on Saturday last, when Phil Macnamara met him, and pressed him to dine that day with a few friends at his house. You know Phil; so that when I tell you Sam Burke, of Greenmount, and Roger Doolan were of the party, I need not say that the English traveler was not left to his own unassisted imagination for his facts; such anecdotes of our habits and customs as they crammed him with, it would appear, never were heard before—nothing was too hot or too heavy for the luckless Cockney, who, when not sipping his claret, was faithfully recording in his tablet the mems. for a very brilliant and very original work on Ireland.

"'Fine country—splendid country—glorious people—gifted—brave—intelligent—but not happy—alas! Mr. Macnamara, not happy. But we don't know you, gentlemen—we don't indeed; at the other side of the Channel our notions regarding you are far, very far from just.'

"'I hope and trust,' said old Burke, 'you'll help them to a better understanding ere long.'

"'Such, my dear sir, will be the proudest task of my life. The facts I have heard here this evening have made so profound an impression upon me, that I burn for the moment when I can make them known to the world at large. To think—just to think, that a portion of this beautiful island should be steeped in poverty—that the people not only live upon the mere potatoes, but are absolutely obliged to wear the skins for raiment, as Mr. Doolan has just mentioned to me.'

"'Which accounts for our cultivation of lumpers,' added Mr. Doolan, 'they being the largest species of the root, and best adapted for wearing apparel.'

"'I should deem myself culpable, indeed I should, did I not inform my countrymen upon the real condition of this great country.'

"'Why, after your great opportunities for judging,' said Phil, 'you ought to speak out. You've seen us in a way, I may fairly affirm, few Englishmen have, and heard more.'

"'That's it—that's the very thing, Mr. Macnamara. I've looked at you more closely, I've watched you more narrowly, I've witnessed what the French call your "*vie intime.*"'

"'Bedad you have,' said old Burke,

with a grin, 'and profited by it to the utmost.'

"'I've been a spectator of your election contests—I've partaken of your hospitality—I've witnessed your popular and national sports—I've been present at your weddings, your fairs, your wakes; but no, I was forgetting, I never saw a wake.'

"'Never saw a wake?' repeated each of the company in turn, as though the gentleman was uttering a sentiment of very dubious veracity.

"'Never,' said Mr. Prettyman, rather abashed at this proof of his incapacity to instruct his English friends upon *all* matters of Irish interest.

"'Well, then,' said Macnamara, 'with a blessing, we'll show you one. Lord forbid that we shouldn't do the honors of our poor country to an intelligent foreigner when he's good enough to come amongst us.'

"'Peter,' said he, turning to the servant behind him, 'who's dead hereabouts?'

"'Sorra one, yer honor. Since the scrimmage at Portumna the place is peaceable.'

"'Who died lately in the neighborhood?'

"'The widow Macbride, yer honor.'

"'Couldn't they take her up again, Peter? My friend here never saw a wake.'

"'I'm afeerd not, for it was the boys roasted her, and she wouldn't be a decent corpse for to show a stranger,' said Peter, in a whisper.

"Mr. Prettyman shuddered at these peaceful indications of the neighborhood, and said nothing.

"'Well, then, Peter, tell Jemmy Divine to take the old musket in my bedroom, and go over to the Clunagh bog—he can't go wrong—there's twelve families there that never pay a halfpenny rent, and *when it's done*, let him give notice to the neighborhood, and we'll have a rousing wake.'

"'You don't mean, Mr. Macnamara—you don't mean to say——,' stammered out the Cockney, with a face like a ghost.

"'I only mean to say,' said Phil, laughing, 'that you're keeping the decanter very long at your right hand.'

"Burke contrived to interpose before the Englishman could ask any explanation of what he had just heard—and for some minutes he could only wait in impatient anxiety—when a loud report of a gun close beside the house attracted the attention of the guests; the next moment old Peter entered, his face radiant with smiles.

"'Well, what's that?' said Macnamara.

"''Twas Jimmy, yer honor. As the evening was rainy, he said he'd take one of the neighbors, and he hadn't to go far, for Andy Moore was going home, and he brought him down at once.'

"'Did he shoot him?' said Mr. Prettyman, while cold perspiration broke over his forehead. 'Did he murder the man?'

"'Sorra murder,' said Peter, disdainfully; 'but why wouldn't he shoot him when the master bid him?'

"I needn't tell you more, Charley; but in ten minutes after, feigning some excuse to leave the room, the terrified Cockney took flight, and, offering twenty guineas for a horse to convey him to Athlone, he left Galway, fully convinced that they don't yet know us on the other side of the Channel."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE JOURNEY.

THE election concluded—the turmoil and excitement of the contest over—all was fast resuming its accustomed routine around us, when one morning my uncle informed me that I was at length to leave my native county, and enter upon the great world as a student of Trinity College, Dublin. Although long since in expectation of this eventful change, it was with no slight feeling of emotion I contemplated the step, which, removing me at once from all my early friends and associations, was to surround me with new companions and new influences, and place before me very different objects of ambition from those I had hitherto been regarding.

My destiny had been long ago decided; the army had had its share of the family, who brought little more back with them from the wars than a short allowance of members and shattered constitutions; the navy had proved, on more than one occasion, that the fate of the O'Malleys did not incline to hanging; so that, in Irish estimation, but one alternative remained, and that was the bar. Besides, as my uncle remarked, with great truth and foresight, "Charley will be tolerably independent of the public, at all events; for, even if they never send him a brief, there's law enough in the family to last *his* time"—a rather novel reason, by-the-by, for making a man a lawyer, and which induced Sir Harry, with his usual clearness, to observe to me,

"Upon my conscience, boy, you are in luck. If there had been a Bible in the

house, I firmly believe he'd have made you a parson."

Considine alone, of all my uncle's advisers, did not concur in this determination respecting me. He set forth, with an eloquence that certainly converted *me*, that my head was better calculated for bearing hard knocks than unraveling knotty points; that a shako would become it infinitely better than a wig; and declared, roundly, that a boy who began so well, and had such very pretty notions about shooting, was positively thrown away in the Four Courts. My uncle, however, was firm, and, as old Sir Harry supported him, the day was decided against us, Considine murmuring, as he left the room, something that did not seem quite a brilliant anticipation of the success awaiting me in my legal career. As for myself, though only a silent spectator of the debate, all my wishes were with the Count. From my earliest boyhood a military life had been my strongest desire; the roll of the drum and the shrill fife that played through the little village, with its ragged troop of recruits following, had charms for me I cannot describe; and had a choice been allowed me, I would infinitely rather have been a sergeant in the dragoons than one of his Majesty's learned in the law. If, then, such had been the cherished feeling of many a year, how much more strongly were my aspirations heightened by the events of the last few days. The tone of superiority I had witnessed in Hammersley, whose conduct to me at parting had placed him high in my esteem—the quiet contempt of civilians, implied in a thousand sly ways—the exalted estimate of his own profession, at once wounded my pride and stimulated my ambition; and, lastly, more than all, the avowed preference that Lucy Dashwood evinced for a military life, were stronger allies than my own conviction needed to make me long for the army. So completely did the thought possess me, that I felt, if I were not a soldier, I cared not what became of me. Life had no other object of ambition for me than military renown, no other success for which I cared to struggle, or would value when obtained. "*Aut Cæsar aut nullus*," thought I; and when my uncle determined I should be a lawyer, I neither murmured nor objected, but hugged myself in the prophecy of Considine, that hinted pretty broadly, "the devil a stupider fellow ever opened a brief; but he'd have made a slashing light dragoon."

The preliminaries were not long in arranging. It was settled that I should be immediately dispatched to Dublin to the care of Doctor Mooney, then a junior fellow in the University, who would take me into his especial charge; while Sir Harry was to furnish me with a letter to his old friend, Doctor Barret, whose advice and assistance he estimated at a very high price. Provided with such documents, I was informed that the gates of knowledge were more than half ajar for me, without an effort upon my part. One only portion of all the arrangements I heard with anything like pleasure; it was decided that my man Mickey was to accompany me to Dublin, and remain with me during my stay.

It was upon a clear, sharp morning in January, of the year 18—, that I took my place upon the box-seat of the old Galway mail, and set out on my journey. My heart was depressed and my spirits were miserably low. I had all that feeling of sadness which leave-taking inspires, and no sustaining prospect to cheer me in the distance. For the first time in my life, I had seen a tear glisten in my poor uncle's eye, and heard his voice falter as he said, "Farewell!" Notwithstanding the difference of age, we had been perfectly companions together; and, as I thought now over all the thousand kindnesses and affectionate instances of his love I had received, my heart gave way, and the tears coursed slowly down my cheeks. I turned to give one last look at the tall chimneys and the old woods, my earliest friends; but a turn of the road had shut out the prospect, and thus I took my leave of Galway.

My friend Mickey, who sat behind with the guard, participated but little in my feelings of regret. The potatoes in the metropolis could scarcely be as wet as the lumpers in Scariff; he had heard that whisky was not dearer, and looked forward to the other delights of the capital with a longing heart. Meanwhile, resolved that no portion of his career should be lost, he was lightening the road by anecdote and song, and held an audience of four people, a very crusty-looking old guard included, in roars of laughter. Mike had contrived, with his usual *savoir faire*, to make himself very agreeable to an extremely pretty-looking country girl, around whose waist he had most lovingly passed his arm, under pretense of keeping her from falling, and to whom, in the midst of all his attentions to the party at large, he devoted himself considerably, pressing his suit with all the aid of his native minstrelsy.

"Hould me tight, Miss Matilda, dear."

"My name's Mary Brady, av ye plase."

"Ay, and I do plase.

"Oh, Mary Brady, you are my darlin',
You are my looking-glass, from night till morning;
I'd rayther have ye without one farthen,
Nor Shusey Gallagher and her house and garden.

May I never av I wouldn't, then; and ye needn't be laughing."

"Is his honor at home?"

This speech was addressed to a gaping country fellow, that leaned on his spade to see the coach pass.

"Is his honor at home? I've something for him from Mr. Davern."

Mickey well knew that few western gentlemen were without constant intercourse with the Athlone attorney. The poor countryman accordingly hastened through the fence, and pursued the coach with all speed for above a mile, Mike pretending all the time to be in the greatest anxiety for his overtaking them; until at last, as he stopped in despair, a hearty roar of laughter told him that, in Mickey's *parlance*, he was "sould."

"Taste it, my dear; devil a harm it'll do ye; it never paid the king sixpence."

Here he filled a little horn vessel from a black bottle he carried, accompanying the action with a song, the air to which, if any of my readers feel disposed to sing it, I may observe bore a resemblance to the well-known "A Fig for St. Denis of France."

"POTTEEN, GOOD LUCK TO YE, DEAR.

"Av I was a monarch in state,
Like Romulus or Julius Caysar,
With the best of fine victuals to eat,
And drink like great Nebuchadnezzar,
A rasher of bacon I'd have,
And potatoes the finest was seen, sir;
And for drink, it's no claret I'd crave,
But a keg of ould Mullens' potteen, sir,
With the smell of the smoke on it still.

"They talk of the Romans of ould,
Whom they say in their own times was frisky;
But trust me, to keep out the cowld,
The Romans at home here like whisky.
Sure it warms both the head and the heart,
It's the soul of all readin' and writin',
It teaches both science and art,
And disposes for love or for fightin'.
Oh, potteen, good luck to ye, dear."

This very classic production, and the black bottle which accompanied it, completely established the singer's pre-eminence in the company; and I heard sundry sounds resembling drinking, with frequent good wishes to the provider of the feast. "Long life to ye, Mr. Free," "Your health and inclinations, Mr. Free," etc.; to which Mr. Free responded by drinking those of the company, "av they were vartuous." The amicable relations thus happily established, promised a very lasting reign, and would, doubtless, have enjoyed such, had not a slight incident occurred, which for a brief season interrupted them.

At the village where we stopped to breakfast, three very venerable figures presented themselves for places in the inside of the coach: they were habited in black coats, breeches, and gaiters, wore hats of a very ecclesiastic breadth in their brim, and had altogether the peculiar air and bearing which distinguishes their calling, being no less than three Roman Catholic prelates on their way to Dublin to attend a convocation. While Mickey and his friends, with the ready tact which every low Irishman possesses, immediately perceived who and what these worshipful individuals were, another traveler, who had just assumed his place on the outside, participated but little in the feelings of reverence so manifestly displayed, but gave a sneer of a very ominous kind, as the skirt of the last black coat disappeared within the coach. This latter individual was a short, thick-set, bandy-legged man, of about fifty, with an enormous nose, which, whatever its habitual coloring, on the morning in question was of a brilliant purple. He wore a blue coat, with bright buttons, upon which some letters were inscribed, and around his neck was fastened a ribbon of the same color, to which a medal was attached. This he displayed with something of ostentation, whenever an opportunity occurred, and seemed altogether a person who possessed a most satisfactory impression of his own importance. In fact, had not this feeling been participated in by others, Mr. Billy Crow would never have been deputed by No. 13,476 to carry their warrant down to the west country, and establish the nucleus of an Orange Lodge in the town of Foxleigh; such being, in brief, the reason why he, a very well known manufacturer of "leather continuations" in Dublin, had ventured upon the perilous journey from which he was now returning. Billy was going on his way to town rejoicing, for he had had most brilliant success; the brethren had feasted and fêted him; he had made several splendid orations, with the usual number of prophecies about the speedy downfall of Romanism; the inevitable return of Protestant ascendancy; the pleasing prospect that, with increased effort and improved organization, they should soon be able to have everything their own

way, and clear the Green Isle of the horrible vermin St. Patrick forgot when banishing the others; and that, if Daniel O'Connell (whom might the Lord confound!) could only be hanged, and Sir Harcourt Lees made Primate of all Ireland, there were still some hopes of peace and prosperity to the country.

Mr. Crow had no sooner assumed his place upon the coach than he saw that he was in the camp of the enemy. Happily for all parties, indeed, in Ireland, political differences have so completely stamped the externals of each party, that he must be a man of small penetration who cannot, in the first five minutes he is thrown among strangers, calculate with considerable certainty, whether it will be more conducive to his happiness to sing "Croppies Lie Down," or "The Battle of Ross." As for Billy Crow, long life to him! you might as well attempt to pass a turkey upon M. Audubon for a giraffe, as endeavor to impose a Papist upon him for a true follower of King William. He could have given you more generic distinctions to guide you in the decision, than ever did Cuvier to designate an antediluvian mammoth; so that no sooner had he seated himself upon the coach, than he buttoned up his great coat, stuck his hands firmly in his side pockets, pursed up his lips, and looked altogether like a man that, feeling himself out of his element, resolves to "bide his time" in patience, until chance may throw him among more congenial associates. Mickey Free, who was himself no mean proficient in reading a character, at one glance saw his man, and began hammering his brains to see if he could not overreach him. The small portmanteau which contained Billy's wardrobe bore the conspicuous announcement of his name; and, as Mickey could read, this was one important step already gained.

He accordingly took the first opportunity of seating himself beside him, and opened the conversation by some very polite observation upon the other's wearing apparel, which is always, in the west, considered a piece of very courteous attention. By degrees the dialogue prospered, and Mickey began to make some very important revelations about himself and his master, intimating that the "state of the country" was such that a man of his way of thinking had no peace or quiet in it.

"That's him there, forenent ye," said Mickey, "and a better Protestant never hated mass. Ye understand."

"What!" said Billy, unbuttoning the collar of his coat to get a fairer view at his companion; "why, I thought you were—"

Here he made some resemblance of the usual manner of blessing oneself.

"Me, devil a more nor yourself, Mr. Crow."

"Why, do you know me, too?"

"Troth, more knows you than you think."

Billy looked very much puzzled at all this; at last he said:

"And ye tell me that your master there's the right sort?"

"Thrue blue," said Mike, with a wink, "and so is his uncles."

"And where are they, when they are at home?"

"In Galway, no less; but they're here now."

"Where?"

"Here."

At these words he gave a knock of his heel to the coach, as if to intimate their "whereabouts."

"You don't mean in the coach—do ye?"

"To be sure I do; and troth, you can't know much of the west, av ye don't know the three Mr. Trenches of Tallybash! them's they."

"You don't say so?"

"Faix, but I do."

"May I never drink the 12th of July if I didn't think they were priests."

"Priests!" said Mickey, in a roar of laughter—"priests!"

"Just priests."

"Be-gorra, though, ye had better keep that to yourself, for they're not the men to have that same said to them."

"Of course, I wouldn't offend them," said Mr. Crow; "faith, it's not me would cast reflections upon such real out-and-outers as they are. And where are they going now?"

"To Dublin straight; there's to be a grand lodge next week; but sure Mr. Crow knows better than me."

Billy after this became silent. A moody reverie seemed to steal over him, and he was evidently displeased with himself for his want of tact in not discovering the three Mr. Trenches of Tallybash, though he only caught sight of their backs.

Mickey Free interrupted not the frame of mind in which he saw conviction was slowly working its way, but, by gently humming in an under tone the loyal melody of "Croppies Lie Down," fanned the flame he had so dexterously kindled. At length, they reached the small town of Kinnegad. While the coach changed

horses, Mr. Crow lost not a moment in descending from the top, and, rushing into the little inn, disappeared for a few moments. When he again issued forth, he carried a smoking tumbler of whisky punch, which he continued to stir with a spoon. As he approached the coach-door he tapped gently with his knuckles, upon which the reverend prelate of Maronia or Mesopotamia, I forget which, inquired what he wanted.

"I ask your pardon, gentlemen," said Billy, "but I thought I'd make bold to ask you to take something warm this cold day."

"Many thanks, my good friend; but we never do," said a bland voice from within.

"I understand," said Billy, with a sly wink: "but there are circumstances now and then—and one might for the honor of the cause, you know. Just put it to your lips, won't you?"

"Excuse me," said a very rosy-cheeked little prelate, "but nothing stronger than water—"

"Botheration," thought Billy, as he regarded the speaker's nose. "But I thought," said he, aloud, "that you would not refuse this."

Here he made a peculiar manifestation in the air, which, whatever respect and reverence it might carry to the honest brethren of 13,476, seemed only to increase the wonder and astonishment of the bishops.

"What does he mean?" said one.

"Is he mad?" said another.

"Tear and ages," said Mr. Crow, getting quite impatient at the slowness of his friends' perception, "tear and ages, I'm one of yourselves."

"One of us," said the three in chorus—"one of us?"

"Ay, to be sure"—here he took a long pull at the punch—"to be sure I am; here's 'No surrender,' your souls! whoop"—a loud yell accompanying the toast as he drank it.

"Do you mean to insult us?" said Father P——. "Guard, take the fellow."

"Are we to be outraged in this manner?" chorused the priests.

"'July the 1st, in Oldbridge town,'" sang Billy, "and here it is, 'The glorious, pious, and immortal memory of the great and good—'"

"Guard! Where is the guard?"

"'And good King William, that saved us from Popery—"

"Coachman!—guard!' screamed Father ——.

"'Brass money—'"

"Policeman! policeman!" shouted the priests.

"'Brass money and wooden shoes;' devil may care who hears me," said Billy, who, supposing that the three Mr. Trenches were skulking the avowal of their principles, resolved to assert the pre-eminence of the great cause single-handed and alone.

"'Here's the Pope in the pillory, and the devil pelting him with priests.'"

At these words a kick from behind apprised the loyal champion that a very ragged auditory, who for some time past had not well understood the gist of his eloquence, had at length comprehended enough to be angry. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte*, certainly, in an Irish row. "The merest urchin may light the train; one handful of mud often ignites a shindy that ends in a most bloody battle." And here, no sooner did the *vis a tergo* impel Billy forward than a severe rap of a closed fist in the eye drove him back, and in one instant he became the center to a periphery of kicks, cuffs, pullings, and haulings, that left the poor Deputy-Grand not only orange, but blue.

He fought manfully, but numbers carried the day; and, when the coach drove off, which it did at last without him, the last thing visible to the outsides was the figure of Mr. Crow, whose hat, minus the crown, had been driven over his head down upon his neck, where it remained like a dress cravat, buffeting a mob of ragged vagabonds, who had so completely metamorphosed the unfortunate man with mud and bruises, that a committee of the grand lodge might actually have been unable to identify him.

As for Mickey and his friends behind, their mirth knew no bounds; and, except the respectable insides, there was not an individual about the coach who ceased to think of and laugh at the incident till we arrived in Dublin, and drew up at the Hibernian, in Dawson street.

CHAPTER XIV.

DUBLIN.

No sooner had I arrived in Dublin than my first care was to present myself to Dr. Mooney, by whom I was received in the most cordial manner. In fact, in my utter ignorance of such persons, I had imagined a College fellow to be a character necessarily severe and unbending; and, as the only two very great people I had ever seen

in my life were the Archbishop of Tuam, and the Chief Baron, when on circuit, I pictured to myself that a University fellow was, in all probability, a cross between the two, and feared him accordingly.

The Doctor read over my uncle's letter attentively, invited me to partake of his breakfast, and then entered upon something like an account of the life before me, for which Sir Harry Boyle had, however, in some degree prepared me.

"Your uncle, I find, wishes you to live in college; perhaps it is better too; so that I must look out for chambers for you. Let me see: it will be rather difficult, just now, to find them." Here he fell for some moments into a musing fit, and merely muttered a few broken sentences, as, "To be sure, if other chambers could be had—but then—and, after all, perhaps, as he is young—besides, Frank will certainly be expelled before long, and then he will have them all to himself. I say, O'Malley, I believe I must quarter you for the present with a rather wild companion; but as your uncle says you're a prudent fellow"—here he smiled very much, as if my uncle had not said any such thing—"why, you must only take the better care of yourself, until we can make some better arrangement. My pupil, Frank Webber, is at this moment in want of a 'chum,' as the phrase is, his last three having only been domesticated with him for as many weeks; so that, until we find you a more quiet resting-place, you may take up your abode with him."

During breakfast, the Doctor proceeded to inform me that my destined companion was a young man of excellent family and good fortune, who, with very considerable talents and acquirements, preferred a life of rackety and careless dissipation to prospects of great success in public life, which his connection and family might have secured for him; that he had been originally entered at Oxford, which he was obliged to leave; then tried Cambridge, from which he escaped expulsion by being rusticated, that is, having incurred a sentence of temporary banishment; and, lastly, was endeavoring, with what he himself believed to be a total reformation, to stumble on to a degree in the "silent sister."

"This is his third year," said the Doctor, "and he is only a freshman, having lost every examination, with abilities enough to sweep the University of its prizes. But come over now, and I'll present you to him."

I followed him down-stairs, across the court, to an angle of the old square, where, up the first floor left, to use the college direction, stood the name of Mr. Webber, a large No. 2 being conspicuously painted in the middle of the door, and not over it, as is usually the custom. As we reached the spot, the observations of my companion were lost to me in the tremendous noise and uproar that resounded from within. It seemed as if a number of people were fighting, pretty much as a banditti in a melodrama do, with considerable more of confusion than requisite; a fiddle and a French horn also lent their assistance to shouts and cries, which, to say the best, were not exactly the aids to study I expected in such a place.

Three times was the bell pulled, with a vigor that threatened its downfall, when, at last, as the jingle of it rose above all other noises, suddenly all became hushed and still; a momentary pause succeeded, and the door was opened by a very respectable-looking servant, who, recognizing the Doctor, at once introduced us into the apartment where Mr. Webber was sitting.

In a large and very handsomely furnished room, where Brussels carpeting and softly-cushioned sofas contrasted strangely with the meagre and comfortless chambers of the Doctor, sat a young man at a small breakfast-table, beside the fire. He was attired in a silk dressing-gown and black velvet slippers, and supported his forehead upon a hand of most lady-like whiteness, whose fingers were absolutely covered with rings of great beauty and price. His long silky brown hair fell in rich profusion upon the back of his neck, and over his arm, and the whole air and attitude was one which a painter might have copied. So intent was he upon the volume before him, that he never raised his head at our approach, but continued to read aloud, totally unaware of our presence.

"Dr. Mooney, sir," said the servant.

"*Ton dapamey bominos, prosephe, crione Agamemnon*," repeated the student, in an ecstacy, and not paying the slightest attention to the announcement.

"Dr. Mooney, sir," repeated the servant in a louder tone, while the Doctor looked around on every side for an explanation of the late uproar, with a face of the most puzzled astonishment.

"*Be dakiown para thina dolekoskion enkos*," said Mr. Webber, finishing a cup of coffee at a draught.

"Well, Webber, hard at work I see," said the Doctor.

"Ah, Doctor, I beg pardon! Have you been long here?" said the most soft and insinuating voice, while the speaker passed

his taper fingers across his brow, as if to dissipate the traces of deep thought and study.

While the doctor presented me to my future companion, I could perceive, in the restless and searching look he threw around, that the fracas he had so lately heard was still an unexplained and *vexata questio* in his mind.

"May I offer you a cup of coffee, Mr. O'Malley?" said the youth, with an air of almost timid bashfulness. "The Doctor, I know, breakfasts at a very early hour."

"I say, Webber," said the Doctor, who could no longer restrain his curiosity, "what an awful row I heard here as I came up to the door. I thought Bedlam was broke loose. What could it have been?"

"Ah, you heard it too, sir," said Mr. Webber, smiling most benignly.

"Hear it? to be sure I did. O'Malley and I could not hear ourselves talking with the uproar."

"Yes, indeed, it is very provoking; but, then, what's to be done? One can't complain, under the circumstances."

"Why, what do you mean?" said Mooney, anxiously.

"Nothing, sir, nothing. I'd much rather you'd not ask me; for, after all, I'll change my chambers."

"But why? Explain this at once. I insist upon it."

"Can I depend upon the discretion of your young friend?" said Mr. Webber, gravely.

"Perfectly," said the Doctor, now wound up to the greatest anxiety to learn a secret.

"And you'll promise not to mention the thing except among your friends?"

"I do," said the Doctor.

"Well, then," said he, in a low and confident whisper, "it's the Dean."

"The Dean!" said Mooney, with a start. "The Dean! Why, how can it be the Dean?"

"Too true," said Mr. Webber, making a sign of drinking; "too true, Doctor. And then, the moment he is so, he begins smashing the furniture. Never was anything heard like it. As for me, as I am now become a reading man, I must go elsewhere."

Now, it so chanced that the worthy Dean, who albeit a man of most abstemious habits, possessed a nose which, in color and development, was a most unfortunate witness to call to character, and as Mooney heard Webber narrate circumstantially the frightful excesses of the great functionary, I saw that something like conviction was stealing over him.

"You'll, of course, never speak of this except to your most intimate friends," said Webber.

"Of course not," said the Doctor, as he shook his hand warmly, and prepared to leave the room. "O'Malley, I leave you here," said he; "Webber and you can talk over your arrangements."

Webber followed the Doctor to the door, whispered something in his ear, to which the other replied, "Very well, I will write; but if your father sends the money, I must insist—" The rest was lost in protestations and professions of the most fervent kind, amid which the door was shut, and Mr. Webber returned to the room.

Short as was the interspace from the door without to the room within, it was still ample enough to effect a very thorough and remarkable change in the whole external appearance of Mr. Frank Webber; for, scarcely had the oaken panel shut out the Doctor, when he appeared no longer the shy, timid, and silvery-toned gentleman of five minutes before, but, dashing boldly forward, he seized a key-bugle that lay hid beneath a sofa-cushion, and blew a tremendous blast.

"Come forth, ye demons of the lower world," said he, drawing a cloth from a large table, and discovering the figures of three young men, coiled up beneath. "Come forth, and fear not, most timorous freshmen that ye are," said he, unlocking a pantry, and liberating two others. "Gentlemen, let me introduce to your acquaintance Mr. O'Malley. My chum, gentlemen. Mr. O'Malley, this is Harry Nesbitt, who has been in college since the days of old Perpendicular, and numbers more cautions than any man who ever had his name on the books. Here is my particular friend, Cecil Cavendish, the only man who could ever devil kidneys. Captain Power, Mr. O'Malley; a dashing dragoon, as you see; aide-de-camp to his Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant, and love-maker-general to Merrion square, West. These," said he, pointing to the late denizens of the pantry, "are jibs, whose names are neither known to the proctor nor the police-office; but, with due regard to their education and morals, we don't despair."

"By no means," said Power; "but come, let us resume our game." At these words he took a folio atlas of maps from a small table, and displayed beneath a pack of cards, dealt as if for whist. The two gentlemen to whom I was introduced by name, returned to their places; the unknown

two put on their boxing gloves, and all resumed the hilarity which Dr. Mooney's advent had so suddenly interrupted.

"Where's Moore?" said Webber, as he once more seated himself at his breakfast.

"Making a spatch-cock, sir," said the servant.

At the same instant, a little, dapper, jovial-looking personage appeared with the dish in question.

"Mr. O'Malley, Mr. Moore, the gentleman who, by repeated remonstrances to the board, has succeeded in getting eatable food for the inhabitants of this penitentiary, and has the honored reputation of reforming the commons of college."

"Anything to Godfrey O'Malley, may I ask, sir?" said Moore.

"His nephew," I replied.

"Which of you winged the gentleman the other day for not passing the decanter, or something of that sort?"

"If you mean the affair with Mr. Bodkin, it was I."

"Glorious, that; begad, I thought you were one of us. I say, Power, it was he pinked Bodkin."

"Ah, indeed," said Power, not turning his head from his game; "a pretty shot, I heard—two by honors—and hit him fairly—the odd trick. Hammersley mentioned the thing to me."

"Oh! is he in town?" said I.

"No; he sailed for Portsmouth yesterday. He is to join the 11th—game—I say, Webber, you've lost the rubber."

"Double or quit, and a dinner at Dunleary," said Webber. "We must show O'Malley—confound the Mister—something of the place."

"Agreed."

The whist was resumed; the boxers, now refreshed by a leg of the spatch-cock, returned to their gloves, Mr. Moore took up his violin, Mr. Webber his French horn, and I was left the only unemployed man in the company.

"I say, Power, you'd better bring the drag over here for us; we can all go down together."

"I must inform you," said Cavendish, "that, thanks to your philanthropic efforts of last night, the passage from Grafton street to Stephen's green is impracticable." A tremendous roar of laughter followed this announcement; and, though at the time the cause was unknown to me, I may as well mention it here, as I subsequently learned it from my companions.

Among the many peculiar tastes which distinguished Mr. Francis Webber, was an extraordinary fancy for street-begging; he had, over and over, won large sums upon his success in that difficult walk; and so perfect were his disguises, both of dress, voice, and manner, that he actually, at one time, succeeded in obtaining charity from his very opponent in the wager. He wrote ballads with the greatest facility, and sang them with infinite pathos and humor; and the old woman at the corner of College green was certain of an audience when the severity of the night would leave all other minstrelsy deserted. As these feats of *jongleric* usually terminated in a row, it was a most amusing part of the transaction to see the singer's part taken by the mob against the college men, who, growing impatient to carry him off to supper somewhere, would invariably be obliged to have a fight for the booty.

Now, it chanced that a few evenings before, Mr. Webber was returning with a pocket well lined with copper, from a musical *réunion* he had held at the corner of York street, when the idea struck him to stop at the end of Grafton street, where a huge stone grating at that time exhibited, perhaps it exhibits still, the descent to one of the great main sewers of the city.

The light was shining brightly from a pastrycook's shop, and showed the large bars of stone between which the muddy water was rushing rapidly down, and plashing in the torrent that ran boisterously several feet beneath.

To stop in the street of any crowded city is, under any circumstances, an invitation to others to do likewise, which is rarely unaccepted; but when in addition to this, you stand fixedly in one spot, and regard with stern intensity any object near you, the chances are ten to one that you have several companions in your curiosity before a minute expires.

Now, Webber, who had at first stood still, without any peculiar thought in view, no sooner perceived that he was joined by others, than the idea of making something out of it immediately occurred to him.

"What is it, agra?" inquired an old woman, very much in his own style of dress, pulling at the hood of his cloak.

"And can't you see for yourself, darling?" replied he, sharply, as he knelt down, and looked most intensely at the sewer.

"Are ye long there, avick?" inquired he of an imaginary individual below, and then waiting as if for a reply, said, "Two hours! Blessed Virgin! he's two hours in the drain!"

By his time the crowd had reached entirely across the street, and the crushing

and squeezing to get near the important spot was awful.

"Where did he come from?" "Who is he?" "How did he get there?" were questions on every side, and various surmises were afloat, till Webber, rising from his knees, said, in a mysterious whisper to those nearest him, "He's made his escape to-night out o' Newgate by the big drain, and lost his way; he was looking for the Liffey, and took the wrong turn."

To an Irish mob, what appeal could equal this? A culprit, at any time, has his claim upon their sympathy; but let him be caught in the very act of cheating the authorities and evading the law, and his popularity knows no bounds. Webber knew this well, and, as the mob thickened around him, sustained an imaginary conversation that Savage Landor might have envied, imparting now and then such hints concerning the runaway as raised their interest to the highest pitch, and fifty different versions were related on all sides—of the crime he was guilty—the sentence that was passed on him—and the day he was to suffer.

"Do you see the light, dear?" said Webber, as some ingeniously benevolent individual had lowered down a candle with a string—"do ye see the light? Oh! he's fainted, the creature." A cry of horror from the crowd burst forth at these words, followed by a universal shout of "Break open the street."

Pickaxes, shovels, spades, and crowbars seemed absolutely the walking accompaniments of the crowd, so suddenly did they appear upon the field of action, and the work of exhumation was begun with a vigor that speedily covered nearly half of the street with mud and paving-stones. Parties relieved each other at the task, and, ere half an hour, a hole capable of containing a mail coach was yawning in one of the most frequented thoroughfares of Dublin. Meanwhile, as no appearance of the culprit could be had, dreadful conjectures as to his fate began to gain ground. By this time the authorities had received intimation of what was going forward, and attempted to disperse the crowd; but Webber, who still continued to conduct the prosecution, called on them to resist the police, and save the poor creature. And now began a most terrific fray; the stones, forming a ready weapon, were hurled at the unprepared constables, who, on their side, fought manfully, but against superior numbers; so that, at last, it was only by the aid of a military force the mob could be dispersed, and a riot, which had assumed a very serious character, got under. Meanwhile, Webber had reached his chambers, changed his costume, and was relating over a supper-table the narrative of his philanthropy to a very admiring circle of his friends.

Such was my chum, Frank Webber; and as this was the first anecdote I had heard of him, I relate it here that my readers may be in possession of the grounds upon which my opinion of that celebrated character was founded, while yet our acquaintance was in its infancy.

CHAPTER XV.

CAPTAIN POWER.

WITHIN a few weeks after my arrival in town I had become a matriculated student of the University, and the possessor of chambers within its walls, in conjunction with the sage and prudent gentleman I have introduced to my readers in the last chapter. Had my intentions on entering college been of the most studious and regular kind, the companion into whose society I was then immediately thrown would have quickly dissipated them. He voted morning chapels a bore, Greek lectures a humbug, examinations a farce, and pronounced the statute-book, with its attendant train of fines and punishment, an "unclean thing." With all my country habits and predilections fresh upon me, that I was an easily won disciple to his code need not be wondered at, and, indeed, ere many days had passed over, my thorough indifference to all college rules and regulations had given me a high place in the esteem of Webber and his friends. As for myself, I was most agreeably surprised to find that what I had looked forward to as a very melancholy banishment, was likely to prove a most agreeable sojourn. Under Webber's directions, there was no hour of the day that hung heavily upon our hands. We rose about eleven, and breakfasted; after which succeeded fencing, sparring, billiards, or tennis in the park; about three, got on horseback, and either cantered in the Phœnix or about the squares till visiting time; after which, made our calls, and then dressed for dinner, which we never thought of taking at commons, but had it from Morrison's, we both being reported sick in the Dean's list, and thereby exempt from the routine fare of the fellows' table. In the evening our occupations became still

more pressing; there were balls, suppers, whist parties, rows at the theatre, shindies in the street, deviled drumsticks at Hayes', select oyster parties at the Carlingford; in fact, every known method of remaining up all night, and appearing both pale and penitent the following morning.

Webber had a large acquaintance in Dublin, and soon made me known to them all. Among others, the officers of the —th Light Dragoons, in which regiment Power was Captain, were his particular friends, and we had frequent invitations to dine at their mess. There it was first that military life presented itself to me in its most attractive, possible form, and heightened the passion I had already so strongly conceived for the army. Power, above all others, took my fancy. He was a gay, dashing-looking, handsome fellow of about eight-and-twenty, who had already seen some service, having joined while his regiment was in Portugal; was in heart and soul a soldier, and had that species of pride and enthusiasm in all that regarded a military career that form no small part of the charm in the character of a young officer.

I sat near him the second day we dined at the mess, and was much pleased at many slight attentions in his manner toward me.

"I called on you to-day, Mr. O'Malley," said he, "in company with a friend, who is most anxious to see you."

"Indeed," said I; "I did not hear of it."

"We left no cards either of us, as we were determined to make you out on another day; my companion has most urgent reasons for seeing you. I see you are puzzled," said he, "and, although I promised to keep his secret, I must blab: it was Sir George Dashwood was with me; he told us of your most romantic adventure in the west, and, faith, there is no doubt you saved the lady's life."

"Was she worth the trouble of it?" said the old major, whose conjugal experiences imparted a very crusty tone to the question.

"I think," said I, "I need only tell her name to convince you of it."

"Here's a bumper to her," said Power, filling his glass; "and every true man will follow my example."

When the hip, hipping which followed the toast was over, I found myself enjoying no small share of the attention of the party as the deliverer of Lucy Dashwood.

"Sir George is cudgeling his brain to show his gratitude to you," said Power.

"What a pity, for the sake of his peace of mind, that you're not in the army," said another; "it's so easy to show a man a delicate regard by a quick promotion."

"A devil of a pity for his own sake, too," said Power, again; "they're going to make a lawyer of as strapping a fellow as ever carried a saberdash."

"A lawyer!" cried out half a dozen together, pretty much with the same tone and emphasis as though he had said a two-penny postman—"the devil they are."

"Cut the service at once: you'll get no promotion in it," said the colonel; "a fellow with a black eye like you would look much better at the head of a squadron than a string of witnesses. Trust me, you'd shine more in conducting a picket than a prosecution."

"But if I can't?" said I.

"Then take my plan," said Power, "and make it cut *you*."

"Yours?" said two or three in a breath —"yours?"

"Ay, mine; did you never know that I was bred to the bar? Come, come, if it was only for O'Malley's use and benefit—as we say in the parchments—I must tell you the story."

The claret was pushed briskly round, chairs drawn up to fill any vacant spaces, and Power began his story.

"As I am not over long-winded, don't be scared at my beginning my history somewhat far back. I began life that most unlucky of all earthly contrivances for supplying casualties in case anything may befall the heir of the house—a species of domestic jury-mast, only lugged out in a gale of wind—a younger son. My brother Tom, a thick-skulled, pudding-headed, dog, that had no taste for anything save his dinner, took it into his wise head one morning that he would go into the army, and, although I had been originally destined for a soldier, no sooner was his choice made, than all regard for my taste and inclination was forgotten; and, as the family interest was only enough for one, it was decided that I should be put in what is called a 'learned profession,' and let push my fortune. 'Take your choice, Dick,' said my father, with a most benign smile—'take your choice, boy: will you be a lawyer, a parson, or a doctor?'

"Had he said, 'Will you be put in the stocks, the pillory, or publicly whipped?' I could not have looked more blank than at the question.

"As a decent Protestant, he should have grudged me to the church; as a philan-

thropist, he might have scrupled at making me a physician; but, as he had lost deeply by lawsuits, there looked something very like a lurking malice in sending me to the bar. Now, so far as I concurred with him, for having no gift for enduring either sermons or senna, I thought I'd make a bad administrator of either, and as I was ever regarded in the family as rather of a shrewd and quick turn, with a very natural taste for roguery, I began to believe he was right, and that nature intended me for the circuit.

"From the hour my vocation was pronounced, it had been happy for the family that they could have got rid of me. A certain ambition to rise in my profession laid hold on me, and I meditated all day and night how I was to get on. Every trick, every subtle invention to cheat the enemy that I could read of, I treasured up carefully, being fully impressed with the notion that roguery meant law, and equity was only another name for odd and even.

"My days were spent haranguing special juries of housemaids and laundresses, cross-examining the cook, charging the under butler, and passing sentence of death upon the pantry boy, who, I may add, was invariably hanged when the court rose.

"If the mutton were overdone, or the turkey burned, I drew up an indictment against old Margaret, and against the kitchen-maid as accomplice; and the family hungered while I harangued; and, in fact, into such disrepute did I bring the legal profession, by the score of annoyance of which I made it the vehicle, that my father got a kind of holy horror of law courts, judges, and crown solicitors, and absented himself from the assizes the same year, for which, being a high sheriff, he paid a penalty of 500*l*.

"The next day I was sent off in disgrace to Dublin to begin my career in college, and eat the usual quartos and folios of beef and mutton which qualify a man for the woolsack.

"Years rolled over, in which, after an ineffectual effort to get through college, the only examination I ever got being a jubilee for the king's birthday, I was at length called to the Irish bar, and saluted by my friends as Counselor Power. The whole thing was so like a joke to me, that it kept me in laughter for three terms, and, in fact, it was the best thing could happen me, for I had nothing else to do. The hall of the Four Courts was a very pleasant lounge, plenty of agreeable fellows that never earned sixpence, or were likely to do so. Then the circuits were so many country excursions, that supplied fun of one kind or other, but no profit. As for me, I was what was called a good junior: I knew how to look after the waiters, to inspect the decanting of the wine, and the airing of the claret, and was always attentive to the father of the circuit, the crossest old villain that ever was a king's counsel. These eminent qualities, and my being able to sing a song in honor of our own bar, were recommendations enough to make me a favorite, and I was one.

"Now the reputation I obtained was pleasant enough at first, but I began to wonder that I never got a brief. Somehow, if it rained civil bills or declarations, devil a one would fall upon my head, and it seemed as if the only object I had in life was to accompany the circuit, a kind of deputy-assistant commissary-general, never expected to come into action. To be sure, I was not alone in misfortune; there were several promising youths who cut great figures in Trinity, in the same predicament, the only difference being, that they attributed to jealousy what I suspected was forgetfulness, for I don't think a single attorney in Dublin knew one of us.

"Two years passed over, and then I walked the hall with a bag filled with newspapers, to look like briefs, and was regularly called by two or three criers from one court to the other. It never took; even when I used to seduce a country friend to visit the courts, and get him into an animated conversation in a corner between two pillars, devil a one would believe him to be a client, and I was fairly nonplussed.

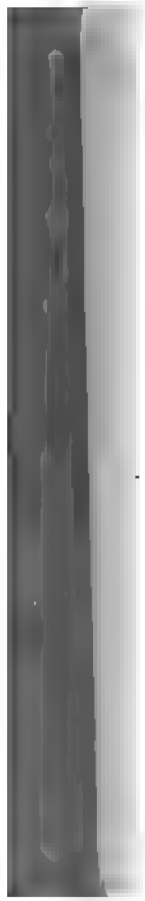
"'How is a man ever to distinguish himself in such a walk as this?' was my eternal question to myself every morning as I put on my wig. 'My face is as well known here as Lord Manners's;' every one says, "How are you, Dick?" "How goes it, Power?" but except Holmes, that said one morning as he passed me, "Eh, always busy?" no one alludes to the possibility of my having anything to do.'

"'If I could only get a footing,' thought I, 'Lord, how I'd astonish them! As the song says,

> "'Perhaps a recruit
> Might chance to shoot
> Great General Buonaparte.'

So,' said I to myself, 'I'll make these halls ring for it some day or other, if the occasion ever present itself.' But, faith, it seemed as if some cunning solicitor overheard me, and told his associates, for they avoided me like a leprosy. The home cir-

"STOP, SIR," SHOUTED SIR GEORGE. (P. 682.)



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cuit I had adopted for some time past, for the very palpable reason that, being near town, it was least costly, and it had all the advantages of any other for me, in getting me nothing to do. Well, one morning we were in Philipstown; I was lying awake in bed, thinking how long it would be before I'd sum up resolution to cut the bar, where certainly my prospects were not the most cheering, when some one tapped gently at my door.

"'Come in,' said I.

"The waiter opened gently, and held out his hand with a large roll of paper tied round with a piece of red tape.

"'Counselor,' said he, 'handsel.'

"'What do you mean?' said I, jumping out of bed; 'what is it, you villain?'

"'A brief.'

"'A brief; so I see, but it's for Counselor Kinshella, below stairs.' That was the first name written on it.

"'Bethershin,' said he, 'Mr. M'Grath bid me give it to you carefully.'

"By this time I had opened the envelope, and read my own name at full length as junior counsel in the important case of Monaghan *v.* M'Shean, to be tried in the Record Court at Ballinasloe. 'That will do,' said I, flinging it on the bed with a careless air, as if it were a very every-day matter with me.

"'But counselor, darlin', give us a thrifle to dhrink your health with your first cause, and the Lord send you plenty of them.'

"'My first,' said I, with a smile of most ineffable compassion at his simplicity, 'I'm worn out with them; do you know, Peter, I was thinking seriously of leaving the bar, when you came into the room. Upon my conscience, it's in earnest I am.'

"Peter believed me, I think, for I saw him give a very peculiar look as he pocketed his half-crown and left the room.

"The door was scarcely closed when I gave way to the free transport of my ecstasy; there it lay at last, the long looked-for, long wished-for object of all my happiness, and, though I well knew that a junior counsel has about as much to do in the conducting of a case as a rusty handspike has in a naval engagement, yet I suffered not such thoughts to mar the current of my happiness. There was my name in conjunction with the two mighty leaders on the circuit, and though they each pocketed a hundred, I doubt very much if they received their briefs with one-half the satisfaction. My joy at length a little subdued, I opened the roll of paper and began carefully to peruse about fifty pages of narrative regarding a watercourse that once had turned a mill; but, from some reasons doubtless known to itself or its friends, would do so no longer, and thus set two respectable neighbors at loggerheads, and involved them in a record that had been now heard three several times.

"Quite forgetting the subordinate part I was destined to fill, I opened the case in a most flowery oration, in which I descanted upon the benefits accruing to mankind from water-communication since the days of Noah; remarked upon the antiquity of mills, and especially of millers, and consumed half an hour in a preamble of generalities that I hoped would make a very considerable impression upon the court. Just at the critical moment when I was about to enter more particularly into the case, three or four of the great unbriefed came rattling into my room, and broke in upon the oration.

"'I say, Power,' said one, 'come and have an hour's skating on the canal; the courts are filled, and we shan't be missed.'

"'Skate, my dear friend,' said I, in a most dolorous tone, 'out of the question; see, I am chained to a devilish knotty case with Kinshella and Mills.'

"'Confound your humbugging,' said another; 'that may do very well in Dublin for the attorneys, but not with us.'

"'I don't well understand you,' I replied; 'there is the brief. Hennesy expects me to report upon it this evening, and I'm so hurried.'

"Here a very chorus of laughing broke forth, in which, after several vain efforts to resist, I was forced to join, and kept it up with the others.

"When our mirth was over, my friends scrutinized the red tape-tied packet, and pronounced it a real brief, with a degree of surprise that certainly augured little for their familiarity with such objects of natural history.

"When they had left the room, I leisurely examined the all-important document, spreading it out before me upon the table, and surveying it as a newly anointed sovereign might be supposed to contemplate a map of his dominions.

"'At last,' said I to myself—'at last, and here is the footstep to the woolsack.' For more than an hour I sat motionless, my eyes fixed upon the outspread paper, lost in a very maze of reverie. The ambition which disappointments had crushed, and delay had chilled, came suddenly back, and all my day-dreams of legal success, my cherished aspirations after silk gowns, and patents of precedence rushed

once more upon me, and I resolved to do or die. Alas! a very little reflection showed me that the latter was perfectly practicable; but that, as a junior counsel, five minutes of very common-place recitation was all my province, and with the main business of the day I had about as much to do as the call-boy of a playhouse has with the success of a tragedy.

"'My Lord, this is an action brought by Timothy Higgin,' etc., and down I go, no more to be remembered and thought of than if I had never existed. How different it would be were I the leader! Zounds, how I would worry the witnesses, browbeat the evidence, cajole the jury, and soften the judges! If the Lord were, in his mercy, to remove old Mills and Kinshella before Tuesday, who knows but my fortune might be made? This supposition, once started, set me speculating upon all the possible chances that might cut off two king's counsel in three days, and left me fairly convinced that my own elevation was certain, were they only removed from my path.

"For two whole days the thought never left my mind; and, on the evening of the second day, I sat moodily over my pint of port, in the Clonbrock Arms, with my friend, Timothy Casey, Captain in the North Cork Militia, for my companion.

"'Fred,' said Tim, 'take off your wine, man. When does this confounded trial come on?'

"'To-morrow,' said I, with a deep groan.

"'Well, well, and if it does, what matter,' he said, 'you'll do well enough, never be afraid.'

"'Alas!' said I, 'you don't understand the cause of my depression' I here entered upon an account of my sorrows, which lasted for above an hour, and only concluded just as a tremendous noise in the street without announced an arrival. For several minutes, such was the excitement in the house, such running hither and thither, such confusion, and such hubbub, that we could not make out who had arrived.

"At last a door opened quite near us, and we saw the waiter assisting a very portly-looking gentleman off with his great-coat, assuring him the while, that if he would only walk into the coffee-room for ten minutes, the fire in his apartment should be got ready. The stranger accordingly entered and seated himself at the fireplace, having never noticed that Casey and myself—the only persons there—were in the room.

"'I say, Phil, who is he?' inquire Casey of the waiter.

"'Counselor Mills, Captain,' said th waiter, and left the room.

"'That's your friend,' said Casey.

"'I see,' said I; 'and I wish with al my heart he was at home with his pretty wife, in Leeson street.'

"'Is she good looking?' inquired Tim

"'Devil a better,' said I; 'and he's as jealous as Old Nick.'

"'Hem,' said Tim; 'mind your cue and I'll give him a start.' Here he suddenly changed his whispering tone for one in a louder key, and resumed: 'I say, Power, it will make some work for you lawyers. But who can she be? that's the question.' Here he took a much crumpled letter from his pocket, and pretended to read: '"A great sensation was created in the neighborhood of Merrion square, yesterday, by the sudden disappearance from her house of the handsome Mrs. ——" Confound it —what's the name?—what a hand he writes? Hill or Miles, or something like that—"the lady of an eminent barrister, now on circuit. The gay Lothario is, they say, the Hon. George ——"' I was so thunderstruck at the rashness of the stroke, I could say nothing; while the old gentleman started as if he had sat down on a pin. Casey, meanwhile, went on.

"'Hell and fury!' said the king's counsel, rushing over, 'what is it you're saying?'

"'You appear warm, old gentleman,' said Casey, putting up the letter, and rising from the table.

"'Show me that letter—show me that infernal letter, sir, this instant!'

"'Show you my letter,' said Casey; 'cool, that, anyhow. You are, certainly, a good one.'

"'Do you know me, sir? answer me that,' said the lawyer, bursting with passion.

"'Not at present,' said Tim, quietly; 'but I hope to do so in the morning, in explanation of your language and conduct.' A tremendous ringing of the bell here summoned the waiter to the room.

"'Who is that ——?' inquired the lawyer. The epithet he judged it safe to leave unsaid, as he pointed to Casey.

"'Captain Casey, sir; the commanding officer here.'

"'Just so,' said Casey; 'and very much at your service, any hour after five in the morning.'

"'Then you refuse, sir, to explain the paragraph I have just heard you read?'

"'Well done, old gentleman; so you

have been listening to a private conversation I held with my friend here. In that case we had better retire to our room.' So saying, he ordered the waiter to send a fresh bottle and glasses to No. 14, and, taking my arm, very politely wished Mr. Mills good night, and left the coffee-room.

"Before we had reached the top of the stairs the house was once more in commotion. The new arrival had ordered out fresh horses, and was hurrying every one in his impatience to get away. In ten minutes the chaise rolled off from the door, and Casey, putting his head out of the window, wished him a pleasant journey; while turning to me, he said,

"'There's one of them out of the way for you, if we are even obliged to fight the other.'

"The port was soon dispatched, and with it went all the scruples of conscience I had at first felt for the cruel *ruse* we had just practiced. Scarcely was the other bottle called for, when we heard the landlord calling out in a stentorian voice,

"'Two horses, for Goran bridge, to meet Counselor Kinshella.'

"'That's the other fellow?' said Casey.

"'It is,' said I.

"'Then we must be stirring,' said he. 'Waiter, chaise and pair in five minutes—d'ye hear? Power, my boy, I don't want you; stay here, and study your brief. It's little trouble Counselor Kinshella will give you in the morning.'

"All he would tell me of his plans was, that he didn't mean any serious bodily harm to the counselor, but that certainly he was not likely to be heard of for twenty-four hours.

"'Meanwhile, Power, go in and win, my boy,' said he; 'such another walk over may never occur.'

"I must not make my story longer. The next morning, the great record of Monaghan *v.* M'Shean was called on, and, as the senior counsel were not present, the attorney wished a postponement. I, however, was firm; told the court I was quite prepared, and with such an air of assurance that I actually puzzled the attorney. The case was accordingly opened by me in a very brilliant speech, and the witnesses called; but such was my unlucky ignorance of the whole matter, that I actually broke down the testimony of our own, and fought like a Trojan for the credit and character of the perjurers against us! The judge rubbed his eyes—the jury looked amazed—and the whole bar laughed outright. However, on I went, blundering, floundering, and foundering at every step, and, at half-past four, amid the greatest and most uproarious mirth of the whole court, heard the jury deliver a verdict against us just as old Kinshella rushed into the court, covered with mud and spattered with clay. He had been sent for twenty miles to make a will for Mr. Daly of Daly's Mount, who was supposed to be at the point of death, but who, on his arrival, threatened to shoot him for causing an alarm to his family by such an imputation.

"The rest is soon told. They moved for a new trial, and I moved out of the profession. I cut the bar, for it cut me. I joined the gallant 14th as a volunteer, and here I am without a single regret, I must confess, that I didn't succeed in the great record of Monaghan *v.* M'Shean."

Once more the claret went briskly round, and while we canvassed Power's story, many an anecdote of military life was told, as every instant increased the charm of that career I longed for.

"Another cooper, Major," said Power.

"With all my heart," said the rosy little officer, as he touched the bell behind him; "and now let's have a song."

"Yes, Power," said three or four together, "let us have 'The Irish Dragoon,' if it's only to convert your friend O'Malley there."

"Here goes, then," said Dick, taking off a bumper as he began the following chant to the air of "Love is the soul of a gay Irish man:"

"THE IRISH DRAGOON.

"Oh! love is the soul of an Irish Dragoon,
In battle, in bivouac, or in saloon—
From the tip of his spur to his bright sabretasche,
With his soldierly gait and his bearing so high,
His gay laughing look, and his light speaking eye,
He frowns at his rival, he ogles his wench,
He springs in his saddle and *chasses* the French—
With his jingling spur and his bright sabretasche.

"His spirits are high, and he little knows care,
Whether sipping his claret, or charging a square—
With his jingling spur and his bright sabretasche.
As ready to sing or to skirmish he's found,
To take off his wine, or to take up his ground;
When the bugle may call him, how little he fears,
To charge forth in column, and beat the Mounseers—
With his jingling spur and his bright sabretasche.

"When the battle is over, he gayly rides back
To cheer every soul in the night bivouac—
With his jingling spur and his bright sabretasche.

Oh! there you may see him in full glory crown'd,
As he sits 'mid his friends on the hardly won ground,
And hear with what feeling the toast he will give,
As he drinks to the land where all Irishmen live—
With his jingling spur and his bright sabretasche."

It was late when we broke up; but among all the recollections of that pleasant evening, none clung to me so forcibly, none sank so deeply in my heart as the gay and careless tone of Power's manly voice; and as I fell asleep toward morning, the words of "The Irish Dragoon" were floating through my mind, and followed me in my dreams.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE VICE-PROVOST.

I HAD now been for some weeks a resident within the walls of the University, and yet had never presented my letter of introduction to Dr. Barret. Somehow, my thoughts and occupations had left me little leisure to reflect upon my college course, and I had not felt the necessity suggested by my friend Sir Harry, of having a supporter in the very learned and gifted individual to whom I was accredited. How long I might have continued in this state of indifference, it is hard to say, when chance brought about my acquaintance with the doctor.

Were I not inditing a true history in this narrative of my life, to the events and characters of which so many are living witnesses, I should certainly fear to attempt anything like a description of this very remarkable man, so liable would any sketch, however faint and imperfect, be, to the accusation of caricature, when all was so singular and so eccentric.

Dr. Barret was, at the time I speak of, close upon seventy years of age, scarcely five feet in height, and even that diminutive stature lessened by a stoop. His face was thin, pointed, and russet-colored; his nose so aquiline as nearly to meet his projecting chin, and his small gray eyes, red and bleary, peered beneath his well-worn cap with a glance of mingled fear and suspicion. His dress was a suit of the rustiest black, threadbare, and patched in several places, while a pair of large brown leather slippers, far too big for his feet, imparted a sliding motion to his walk, that added an air of indescribable meanness to his appearance; a gown that had been worn for twenty years, browned and coated with the learned dust of the *Fugel*, covered his rusty habiliments, and completed the equipments of a figure that it was somewhat difficult for the young student to recognise as the Vice-Provost of the University. Such was he in externals. Within, a greater or more profound scholar never graced the walls of the college; a distinguished Grecian, learned in all the refinements of a hundred dialects; a deep Orientalist, cunning in all the varieties of Eastern languages, and able to reason with a Moonshee, or chat with a Persian ambassador. With a mind that never ceased acquiring, he possessed a memory ridiculous for its retentiveness even of trifles; no character in history, no event in chronology, was unknown to him, and he was referred to by his contemporaries for information in doubtful and disputed cases, as men consult a lexicon or dictionary. With an intellect thus stored with deep and far-sought knowledge, in the affairs of the world he was a child. Without the walls of the college, for above forty years, he had not ventured half as many times, and knew absolutely nothing of the busy, active world that fussed and fumed so near him; his farthest excursion was to the Bank of Ireland, to which he made occasional visits to fund the ample income of his office, and add to the wealth which already had acquired for him a well-merited repute of being the richest man in college.

His little intercourse with the world had left him, in all his habits and manners, in every respect exactly as when he entered college, nearly half a century before; and as he had literally risen from the ranks in the University, all the peculiarities of voice, accent, and pronunciation which distinguished him as a youth, adhered to him in old age. This was singular enough, and formed a very ludicrous contrast with the learned and deep-read tone of his conversation; but another peculiarity, still more striking, belonged to him. When he became a fellow, he was obliged, by the rules of the college, to take holy orders as a *sine qua non* to his holding his fellowship; this he did, as he would have assumed a red hood or blue one, as bachelor of laws, or doctor of medicine, and thought no more of it; but, frequently, in his moments of passionate excitement, the venerable character with which he was invested was quite forgotten, and he would utter some sudden and terrific oath, more productive of mirth to his auditors than was seemly, and for which, once spoken, the poor Doctor felt the greatest shame and contrition. These oaths were no less singular

than forcible, and many a trick was practiced, and many a plan devised, that the learned Vice-Provost might be entrapped into his favorite exclamation of "May the devil admire me!" which no place or presence could restrain.

My servant, Mike, who had not been long in making himself acquainted with all the originals about him, was the cause of my first meeting the Doctor, before whom I received a summons to appear, on the very serious charge of treating with disrespect the heads of the college.

The circumstances were shortly these:—Mike had, among the other gossip of the place, heard frequent tales of the immense wealth and great parsimony of the Doctor; of his anxiety to amass money on all occasions, and the avidity with which even the smallest trifle was added to his gains. He accordingly resolved to amuse himself at the expense of this trait, and proceeded thus:—Boring a hole in a halfpenny, he attached a long string to it, and, having dropped it on the Doctor's step, stationed himself on the opposite side of the court, concealed from view by the angle of the Commons' wall. He waited patiently for the chapel bell, at the first toll of which the door opened, and the Doctor issued forth. Scarcely was his foot upon the step, when he saw the piece of money, and as quickly stooped to seize it; but just as his finger had nearly touched it, it evaded his grasp, and slowly retreated. He tried again, but with the like success. At last, thinking he miscalculated the distance, he knelt leisurely down, and put forth his hand, but lo! it again escaped him; on which, slowly rising from his posture, he shambled on toward the chapel, where, meeting the senior lecturer at the door, he cried out, "H— to my soul, Wall, but I saw the halfpenny walk away!"

For the sake of the grave character whom he addressed, I need not recount how such a speech was received; suffice it to say, that Mike had been seen by a college porter, who reported him as my servant.

I was in the very act of relating the anecdote to a large party at breakfast in my rooms, when a summons arrived, requiring my immediate attendance at the Board, then sitting in solemn conclave at the examination-hall.

I accordingly assumed my academic costume as speedily as possible, and, escorted by that most august fuctionary, Mr. M'Alister, presented myself before the seniors.

The members of the Board, with the Provost at their head, were seated at a long oak table, covered with books, papers, etc., and from the silence they maintained, as I walked up the hall, I augured that a very solemn scene was before me.

"Mr. O'Malley," said the Dean, reading my name from a paper he held in his hand, "you have been summoned here at the desire of the Vice-Provost, whose questions you will reply to."

I bowed. A silence of a few minutes followed, when, at length, the learned Doctor, hitching up his nether garments with both hands, put his old and bleary eyes close to my face, while he croaked out, with an accent that no hackney-coachman could have exceeded in vulgarity,

"Eh, O'Malley; you're *quartus*, I believe; a'n't you?"

"I believe not. I think I am the only person of that name now on the books."

"That's thrue; but there were three O'Malleys before you. Godfrey O'Malley, that construed *Calve Neroni* to Nero the Calvinist—ha! ha! ha!—was cautioned in 1788."

"My uncle, I believe, sir."

"More than likely, from what I hear of you—*Ex uno*, etc. I see your name every day on the punishment roll. Late hours, never at chapel, seldom at morning lecture. Here ye are, sixteen shillings, wearing a red coat."

"Never knew any harm in that, Doctor."

"Ay, but d'ye see me, now? 'Grave raiment,' says the statute. And then, ye keep numerous beasts of prey, dangerous in their habits, and unseemly to behold."

"A bull terrier, sir, and two game-cocks, are, I assure you, the only animals in my household."

"Well, I'll fine you for it."

"I believe, Doctor," said the Dean, interrupting, in an undertone, "that you cannot impose a penalty in this matter."

"Ay, but I can. 'Singing-birds,' says the statute, 'are forbidden within the walls.'"

"And then, ye dazzled my eyes at Commons, with a bit of looking-glass, on Friday. I saw you. May the devil—ahem!—As I was saying, that's casting *reflections* on the heads of the college; and your servant it was, *Michaelis Liber*, Mickey Free—may the flames of—ahem!—an insolent varlet! called me a sweep."

"You, Doctor; impossible!" said I, with pretended horror.

"Ay, but d'ye see me, now? It's thrue, for I looked about me at the time, and there wasn't another sweep in the place but myself. Hell to—I mean—God

forgive me for swearing! but I'll fine you a pound for this."

As I saw the Doctor was getting on at such a pace, I resolved, notwithstanding the august presence of the Board, to try the efficacy of Sir Harry's letter of introduction, which I had taken in my pocket, in the event of its being wanted.

"I beg your pardon, sir, if the time be an unsuitable one; but may I take the opportunity of presenting this letter to you?"

"Ha! I know the hand—Boyle's. *Boyle secundus.* Hem, ha, ay! 'My young friend; and assist him by your advice.' To be sure! Oh! of course. Eh, tell me, young man, did Boyle say nothing to you about the copy of Erasmus, bound in vellum, that I sold him in Trinity term, 1782?"

"I rather think not, sir," said I, doubtfully.

"Well, then, he might. He owes me two-and-fourpence of the balance."

"Oh! I beg pardon, sir; I now remember he desired me to repay you that sum; but he had just sealed the letter when he recollected it."

"Better late than never," said the Doctor, smiling graciously. "Where's the money? Ay! half-a-crown. I haven't twopence—never mind. Go away, young man; the case is dismissed. *Vehementer miror quare huc venisti.* You're more fit for anything than a college life. Keep good hours; mind the terms; and dismiss *Michaelis Liber.* Ha, ha, ha! May the devil!—hem!—that is, do—" So saying, the little Doctor's hand pushed me from the hall, his mind evidently relieved of all the griefs from which he had been suffering, by the recovery of his long-lost two-and-fourpence.

Such was my first and last interview with the Vice-Provost, and it made an impression upon me that all the intervening years have neither dimmed nor erased.

CHAPTER XVII.

TRINITY COLLEGE—A LECTURE.

I HAD not been many weeks a resident of Old Trinity ere the flattering reputation my chum, Mr. Francis Webber, had acquired, extended also to myself; and, by universal consent, we were acknowledged the most riotous, ill-conducted, and disorderly men on the books of the University. Were the lamps of the squares extinguished, and the college left in total darkness, we were summoned before the Dean; was the Vice-Provost serenaded with a chorus of trombones and French horns, to our taste in music was the attention ascribed; did a sudden alarm of fire disturb the congregation at morning chapel, Messrs. Webber and O'Malley were brought before the Board; and I must do them the justice to say that the most trifling circumstantial evidence was ever sufficient to bring a conviction. Reading men avoided the building where we resided as they would have done the plague. Our doors, like those of a certain classic precinct commemorated by a Latin writer, lay open night and day; while moustached dragoons, knowingly dressed four-in-hand men, fox-hunters in pink issuing forth to the Dubber, or returning splashed from a run with the Kildare hounds, were everlastingly seen passing and repassing. Within, the noise and confusion resembled rather the mess-room of a regiment toward eleven at night than the chambers of a college student; while, with the double object of affecting to be in ill health, and to avoid the reflections that daylight occasionally inspires, the shutters were never opened, but lamps and candles kept always burning. Such was No. 2, Old Square, in the goodly days I write of. All the terrors of fines and punishments fell scatheless on the head of my worthy chum. In fact, like a well-known political character, whose pleasure and amusement it has been for some years past to drive through acts of parliaments and deride the powers of the law, so did Mr. Webber tread his way, serpenting through the statute-book, ever grazing, but rarely trespassing upon some forbidden ground, which might involve the great punishment of expulsion. So expert, too, had he become in his special pleadings, so dexterous in the law of the University, that it was no easy matter to bring crime home to him; and even when this was done, his pleas in mitigation rarely failed of success.

There was a sweetness of demeanor, a mild, subdued tone about him, that constantly puzzled the worthy heads of the college how the accusations ever brought against him could be founded on truth; that the pale, delicate-looking student, whose harsh, hacking cough terrified the hearers, could be the boisterous performer upon a key-bugle, or the terrific assailant of watchmen, was something too absurd for belief; and when Mr. Webber, with his hand upon his heart, and in his most dulcet accents, assured them that the

hours he was not engaged in reading for the medal were passed in the soothing society of a few select and intimate friends of literary tastes and refined minds, who, knowing the delicacy of his health—here he would cough—were kind enough to sit with him for an hour or so in the evening, the delusion was perfect; and the story of the Dean's riotous habits having got abroad, the charge was usually suppressed.

Like most idle men, Webber never had a moment to spare. Except read, there was nothing he did not do; training a hack for a race in the Phœnix—arranging a rowing-match—getting up a mock duel between two white-feather acquaintances, were his almost daily avocations. Besides that, he was at the head of many organized societies, instituted for various benevolent purposes. One was called "The Association for Discountenancing Watchmen;" another, "The Board of Works," whose object was principally devoted to the embellishment of the University, in which, to do them justice, their labors were unceasing, and what with the assistance of some black paint, a ladder, and a few pounds of gunpowder, they certainly contrived to effect many important changes. Upon an examination morning, some hundred luckless "jibs" might be seen perambulating the courts, in the vain effort to discover their tutors' chambers, the names having undergone an alteration that left all trace of their original proprietors unattainable; Doctor Francis Mooney having become Doctor Full Moon—Doctor Hare being, by the change of two letters, Doctor Ape—Romney Robinson, Romulus and Remus, etc. While, upon occasions like these, there could be but little doubt of Master Frank's intentions, upon many others, so subtle were his inventions, so well-contrived his plots, it became a matter of considerable difficulty to say whether the mishap which befell some luckless acquaintance were the result of design or mere accident; and not unfrequently well-disposed individuals were found condoling with "Poor Frank!" upon his ignorance of some college rule or etiquette, his breach of which had been long and deliberately planned. Of this latter description was a circumstance which occurred about this time, and which some who may throw an eye over these pages will perhaps remember.

The Dean having heard (and, indeed, the preparations were not intended to secure secrecy) that Webber destined to entertain a party of his friends at dinner on a certain day, sent a most peremptory order for his appearance at Commons, his name being erased from the sick list, and a pretty strong hint conveyed to him that any evasion upon his part would be certainly followed by an inquiry into the real reasons for his absence. What was to be done? That was the very day he had destined for his dinner. To be sure, the majority of his guests were college men, who would understand the difficulty at once; but still there were some others, officers of the 14th, with whom he was constantly dining, and whom he could not so easily put off. The affair was difficult, but still Webber was the man for a difficulty; in fact, he rather liked one. A very brief consideration accordingly sufficed, and he sat down and wrote to his friends at the Royal Barracks thus:

"DEAR POWER,—I have a better plan for Tuesday than that I had proposed. Lunch here at three—(we'll call it dinner)—in the hall with the great guns: I can't say much for the grub, but the company—glorious! After that we'll start for Lucan in the drag—take our coffee, strawberries, etc., and return to No. 2, for supper at ten. Advertise your fellows of this change, and believe me,

"Most unchangeably yours,
"FRANK WEBBER."

"Saturday."

Accordingly, as three o'clock struck, six dashing-looking light dragoons were seen slowly sauntering up the middle of the dining-hall, escorted by Webber, who, in full academic costume, was leisurely ciceroning his friends, and expatiating upon the excellences of the very remarkable portraits which graced the walls.

The porters looked on with some surprise at the singular hour selected for sight-seeing, but what was their astonishment to find that the party, having arrived at the end of the hall, instead of turning back again, very composedly unbuckled their belts, and having disposed of their sabres in a corner, took their places at the Fellows' table, and sat down amid the collective wisdom of Greek Lecturers and Regius Professors, as though they had been mere mortals like themselves.

Scarcely was the long Latin grace concluded, when Webber, leaning forward, enjoined his friends, in a very audible whisper, that if they intended to dine, no time was to be lost.

"We have but little ceremony here, gentlemen, and all we ask is a fair start," said he, as he drew over the soup, and proceeded to help himself.

The advice was not thrown away, for each man, with an alacrity a campaign usually teaches, made himself master of some neighboring dish—a very quick interchange of good things speedily following the appropriation. It was in vain that the Senior Lecturer looked aghast—that the Professor of Astronomy frowned—the whole table, indeed, were thunderstruck, even to the poor Vice-Provost himself, who, albeit given to the comforts of the table, could not lift a morsel to his mouth, but muttered between his teeth, "May the devil admire me, but they're dragoons!" The first shock of surprise over, the porters proceeded to inform them that except Fellows of the University or Fellow-commoners, none were admitted to the table. Webber, however, assured them that it was a mistake, there being nothing in the statute to exclude the 14th Light Dragoons, as he was prepared to prove. Meanwhile dinner proceeded, Power and his party performing with great self-satisfaction upon the sirloins and saddles about them; regretting only, from time to time, that there was a most unaccountable absence of wine, and suggesting the propriety of napkins whenever they should dine there again. Whatever chagrin these unexpected guests caused among their entertainers of the upper table, in the lower part of the hall the laughter was loud and unceasing, and long before the hour concluded, the Fellows took their departure, leaving to Master Frank Webber the task of doing the honors alone and unassisted. When summoned before the Board for the offense on the following morning, Webber excused himself by throwing the blame upon his friends, with whom, he said, nothing short of a personal quarrel—a thing for a reading man not to be thought of—could have prevented intruding in the manner related. Nothing less than *his* tact could have saved him on this occasion, and at last he carried the day; while, by an act of the Board, the 14th Light Dragoons were pronounced the most insolent corps in the service.

An adventure of his, however, got wind about this time, and served to enlighten many persons as to his real character, who had hitherto been most lenient in their expressions about him. Our worthy tutor, with a zeal for our welfare far more praiseworthy than successful, was in the habit of summoning to his chambers, on certain mornings of the week, his various pupils, whom he lectured in the books for the approaching examinations. Now, as these séances were held at six o'clock in winter as well as summer, in a cold, fireless chamber—the lecturer lying snug amid his blankets, while we stood shivering around the walls—the ardor of learning must, indeed, have proved strong that prompted a regular attendance. As to Frank, he would have as soon thought of attending chapel as of presenting himself on such an occasion. Not so with me. I had not yet grown hackneyed enough to fly in the face of authority, and I frequently left the whist-table, or broke off in a song, to hurry over to the Doctor's chambers, and spout Homer and Hesiod. I suffered on in patience, till at last the bore became so insupportable that I told my sorrows to my friend, who listened to me out, and promised me succor.

It so chanced that upon some evening in each week Dr. Mooney was in the habit of visiting some friends who resided a short distance from town, and spending the night at their house. He, of course, did not lecture the following morning—a paper placard, announcing no lecture, being affixed to the door on such occasions. Frank waited patiently till he perceived the Doctor affixing this announcement upon his door one evening; and no sooner had he left the college, than he withdrew the paper and departed.

On the next morning he rose early, and, concealing himself on the staircase, waited the arrival of the venerable damsel who acted as servant to the Doctor. No sooner had she opened the door and groped her way into the sitting-room, than Frank crept forward, and, stealing gently into the bedroom, sprung into the bed, and wrapped himself up in the blankets. The great bell boomed forth at six o'clock, and soon after the sounds of the feet were heard upon the stairs—one by one they came along—and gradually the room was filled with cold and shivering wretches, more than half asleep, and trying to arouse themselves into an approach to attention.

"Who's there?" said Frank, mimicking the Doctor's voice, as he yawned three or four times in succession, and turned in the bed.

"Collisson, O'Malley, Nesbitt," etc., said a number of voices, anxious to have all the merit such a penance could confer.

"Where's Webber?"

"Absent, sir," chorused the whole party.

"Sorry for it," said the mock Doctor. "Webber is a man of first-rate capacity, and were he only to apply, I am not certain to what eminence his abilities might raise him. Come, Collisson—any three

angles of a triangle are equal to—are equal to—what are they equal to?" Here he yawned as though he would dislocate his jaw.

"Any three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles," said Collisson, in the usual sing-song tone of a freshman.

As he proceeded to prove the proposition, his monotonous tone seemed to have lulled the Doctor into a doze, for in a few minutes a deep long-drawn snore announced from the closed curtains that he listened no longer. After a little time, however, a short snort from the sleeper awoke him suddenly, and he called out,

"Go on; I'm waiting. Do you think I can arouse at this hour of the morning for nothing but to listen to your bungling? Can no one give me a free translation of the passage?"

This digression from mathematics to classics did not surprise the hearers, though it somewhat confused them, no one being precisely aware what the line in question might be.

"Try it, Nesbitt—you, O'Malley—silent all—really this is too bad!" An indistinct muttering here from the crowd was followed by an announcement from the Doctor that "the speaker was an ass, and his head a turnip! Not one of you capable of translating a chorus from Euripides—'Ou, ou, papai, papai,' etc.; which, after all, means no more than—'Oh, whilleleu, murder, why did you die?' etc. What are you laughing at, gentlemen? May I ask, does it become a set of ignorant, ill-informed savages—yes, savages, I repeat the word—to behave in this manner? Webber is the only man I have with common intellect—the only man among you capable of distinguishing himself. But as for you—I'll bring you before the Board—I'll write to your friends—I'll stop your college indulgences—I'll confine you to the walls—I'll be damned, eh—"

This lapse confused him; he stammered, stuttered, endeavored to recover himself; but by this time we had approached the bed, just at the moment when Master Frank, well knowing what he might expect if detected, had bolted from the blankets and rushed from the room. In an instant we were in pursuit; but he regained his chambers, and double-locked the door before we could overtake him, leaving us to ponder over the insolent tirade we had so patiently submitted to.

That morning the affair got wind all over college. As for us, we were scarcely so much laughed at as the Doctor; the world wisely remembering, if such were the nature of our morning's orisons, we might nearly as profitably have remained snug in our quarters.

Such was our life in Old Trinity; and strange enough it is that one should feel tempted to the confession, but I really must acknowledge these were, after all, happy times, and I look back upon them with mingled pleasure and sadness. The noble lord who so pathetically lamented that the devil was not so strong in him as he used to be forty years before, has an echo in my regrets, that the student is not as young in me as when these scenes were enacting of which I write.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE INVITATION—THE WAGER.

I WAS sitting at breakfast with Webber, a few mornings after the mess dinner I have spoken of, when Power came in hastily.

"Ha, the very man!" said he. "I say, O'Malley, here's an invitation for you from Sir George, to dine on Friday. He desired me to say a thousand civil things about his not having made you out, regrets that he was not at home when you called yesterday, and all that. By Jove, I know nothing like the favor you stand in; and, as for Miss Dashwood, faith! the fair Lucy blushed, and tore her glove in most approved style, when the old General began his laudation of you."

"Pooh, nonsense," said I; "that silly affair in the west."

"Oh, very probably; there's reason the less for your looking so excessively conscious. But I must tell you, in all fairness, that you have no chance; nothing short of a dragoon will go down."

"Be assured," said I, somewhat nettled, "my pretensions do not aspire to the fair Miss Dashwood."

"*Tant mieux et tant pis, mon cher.* I wish to Heaven mine did; and, by St. Patrick, if I only played the knight errant half as gallantly as yourself, I would not relinquish my claims to the Secretary at War himself."

"What the devil brought the old General down to your wild regions?" inquired Webber.

"To contest the county."

"A bright thought, truly. When a man was looking for a seat, why not try a place where the law is occasionally heard of?"

"I'm sure I can give you no information on that head; nor have I ever heard how Sir George came to learn that such a place as Galway existed."

"I believe I can enlighten you," said Power. "Lady Dashwood—rest her soul!—came west of the Shannon; she had a large property somewhere in Mayo, and owned some hundred acres of swamp, with some thousand starving tenantry thereupon, that people dignified as an estate in Connaught. This first suggested to him the notion of setting up for the county; probably supposing, that the people who never paid in rent might like to do so in gratitude. How he was undeceived, O'Malley there can inform us. Indeed, I believe the worthy General, who was confoundedly hard up when he married, expected to have got a great fortune, and little anticipated the three Chancery suits he succeeded to, nor the fourteen rent-charges to his wife's relatives that made up the bulk of the dower. It was an unlucky hit for him when he fell in with the old 'maid' at Bath; and, had she lived, he must have gone to the colonies. But the Lord took her one day, and Major Dashwood was himself again. The Duke of York, the story goes, saw him at Hounslow during a review—was much struck with his air and appearance—made some inquiries—found him to be of excellent family and irreproachable conduct—made him an aide-de-camp—and, in fact, made his fortune. I do not believe that, while doing so kind, he could by possibility have done a more popular thing. Every man in the army rejoiced at his good fortune; so that, after all, though he has had some hard rubs, he has come well through, the only vestige of his unfortunate matrimonial connection being a correspondence kept up by a maiden sister of his late wife's with him. She insists upon claiming the ties of kindred upon about twenty family eras during the year, when she regularly writes a most loving and ill-spelled epistle, containing the latest information from Mayo, with all particulars of the Macan family, of which she is a worthy member. To her constant hints of the acceptable nature of certain small remittances, the poor General is never inattentive; but to the pleasing prospect of a visit in the flesh from Miss Judy Macan, the good man is dead. In fact, nothing short of being broke by a general court-martial could at all complete his sensations of horror at such a stroke of fortune; and I am not certain, if choice were allowed him, that he would not prefer the latter."

"Then he has never yet seen her?" said Webber.

"Never," replied Power; "and he hopes to leave Ireland without that blessing, the prospect of which, however remote and unlikely, has, I know well, more than once terrified him since his arrival."

"I say, Power, and has your worthy General sent me a card for his ball?"

"Not through me, Master Frank."

"Well, now, I call that devilish shabby, do you know. He asks O'Malley there from *my* chambers, and never notices the other man, the superior in the firm. Eh, O'Malley, what say you?"

"Why, I didn't know you were acquainted."

"And who said we were? It was his fault, though, entirely, that we were not. I am, as I have ever been, the most easy fellow in the world on that score—never give myself airs to military people—endure anything, everything—and you see the result—hard, ain't it?"

"But, Webber, Sir George must really be excused in this matter. He has a daughter, a most attractive, lovely daughter, just at that budding, unsuspecting age when the heart is most susceptible of impressions; and where, let me ask, could she run such a risk as in the chance of a casual meeting with the redoubted lady-killer, Master Frank Webber? If he has not sought you out, then here be his apology."

"A very strong case, certainly," said Frank; "but, still, had he confided his critical position to my honor and secrecy, he might have depended on me; now, having taken the other line—"

"Well, what then?"

"Why, he must abide the consequences. I'll make fierce love to Louisa; isn't that the name?"

"Lucy, so please you."

"Well, be it so—to Lucy—talk the little girl into a most deplorable attachment for me."

"But how, may I ask, and when?"

"I'll begin at the ball, man."

"Why, I thought you said you were not going?"

"There you mistake seriously. I merely said that I had not been invited."

"Then, of course," said I, "Webber, you can't think of going, in any case, on *my* account."

"My very dear friend, I go entirely upon my own. I not only shall go, but I intend to have most particular notice and attention paid me. I shall be prime favorite with Sir George—kiss Lucy—"

"Come, come, this is too strong."

"What do you bet I don't? There, now, I'll give you a pony a piece, I do. Do you say done?"

"That you kiss Miss Dashwood, and are not kicked down-stairs for your pains; are those the terms of the wager?" inquired Power.

"With all my heart. That I kiss Miss Dashwood, and am not kicked down-stairs for my pains."

"Then I say, done."

"And with you too, O'Malley?"

"I thank you," said I, coldly; "I'm not disposed to make such a return for Sir George Dashwood's hospitality as to make an insult to his family the subject of a bet."

"Why, man, what are you dreaming of? Miss Dashwood will not refuse my chaste salute. Come, Power, I'll give you the other pony."

"Agreed!" said he. "At the same time, understand me distinctly—that I hold myself perfectly eligible to winning the wager by my own interference; for, if you do kiss her, by Jove! I'll perform the remainder of the compact."

"So I understand the agreement," said Webber, arranging his curls before the looking-glass. "Well, now, who's for Howth? the drag will be here in half an hour."

"Not I," said Power; "I must return to the barracks."

"Nor I," said I, "for I shall take this opportunity of leaving my card at Sir George Dashwood's."

"I have won my fifty, however," said Power, as we walked out in the courts.

"I am not quite certain—"

"Why, the devil, he would not risk a broken neck for that sum; besides, if he did, he loses the bet."

"He's a devilish keen fellow."

"Let him be. In any case I am determined to be on my guard here."

So chatting, we strolled along to the Royal Hospital, when, having dropped my pasteboard, I returned to the college.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BALL.

I HAVE often dressed for a storming party with less of trepidation than I felt on the evening of Sir George Dashwood's ball. Since the eventful day of the election I had never seen Miss Dashwood; therefore, as to what precise position I might occupy in her favor was a matter of great doubt in my mind, and great import to my happiness. That I myself loved her was a matter of which all the badinage of my friends regarding her made me painfully conscious; but that, in our relative positions, such an attachment was all but hopeless, I could not disguise from myself. Young as I was, I well knew to what a heritage of debt, lawsuit, and difficulty I was born to succeed. In my own resources and means of advancement I had no confidence whatever, had even the profession to which I was destined been more of my choice. I daily felt that it demanded greater exertions, if not far greater abilities, than I could command, to make success at all likely; and then, even if such a result were in store, years, at least, must elapse before it could happen, and where would she then be, and where should I?—where the ardent affection I now felt and gloried in—perhaps all the more for its desperate hopelessness—when the sanguine and buoyant spirit to combat with difficulties which youth suggests, and which later manhood refuses, should have passed away? And, even if all these survived the toil and labor of anxious days and painful nights, what of her? Alas! I now reflected that, although only of my own age, her manner to me had taken all that tone of superiority and patronage which an elder assumes toward one younger, and which, in the spirit of protection it proceeds upon, essentially bars up every inlet to a dearer or warmer feeling—at least, when the lady plays the former part. "What, then, is to be done?" thought I. "Forget her?—but, how? How shall I renounce all my plans, and unweave the web of life I have been spreading around me for many a day, without that one golden thread that lent it more than half its brilliancy and all its attraction? But then, the alternative is even worse, if I encourage expectations and nurture hopes never to be realized. Well, we meet to-night, after a long and eventful absence; let my future fate be ruled by the results of this meeting. If Lucy Dashwood does care for me—if I can detect in her manner enough to show me that my affection may meet a return, the whole effort of my life shall be to make her mine; if not—if my own feelings be all that I have to depend upon to extort a reciprocal affection—then shall I take my last look of her, and with it the first and brightest dream of happiness my life has hitherto presented."

* * * * *

It need not be wondered at if the brilliant *coup d'œil* of the ball-room, as I entered, struck me with astonishment, accustomed as I had hitherto been to nothing more magnificent than an evening party of squires and their squiresses, or the annual garrison ball at the barracks. The glare of wax-lights, the well-furnished saloons, the glitter of uniforms, and the blaze of plumed and jeweled dames, with the clang of military music, was a species of enchanted atmosphere which, breathing for the first time, rarely fails to intoxicate. Never before had I seen so much beauty: lovely faces, dressed in all the seductive flattery of smiles, were on every side; and, as I walked from room to room, I felt how much more fatal to a man's peace and heart's ease the whispered words and silent glances of those fair damsels, than all the loud gayety and boisterous freedom of our country belles, who sought to take the heart by storm and escalade.

As yet I had seen neither Sir George nor his daughter, and, while I looked on every side for Lucy Dashwood, it was with a beating and anxious heart I longed to see how she would bear comparison with the blaze of beauty around.

Just at this moment a very gorgeously-dressed hussar stepped from a doorway beside me, as if to make a passage for some one, and the next moment she appeared leaning upon the arm of another lady. One look was all that I had time for, when she recognized me.

"Ah, Mr. O'Malley—how happy—has Sir George—has my father seen you?"

"I have only arrived this moment; I trust he is quite well?"

"Oh! yes, thank you—"

"I beg your pardon with all humility, Miss Dashwood," said the Hussar, in a tone of the most knightly courtesy, "but they are waiting for us."

"But, Captain Fortescue, you must excuse me one moment more. Mr. Lechmere, will you do me the kindness to find out Sir George? Mr. O'Malley—Mr. Lechmere." Here she said something in French to her companion, but so rapidly that I could not detect what it was, but merely heard the reply—"*Pas mal!*"—which, as the lady continued to canvass me most deliberately through her eye-glass, I supposed referred to me. "And now, Captain Fortescue—" And with a look of most courteous kindness to me she disappeared in the crowd.

The gentleman to whose guidance I was intrusted was one of the aides-de-camp, and was not long in finding Sir George. No sooner had the good old General heard my name, than he held out both his hands and shook mine most heartily.

"At last, O'Malley—at last I am able to thank you for the greatest service ever man rendered me. He saved Lucy, my Lord; rescued her under circumstances where anything short of his courage and determination must have cost her her life."

"Ah! very pretty indeed," said a stiff old gentleman addressed, as he bowed a most superbly-powdered scalp before me; "most happy to make your acquaintance."

"Who is he?" added he, in nearly as loud a tone to Sir George.

"Mr. O'Malley, of O'Malley Castle."

"True, I forgot—why is he not in uniform?"

"Because, unfortunately, my Lord, we don't own him; he's not in the army."

"Ha! ha! thought he was."

"You dance, O'Malley, I suppose? I'm sure you'd rather be over there than hearing all my protestations of gratitude, sincere and heartfelt as they really are."

"Lechmere, introduce my friend Mr. O'Malley; get him a partner."

I had not followed my new acquaintance many steps, when Power came up to me. "I say, Charley," cried he, "I have been tormented to death by half the ladies in the room to present you to them, and have been in quest of you this half-hour. Your brilliant exploit in savage land has made you a regular *preux chevalier;* and if you don't trade on that adventure to your most lasting profit, you deserve to be—a lawyer. Come along here! Lady Muckleman, the adjutant-general's lady and chief, has four Scotch daughters you are to dance with; then, I am to introduce you in all form to the Dean of Something's niece; she is a good-looking girl, and has two livings in a safe county. Then there's the town-major's wife; and, in fact, I have several engagements from this to supper-time."

"A thousand thanks for all your kindness in prospective, but I think, perhaps, it were right I should ask Miss Dashwood to dance, if only as a matter of form—you understand?"

"And, if Miss Dashwood should say, 'With pleasure, sir,' only as a matter of form—you understand?" said a silvery voice beside me. I turned, and saw Lucy Dashwood, who, having overheard my very free-and-easy suggestion, replied to me in this manner.

I here blundered out my excuses. What I said, and what I did not say, I do not now remember; but, certainly, it was her turn now to blush, and her arm trembled

within mine as I led her to the top of the room. In the little opportunity which our quadrille presented for conversation, I could not help remarking that, after the surprise of her first meeting with me, Miss Dashwood's manner became gradually more and more reserved, and that there was an evident struggle between her wish to appear grateful for what had occurred, with a sense of the necessity of not incurring a greater degree of intimacy. Such was my impression, at least, and such the conclusion I drew from a certain quiet tone in her manner, that went further to wound my feelings and mar my happiness than any other line of conduct toward me could possibly have effected.

Our quadrille over, I was about to conduct her to a seat, when Sir George came hurriedly up, his face greatly flushed, and betraying every semblance of high excitement,

"Dear papa, has anything occurred? pray what is?" inquired she.

He smiled faintly, and replied, "Nothing very serious, my dear, that I should alarm you in this way; but, certainly, a more disagreeable *contretemps* could scarcely occur."

"Do tell me; what can it be?"

"Read this," said he, presenting a very dirty-looking note, which bore the mark of a red wafer most infernally plain upon its outside.

Miss Dashwood unfolded the billet, and, after a moment's silence, instead of participating, as he expected, in her father's feeling of distress, burst out a-laughing, while she said, "Why, really, papa, I do not see why this should put you out much, after all. Aunt may be somewhat of a character, as her note evinces, but after a few days—"

"Nonsense, child; there's nothing in this world I have such a dread of as that confounded woman—and to come at such a time."

"When does she speak of paying her visit?"

"I knew you had not read the note," said Sir George, hastily; "she's coming here to-night—is on her way this instant, perhaps. What is to be done? If she forces her way in here, I shall go deranged outright. O'Malley, my boy, read this note, and you will not feel surprised if I appear in the humor you see me."

I took the billet from the hands of Miss Dashwood, and read as follows:

"Dear Brother,—When this reaches your hand, I'll not be far off. I'm on my way up to town, to be under Dr. Dease, for the ould complaint. Cowley mistakes my case entirely; he says it's nothing but religion and wind. Father Magrath, who understands a good deal about females, thinks otherwise—but God knows who's right. Expect me to tea, and, with love to Lucy, believe me yours, in haste,

"Judith Macan.

"Let the sheets be well aired in my room; and if you have a spare bed, perhaps we could prevail upon Father Magrath to stop too."

I scarcely could contain my laughter till I got to the end of this very free-and-easy epistle; when at last I burst forth in a hearty fit, in which I was joined by Miss Dashwood.

From the account Power had given me in the morning, I had no difficulty in guessing that the writer was the maiden sister of the late Lady Dashwood, and for whose relationship Sir George had ever testified the greatest dread, even at the distance of two hundred miles, and for whom, in any nearer intimacy, he was in no wise prepared.

"I say, Lucy," said he, "there's only one thing to be done; if this horrid woman does arrive, let her be shown to her room, and for the few days of her stay in town, we'll neither see nor be seen by any one."

Without waiting for a reply, Sir George was turning away to give the necessary instructions, when the door of the drawing-room was flung open, and the servant announced, in his loudest voice, "Miss Macan." Never shall I forget the poor General's look of horror as the words reached him; for, as yet, he was too far to catch even a glimpse of its fair owner. As for me, I was already so much interested in seeing what she was like, that I made my way through the crowd toward the door. It is no common occurrence that can distract the various occupations of a crowded ball-room, where, amid the crash of music and the din of conversation, goes on the soft, low voice of insinuating flattery, or the light flirtation of a first acquaintance; every clique, every coterie, every little group of three or four, has its own separate and private interests, forming a little world of its own, and caring for and heeding nothing that goes on around; and even when some striking character or illustrious personage makes his *entrée*, the attention he attracts is so momentary, that the buzz of conversation is scarcely,

if at all, interrupted, and the business of pleasure continues to flow on. Not so now, however. No sooner had the servant pronounced the magical name of Miss Macan, than all seemed to stand still. The spell thus exercised over the luckless General seemed to have extended to his company, for it was with difficulty that any one could continue his train of conversation, while every eye was directed toward the door. About two steps in advance of the servant, who still stood door in hand, was a tall, elderly lady, dressed in an antique brocade silk, with enormous flowers gaudily embroidered upon it. Her hair was powdered, and turned back, in the fashion of fifty years before; while her high-pointed and heeled shoes completed a costume that had not been seen for nearly a century. Her short, skinny arms were bare and partly covered by a falling flower of old point lace, while on her hands she wore black silk mittens; a pair of green spectacles scarcely dimmed the lustre of a most piercing pair of eyes, to whose effect a very palpable touch of rouge on the cheeks certainly added brilliancy. There stood this most singular apparition, holding before her a fan about the size of a modern tea-tray, while at each repetition of her name by the servant, she curtsied deeply, bestowing the while upon the gay crowd before her a very curious look of maidenly modesty at her solitary and unprotected position.

As no one had ever heard of the fair Judith save one or two of Sir George's most intimate friends, the greater part of the company were disposed to regard Miss Macan as some one who had mistaken the character of the invitation, and had come in a fancy dress. But this delusion was but momentary, as Sir George, armed with the courage of despair, forced his way through the crowd, and taking her hand affectionately, bid her welcome to Dublin. The fair Judy, at this, threw her arms about his neck, and saluted him with a hearty smack, that was heard all over the room.

"Where's Lucy, brother? let me embrace my little darling," said the lady, in an accent that told more of Miss Macan than a three-volume biography could have done. "There she is, I'm sure; kiss me, my honey."

This office Miss Dashwood performed with an effort at courtesy really admirable; while, taking her aunt's arm, she led her to a sofa.

It needed all the poor General's tact to get over the sensation of this most *mal à propos* addition to his party; but, by degrees, the various groups renewed their occupations, although many a smile, and more than one sarcastic glance at the sofa, betrayed that the maiden aunt had not escaped criticism.

Power, whose propensity for fun very considerably outstripped his sense of decorum to his commanding officer, had already made his way toward Miss Dashwood, and succeeded in obtaining a formal introduction to Miss Macan.

"I hope you will do me the favor to dance next set with me, Miss Macan?"

"Really, Captain, it's very polite of you, but you must excuse me. I was never anything great in quadrilles; but if a reel or a jig—"

"Oh, dear aunt, don't think of it, I beg of you."

"Or even Sir Roger de Coverley," resumed Miss Macan.

"I assure you, quite equally impossible."

"Then I'm certain you waltz," said Power.

"What do you take me for, young man? I hope I know better. I wish Father Magrath heard you ask me that question, and for all your laced jacket—"

"Dearest aunt, Captain Power didn't mean to offend you; I'm certain he—"

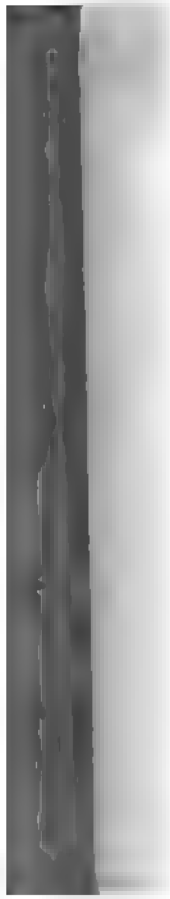
"Well, why did he dare to—*sob, sob*, —did he see anything light about me, that he—*sob, sob, sob*—oh dear! oh dear! is it for this I came up from my little peaceful place in the west?—*sob, sob, sob*—General, George, dear; Lucy, my love, I'm taken bad. Oh dear! oh dear! is there any whisky negus?"

Whatever sympathy Miss Macan's sufferings might have excited in the crowd about her before, this last question totally routed them, and a most hearty fit of laughter broke forth from more than one of the bystanders.

At length, however, she was comforted, and her pacification completely effected by Sir George setting her down to a whist-table. From this moment I lost sight of her for above two hours. Meanwhile, I had little opportunity of following up my intimacy with Miss Dashwood, and, as I rather suspected that, on more than one occasion, she seemed to avoid our meeting, I took especial care, on my part, to spare her the annoyance.

For one instant only had I any opportunity of addressing her, and then there was such an evident embarrassment in her manner that I readily perceived how she felt circumstanced, and that the sense of gratitude to one whose further advances

THE FAIR JUDY, AT THIS, THREW HER ARMS ABOUT HIS NECK, AND SALUTED HIM WITH A HEARTY SMACK, THAT WAS HEARD ALL OVER THE ROOM. (P. 696.)



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she might have feared rendered her constrained and awkward. "Too true," said I; "she avoids me. My being here is only a source of discomfort and pain to her; therefore, I'll take my leave, and, whatever it may cost me, never to return." With this intention, resolving to wish Sir George a very good night, I sought him out for some minutes. At length I saw him in a corner, conversing with the old nobleman to whom he had presented me early in the evening.

"True, upon my honor, Sir George," said he; "I saw it myself, and she did it just as dexterously as the oldest blackleg in Paris."

"Why, you don't mean to say that she cheated?"

"Yes, but I do, though—turned the ace every time. Lady Herbert said to me, 'Very extraordinary it is—four by honors again.' So I looked, and then I perceived it—a very old trick it is; but she did it beautifully. What's her name?"

"Some western name; I forget it," said the poor General, ready to die with shame.

"Clever old woman, very!" said the old Lord, taking a pinch of snuff; "but reckons too often."

Supper was announced at this critical moment, and before I had further thought of my determination to escape, I felt myself hurried along in the crowd toward the staircase. The party immediately in front of me were Power and Miss Macan, who now appeared reconciled, and certainly testified most openly their mutual feelings of good-will.

"I say, Charley," whispered Power, as I came along, "it is capital fun—never met anything equal to her; but the poor General will never live through it, and I'm certain of ten days' arrest for this night's proceeding."

"Any news of Webber?" I inquired.

"Oh yes, I fancy I can tell something of him; for I heard of some one presenting himself, and being refused the *entrée*, so that Master Frank has lost his money. Sit near us, I pray you, at supper. We must take care of the dear aunt for the niece's sake, eh?"

Not seeing the force of this reasoning, I soon separated myself from them, and secured a corner at a side table. Every supper, on such an occasion as this, is the same scene of soiled white muslin, faded flowers, flushed faces, torn gloves, blushes, blanc-mange, cold chicken, jelly, sponge cakes, spooney young gentlemen doing the attractive, and watchful mammas calculating what precise degree of propinquity in the crush is safe or seasonable for their daughters, to the moustached and unmarrying lovers beside them. There are always the same set of gratified elders, like the benchers in King's Inn, marched up to the head of the table, to eat, drink, and be happy—removed from the more profane looks and soft speeches of the younger part of the creation. Then there are the *oi polloi* of outcasts, younger sons of younger brothers, tutors, governesses, portionless cousins, and curates, all formed in a phalanx round the side tables, whose primitive habits and simple tastes are evinced by their all eating off the same plate and drinking from nearly the same wine-glass,—too happy if some better-off acquaintance at the long table invites them to "wine," though the ceremony on their part is limited to the pantomime of drinking. To this miserable *tiers état* I belonged, and bore my fate with unconcern; for, alas! my spirits were depressed and my heart heavy. Lucy's treatment of me was every moment before me, contrasted with her gay and courteous demeanor to all save myself, and I longed for the moment to get away.

Never had I seen her looking so beautiful; her brilliant eyes were lit with pleasure, and her smile was enchantment itself. What would I not have given for one moment's explanation, as I took my leave for ever!—one brief avowal of my love, my unalterable, devoted love; for which I sought not or expected return, but merely that I might not be forgotten.

Such were my thoughts, when a dialogue quite near me aroused me from my reverie. I was not long in detecting the speakers, who, with their backs turned to us, were seated at the great table, discussing a very liberal allowance of pigeon pie, a flask of champagne standing between them.

"Don't, now! don't, I tell ye; it's little ye know Galway, or ye wouldn't think to make up to me, squeezing my foot."

"Upon my soul, you're an angel, a regular angel. I never saw a woman suit my fancy before."

"Oh, behave now. Father Magrath says—"

"Who's he?"

"The priest; no less."

"Oh! confound him."

"Confound Father Magrath, young man?"

"Well, then, Judy, don't be angry; I only meant that a dragoon knows rather more of these matters than a priest."

"Well, then, I'm not so sure of that. But, anyhow, I'd have you to remember it.

ain't a Widow Malone you have beside you."

"Never heard of the lady," said Power.

"Sure, it's a song—poor creature—it's a song they made about her in the North Cork, when they were quartered down in our county."

"I wish to Heaven you'd sing it."

"What will you give me, then, if I do?"

"Anything—everything—my heart, my life."

"I wouldn't give a trauneen for all of them. Give me that old green ring on your finger, then."

"It's yours," said Power, placing it gracefully upon Miss Macan's finger, "and now for your promise."

"Maybe my brother might not like it."

"He'd be delighted," said Power; "he dotes on music."

"Does he, now?"

"On my honor, he does."

"Well, mind you get up a good chorus, for the song has one, and here it is."

"Miss Macan's song!" said Power, tapping the table with his knife.

"Miss Macan's song!" was re-echoed on all sides; and before the luckless General could interfere, she had begun. How to explain the air I know not, for I never heard its name; but at the end of each verse a species of echo followed the last word, that rendered it irresistibly ridiculous.

"THE WIDOW MALONE.

"Did ye hear of the Widow Malone,
Ohone!
Who lived in the town of Athlone
Alone?
Oh! she melted the hearts
Of the swains in them parts,
So lovely the Widow Malone,
Ohone!
So lovely the Widow Malone.

"Of lovers she had a full score,
Or more,
And fortunes they all had galore,
In store;
From the minister down
To the clerk of the crown,
All were courting the Widow Malone,
Ohone!
All were courting the Widow Malone.

"But so modest was Mrs. Malone,
'Twas known
No one ever could see her alone,
Ohone!
Let them ogle and sigh,
They could ne'er catch her eye,
So bashful the Widow Malone,
Ohone!
So bashful the Widow Malone.

"Till one Mister O'Brian from Clare,
How quare!
It's little for blushin' they care
Down there;
Put his arm round her waist,
Gave ten kisses at laste,
'Oh,' says he, 'you're my Molly Malone,
My own;
Oh,' says he, 'you're my Molly Malone.'

"And the Widow they all thought so shy,
My eye,
Ne'er thought of a simper or sigh,
For why?
But 'Lucius,' says she,
'Since you've made now so free,
You may marry your Mary Malone,
Ohone!
You may marry your Mary Malone.'

"There's a moral contained in my song,
Not wrong,
And one comfort it's not very long,
But strong:
If for widows you die,
Larn to *kiss* not to *sigh*,
For they're all like sweet Mistress Malone,
Ohone!
Oh! they're very like Mistress Malone."

Never did song create such a sensation as Miss Macan's; and certainly her desires as to the chorus were followed to the letter, for "The Widow Malone, ohone!" resounded from one end of the table to the other, amid one universal shout of laughter. None could resist the ludicrous effect of her melody; and even poor Sir George, sinking under the disgrace of his relationship, which she had contrived to make public by frequent allusions to her "dear brother the General," yielded at last, and joined in the mirth around him.

"I insist upon a copy of 'The Widow,' Miss Macan," said Power.

"To be sure; give me a call to-morrow—let me see—about two. Father Magrath won't be at home," said she, with a coquettish look.

"Where, pray, may I pay my respects?"

"No. 22 South Anne street—very respectable lodgings. I'll write the address in your pocket-book."

Power produced a card and pencil, while Miss Macan wrote a few lines, saying, as she handed it:

"There, now, don't read it here before the people; they'll think it mighty indelicate in me to make an appointment."

Power pocketed the card, and the next minute Miss Macan's carriage was announced.

Sir George Dashwood, who little flattered himself that his fair guest had any intention of departure, became now most considerately attentive—reminded her of

the necessity of muffling against the night air—hoped she would escape cold—and wished her a most cordial good-night, with a promise of seeing her early the following day.

Notwithstanding Power's ambition to engross the attention of the lady, Sir George himself saw her to her carriage, and only returned to the room, as a group was collecting around the gallant Captain, to whom he was relating some capital traits of his late conquest—for such he dreamed she was.

"Doubt it who will," said he, "she has invited me to call on her to-morrow—written her address on my card—told me the hour she is certain of being alone. See here!" At these words he pulled forth the card, and handed it to Lechmere.

Scarcely were the eyes of the other thrown upon the writing, when he said, "So, this isn't it, Power."

"To be sure it is, man," said Power. "Anne street is devilish seedy—but that's the quarter."

"Why, confound it, man," said the other, "there's not a word of that here."

"Read it out," said Power. "Proclaim aloud my victory."

Thus urged, Lechmere read:

"DEAR P.,—Please pay to my credit—and soon, mark ye—the two ponies lost this evening. I have done myself the pleasure of enjoying your ball, kissed the lady, quizzed the papa, and walked into the cunning Fred Power. Yours,

"FRANK WEBBER.

"'The Widow Malone, ohone!' is at your service."

Had a thunderbolt fallen at his feet, his astonishment could not have equaled the result of this revelation. He stamped, swore, raved, laughed, and almost went deranged. The joke was soon spread through the room, and from Sir George to poor Lucy, now covered with blushes at her part in the transaction, all was laughter and astonishment.

"Who is he? that is the question," said Sir George, who, with all the ridicule of the affair hanging over him, felt no common relief at the discovery of the imposition.

"A friend of O'Malley's," said Power, delighted, in his defeat, to involve another with himself.

"Indeed!" said the General, regarding me with a look of a very mingled cast.

"Quite true, sir," said I, replying to the accusation that his manner implied; "but equally so, that I neither knew of his plot, nor recognized him when here."

"I am perfectly sure of it, my boy," said the General; "and, after all, it was an excellent joke—carried a little too far, it's true; eh, Lucy?"

But Lucy either heard not, or affected not to hear; and, after some little further assurance that he felt not the least annoyed, the General turned to converse with some other friends; while I, burning with indignation against Webber, took a cold farewell of Miss Dashwood, and retired.

CHAPTER XX.

THE LAST NIGHT IN TRINITY.

How I might have met Master Webber after his impersonation of Miss Macan, I cannot possibly figure to myself. Fortunately, indeed, for all parties, he left town early the next morning; and it was some weeks ere he returned. In the meanwhile, I became a daily visitor at the General's, dined there usually three or four times a week, rode out with Lucy constantly, and accompanied her every evening either to the theatre or into society. Sir George, possibly from my youth, seemed to pay little attention to an intimacy which he perceived every hour growing closer, and frequently gave his daughter into my charge in our morning excursions on horseback. As for me, my happiness was all but perfect. I loved, and already began to hope that I was not regarded with indifference; for, although Lucy's manner never absolutely evinced any decided preference toward me, yet many slight and casual circumstances served to show me that my attentions to her were neither unnoticed nor uncared for. Among the many gay and dashing companions of our rides, I remarked that, however anxious for such a distinction, none ever seemed to make any way in her good graces; and I had already gone far in my self-deception that I was destined for good fortune, when a circumstance which occurred one morning at length served to open my eyes to the truth, and blast, by one fatal breath, the whole harvest of my hopes.

We were about to set out one morning on a long ride, when Sir George's presence was required by the arrival of an officer who had been sent from the Horse Guards on official business. After half an hour's delay, Colonel Cameron, the officer in question, was introduced, and entered into

conversation with our party. He had only landed in England from the Peninsula a few days before, and had abundant information of the stirring events enacting there. At the conclusion of an anecdote—I forget what—he turned suddenly round to Miss Dashwood, who was standing beside me, and said in a low voice,

"And now, Miss Dashwood, I am reminded of a commission I promised a very old brother officer to perform. Can I have one moment's conversation with you in the window?"

As he spoke, I perceived that he crumpled beneath his glove something like a letter.

"To me?" said Lucy, with a look of surprise that sadly puzzled me whether to ascribe it to coquetry or innocence—"to me?"

"To you," said the Colonel, bowing; "and I am sadly deceived by my friend Hammersley—"

"Captain Hammersley?" said she, blushing deeply as she spoke.

I heard no more. She turned toward the window with the Colonel, and all I saw was, that he handed her a letter, which, having hastily broken open, and thrown her eyes over, she grew at first deadly pale—then red—and, while her eyes filled with tears, I heard her say, "How like him!—how truly generous this is!" I listened for no more—my brain was wheeling round, and my senses reeling—I turned and left the room—in another moment I was on my horse, galloping from the spot, despair, in all its blackness, in my heart—and, in my broken-hearted misery, wishing for death.

I was miles away from Dublin ere I remembered well what had occurred, and even then not over clearly; the fact that Lucy Dashwood, whom I imagined to be my own in heart, loved another, was all that I really knew. That one thought was all my mind was capable of, and in it my misery, my wretchedness were centered.

Of all the grief my life has known, I have had no moments like the long hours of that dreary night. My sorrow, in turn, took every shape and assumed every guise; now I remembered how the Dashwoods had courted my intimacy and encouraged my visits; how Lucy herself had evinced, in a thousand ways, that she felt a preference for me. I called to mind the many unequivocal proofs I had given her that my feeling, at least, was no common one; and yet, how had she sported with my affections, and jested with my happiness! That she loved Hammersley I had now a palpable proof; that this affection must have been mutual, and prosecuted at the very moment I was not only professing my own love for her, but actually receiving all but an avowal of its return—oh! it was too, too base; and, in my deepest heart, I cursed my folly, and vowed never to see her more.

It was late on the next day ere I retraced my steps toward town, my heart sad and heavy, careless what became of me for the future, and pondering whether I should not at once give up my college career, and return to my uncle. When I reached my chambers, all was silent and comfortless; Webber had not returned; my servant was from home; and I felt myself more than ever wretched in the solitude of what had been so oft the scene of noisy and festive gayety. I sat some hours in a half musing state, every sad depressing thought that blighted hopes can conjure up rising in turn before me. A loud knocking at the door at length aroused me. I got up and opened it. No one was there; I looked around, as well as the coming gloom of evening would permit, but saw nothing. I listened, and heard, at some distance off, my friend Power's manly voice, as he sang,

"Oh! love is the soul of an Irish Dragoon!"

I hallooed out, "Power!"

"Eh, O'Malley, is that you?" inquired he. "Why, then, it seems it required some deliberation whether you opened your door or not. Why, man, you can have no great gift of prophecy, or you wouldn't have kept me so long there."

"And have you been so?"

"Only twenty minutes; for, as I saw the key in the lock, I had determined to succeed, if noise would do it."

"How strange! I never heard it."

"Glorious sleeper you must be; but come, my dear fellow, you don't appear altogether awake yet."

"I have not been quite well these few days."

"Oh! indeed. The Dashwoods thought there must have been something of that kind the matter by your brisk retreat. They sent me after you yesterday; but, wherever you went, Heaven knows! I never could come up with you; so that your great news has been keeping these twenty-four hours longer than need be."

"I am not aware what you allude to."

"Well, you are not over-likely to be the wiser when you hear it, if you can assume no more intelligent look than that. Why, man, there's great luck in store for you."

"As how, pray? Come, Power, out

with it, though I can't pledge myself to feel half as grateful for my good fortune as I should do. What is it?"

"You know Cameron?"

"I have seen him," said I, reddening.

"Well, Old Camy, as we used to call him, has brought over, among his other news, your gazette."

"My gazette? what do you mean?"

"Confound your uncommon stupidity this evening. I mean, man, that you are one of us—gazetted to the 14th Light—the best fellows for love, war, and whisky that ever sported a sabretasche. 'Oh! love is the soul of an Irish Dragoon.' By Jove! I am as delighted to have rescued you from the black harness of the King's Bench as though you had been a prisoner there. Know, then, friend Charley, that on Wednesday we proceed to Fermoy, join some score of gallant fellows—all food for powder—and, with the aid of a rotten transport and the stormy winds that blow, will be bronzing our beautiful faces in Portugal before the month's out. But come, now, let's see about supper. Some of ours are coming over here at eleven, and I promised them a deviled bone; and, as it's your last night among these classic precincts, let us have a shindy of it."

While I dispatched Mike to Morrison's to provide supper, I heard from Power that Sir George Dashwood had interested himself so strongly for me that I had obtained my cornetcy in the 14th; that, fearful lest any disappointment might arise, he had never mentioned the matter to me, but that he had previously obtained my uncle's promise to concur in the arrangement if his negotiation succeeded. It had so done, and now the long sought-for object of many days was within my grasp; but, alas! the circumstance which lent it all its fascinations was a vanished dream; and what, but two days before, had rendered my happiness perfect, I listened to listlessly and almost without interest. Indeed, my first impulse at finding that I owed my promotion to Sir George, was to return a positive refusal of the cornetcy; but then I remembered how deeply such conduct would hurt my poor uncle, to whom I never could give an adequate explanation. So I heard Power in silence to the end, thanked him sincerely for his own good-natured kindness in the matter, which already, by the interest he had taken in me, went far to heal the wounds that my own solitary musings were deepening in my heart. At eighteen, fortunately, consolations are attainable that become more difficult at eight-and-twenty, and impossible at eight-and-thirty.

While Power continued to dilate upon the delights of a soldier's life—a theme which many a boyish dream had long since made hallowed to my thoughts—I gradually felt my enthusiasm rising, and a certain throbbing at my heart betrayed to me that, sad and dispirited as I felt, there was still within that buoyant spirit which youth possesses as its privilege, and which answers to the call of enterprise as the war-horse to the trumpet. That a career worthy of manhood, great, glorious, and inspiriting, opened before me, coming so soon after the late downfall of my hopes, was, in itself, a source of such true pleasure, that ere long I listened to my friend, and heard his narrative with breathless interest. A lingering sense of pique, too, had its share in all this. I longed to come forward in some manly and dashing part, where my youth might not be ever remembered against me, and when, having brought myself to the test, I might no longer be looked upon and treated as a boy.

We were joined at length by the other officers of the 14th, and, to the number of twelve, sat down to supper.

It was to be my last night in Old Trinity, and we resolved that the farewell should be a solemn one. Mansfield, one of the wildest young fellows in the regiment, had vowed that the leave-taking should be commemorated by some very decisive and open expression of our feelings, and had already made some progress in arrangements for blowing up the great bell, which had more than once obtruded upon our morning convivialities; but he was overruled by his more discreet associates, and we at length assumed our places at table, in the midst of which stood a *hecatomb* of all my college equipments, cap, gown, bands, etc. A funeral pile of classics was arrayed upon the hearth, surmounted by my "Book on the Cellar," and a punishment-roll waved its length, like a banner, over the doomed heroes of Greece and Rome.

It is seldom that any very determined attempt to be gay *par excellence* has a perfect success, but certainly upon this evening ours had. Songs, good stories, speeches, toasts, bright visions of the campaign before us, the wild excitement which such a meeting cannot be free from, gradually, as the wine passed from hand to hand, seized upon all, and about four in the morning, such was the uproar we caused, and so terrific the noise of our proceedings, that

the accumulated force of porters, sent one by one to demand admission, was now a formidable body at the door; and Mike at last came in to assure us that the Bursar, the most dread official of all collegians, was without, and insisted, with a threat of his heaviest displeasure, in case of refusal, that the door should be opened.

A committee of the whole house immediately sat upon the question, and it was at length resolved, *nemine contradicente*, that the request should be complied with. A fresh bowl of punch, in honor of our expected guest, was immediately concocted, a new broil put on the gridiron, and, having seated ourselves with as great a semblance of decorum as four bottles a man admits of, Curtis, the junior Captain, being most drunk, was deputed to receive the Bursar at the door, and introduce him to our august presence.

Mike's instructions were, that immediately on Dr. Stone, the Bursar's entering, the door was to be slammed to, and none of his followers admitted. This done, the Doctor was to be ushered in, and left to our own polite attentions.

A fresh thundering from without scarcely left time for further deliberation; and at last Curtis moved toward the door, in execution of his mission.

"Is there any one there?" said Mike, in a tone of most unsophisticated innocence, to a rapping that, having lasted three-quarters of an hour, threatened now to break in the panel. "Is there any one there?"

"Open the door this instant—the senior Bursar desires you—this instant."

"Sure it's night, and we're all in bed," said Mike.

"Mr. Webber—Mr. O'Malley," said the Bursar, now boiling with indignation, "I summon you, in the name of the Board, to admit me."

"Let the gemman in," hiccuped Curtis; and, at the same instant, the heavy bars were withdrawn, and the door opened, but so sparingly as with difficulty to permit the passage of the burly figure of the Bursar.

Forcing his way through, and regardless of what became of the rest, he pushed on vigorously through the ante-chamber, and before Curtis could perform his functions of usher, stood in the midst of us. What were his feelings at the scene before him, Heaven knows. The number of figures in uniform at once betrayed how little his jurisdiction extended to the great mass of the company, and he immediately turned toward me.

"Mr. Webber—"

"O'Malley, if you please, Mr. Bursar," said I, bowing with most ceremonious politeness.

"No matter, sir; *arcades ambo*, I believe."

"Both Archdeacons," said Melville, translating, with a look of withering contempt upon the speaker.

The Doctor continued, addressing me:

"May I ask, sir, if you believe yourself possessed of any privilege for converting this University into a common tavern?"

"I wish to Heaven he did," said Curtis; "capital tap your old Commons would make."

"Really, Mr. Bursar," replied I, modestly, "I had began to flatter myself that our little innocent gayety had inspired you with the idea of joining our party."

"I humbly move that the old cove in the gown do take the chair," sang out one. "All who are of this opinion say 'Ay.'" A perfect yell of ayes followed this. "All who are of the contrary say 'No.' The ayes have it."

Before the luckless Doctor had a moment for thought, his legs were lifted from under him, and he was jerked, rather than placed, upon a chair, and put sitting upon the table.

"Mr. O'Malley, your expulsion within twenty-four hours—"

"Hip, hip, hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!" drowned the rest, while Power, taking off the Doctor's cap, replaced it by a foraging cap, very much to the amusement of the party:

"There is no penalty the law permits of, that I shall not—"

"Help the Doctor," said Melville, placing a glass of punch in his unconscious hand.

"Now for a 'Viva la Compagnie!'" said Telford, seating himself at the piano, and playing the first bars of that well-known air, to which, in our meetings, we were accustomed to improvise a doggerel in turn:

"I drink to the graces, Law, Physic, Divinity,
Viva la Compagnie!
And here's to the worthy old Bursar of Trinity
Viva la Compagnie!"

"Viva, viva la va!" etc., were chorused with a shout that shook the old walls, while Power took up the strain:

"Though with lace caps and gowns they look so like asses,
Viva la Compagnie!

They'd rather have punch than the springs of Parnassus,
Viva la Compagnie!

"What a nose the old gentleman has, by the way,
Viva la Compagnie!
Since he smelt out the devil from Botany Bay,*
Viva la Compagnie!"

Words cannot give even the faintest idea of the poor Bursar's feelings while these demoniacal orgies were enacting around him. Held fast in his chair by Lechmere and another, he glowered on the riotous mob around like a maniac, and astonishment that such liberties could be taken with one in his situation seemed to have surpassed even his rage and resentment; and every now and then a stray thought would flash across his mind that we were mad,—a sentiment which, unfortunately, our conduct was but too well calculated to inspire.

"So you're the morning lecturer, old gentleman, and have just dropped in here in the way of business; pleasant life you must have of it," said Casey, now by far the most tipsy man present.

"If you think, Mr. O'Malley, that the events of this evening are to end here—"

"Very far from it, Doctor," said Power; "I'll draw up a little account of the affair for 'Saunders.' They shall hear of it in every corner and nook of the kingdom."

"The Bursar of Trinity shall be a proverb for a good fellow that loveth his lush," hiccuped out Fegan.

"And if you believe that such conduct is academical," said the Doctor, with a withering sneer.

"Perhaps not," lisped Melville, tightening his belt; "but it's devilish convivial—eh, Doctor?"

"Is that like him?" said Moreton, producing a caricature, which he had just sketched.

"Capital—very good—perfect. M'Cleary shall have it in his window by noon today," said Power.

At this instant some of the combustibles disposed among the rejected habiliments of my late vocation caught fire, and squibs, crackers, and detonating shots went off on all sides. The Bursar, who had not been deaf to several hints and friendly suggestions about setting fire to him, blowing him up, etc., with one vigorous spring burst from his antagonists, and, clearing the table at a bound, reached the floor. Before he could be seized, he had gained the door, opened it, and was away. We gave chase, yelling like so many devils; but wine and punch, songs and speeches, had done their work, and more than one among the pursuers measured his length upon the pavement; while the terrified Bursar, with the speed of terror, held on his way, and gained his chambers, by about twenty yards in advance of Power and Melville, whose pursuit only ended when the oaken panel of the door shut them out from their victim. One loud cheer beneath his window served for our farewell to our friend, and we returned to my rooms. By this time a regiment of those classic functionaries, yclept porters, had assembled around the door, and seemed bent upon giving battle in honor of their maltreated ruler; but Power explained to them, in a neat speech, replete with Latin quotations, that their cause was a weak one, that we were more than their match, and, finally, proposed to them to finish the punch-bowl—to which we were really incompetent—a motion that met immediate acceptance; and old Duncan, with his helmet in one hand, and a goblet in the other, wished me many happy days, and every luck in this life, as I stepped from the massive archway, and took my last farewell of Old Trinity.

Should any kind reader feel interested as to the ulterior course assumed by the Bursar, I have only to say that the terrors of the "Board" were never fulminated against me, harmless and innocent as I should have esteemed them. The threat of giving publicity to the entire proceedings by the papers, and the dread of figuring in a sixpenny caricature in M'Cleary's window, were too much for the worthy Doctor, and he took the wiser course, under the circumstances, and held his peace about the matter. I, too, have done so for many a year, and only now recall the scene among the wild transactions of early days and boyish follies.

* Botany Bay was the slang name given by college men to a new square rather remotely situated from the remainder of the college.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PHŒNIX PARK.

WHAT a glorious thing it is, when our our first waking thoughts not only dispel some dark depressing dream, but arouse us to the consciousness of a new and bright career suddenly opening before us, buoyant in hope, rich in promise for the future! Life has nothing better than

this. The bold spring by which the mind clears the depth that separates misery from happiness, is ecstasy itself; and, then, what a world of bright visions come teeming before us—what plans we form—what promises we make to ourselves in our own hearts—how prolific is the dullest imagination—how excursive the tamest fancy, at such a moment! In a few short and fleeting seconds, the events of a whole life are planned and pictured before us. Dreams of happiness and visions of bliss, of which all our after-years are insufficient to eradicate the *prestige*, come in myriads about us; and from that narrow aperture through which this new hope pierces into our heart, a flood of light is poured that illumines our path to the very verge of the grave. How many a success in after-days is reckoned but as one step in that ladder of ambition some boyish review has framed; perhaps, after all, destined to be the first and only one! With what triumph we hail some goal attained, some object of our wishes gained, less for its present benefit, than as the accomplishment of some youthful prophecy, when, picturing to our hearts all that we would have in life, we whispered within us the flattery of success.

Who is there who has not had some such moment? and who would exchange it, with all the delusive and deceptive influences by which it comes surrounded, for the greatest actual happiness he has partaken of? Alas! alas! it is only in the boundless expanse of such imaginations, unreal and fictitious as they are, that we are truly blessed. Our choicest blessings in life come even so associated with some sources of care, that the cup of enjoyment is not pure, but dregged in bitterness.

To such a world of bright anticipation did I awake on the morning after the events I have detailed in my last chapter. The first thing my eyes fell upon was an official letter from the Horse Guards:

"The Commander of the Forces desires that Mr. O'Malley will report himself, immediately on the receipt of this letter, at the headquarters of the regiment to which he is gazetted."

Few and simple as the lines were, how brimful of pleasure they sounded to my ears. The regiment to which I was gazetted! And so I was a soldier at last! the first wish of my boyhood was then really *accomplished*. And my uncle—what will *he say?*—what will he think?

"A letter, sir, by the post," said Mike, at the moment.

I seized it eagerly; it came from home, but was in Considine's handwriting. How my heart failed me as I turned to look at the seal. "Thank God!" said I, aloud, on perceiving that it was a red one. I now tore it open and read:

"My dear Charley,—Godfrey being laid up with the gout, has desired me to write to you by this day's post. Your appointment to the 14th, notwithstanding all his prejudices about the army, has given him sincere pleasure. I believe, between ourselves, that your college career, of which he has heard something, convinced him that your forte did not lie in the classics; you know I said so always, but nobody minded me. Your new prospects are all that your best friends could wish for you; you begin early; your corps is a crack one; you are ordered for service. What could you have more?

"Your uncle hopes, if you can get a few days' leave, that you will come down here before you join, and I hope so too; for he is unusually low spirited, and talks about his never seeing you again, and all that sort of thing.

"I have written to Merivale, your Colonel, on this subject, as well as generally on your behalf; we were cornets together forty years ago; a strict fellow you'll find him, but a trump on service. If you can't manage the leave, write a long letter home at all events; and so God bless you, and all success!

"Yours, sincerely,
"W. Considine."

"I had thought of writing you a long letter of advice for your new career, and, indeed, half accomplished one. After all, however, I can tell you little that your own good sense will not teach you as you go on, and experience is ever better than precept. I know of but one rule in life which admits of scarcely any exception, and having followed it upward of sixty years, approve of it only the more. Never quarrel when you can help it; but meet any man—your tailor, your hairdresser—if he wishes to have you out. W. C."

I had scarcely come to the end of this very characteristic epistle, when two more letters were placed upon my table. One was from Sir George Dashwood, inviting me to dinner, to meet some of my "brother officers." How my heart beat at the expression. The other was a short note,

marked "Private," from my late tutor, Dr. Mooney, saying, "that if I made a suitable apology to the Bursar for the late affair at my room, he might probably be induced to abandon any further step; otherwise,"—then followed innumerable threats about fine, penalties, expulsion, etc., that fell most harmlessly upon my ears. I accepted the invitation; declined the apology; and, having ordered my horse, cantered off to the barracks to consult my friend Power as to all the minor details of my career.

As the dinner hour grew near, my thoughts became again fixed upon Miss Dashwood, and a thousand misgivings crossed my mind, as to whether I should have nerve enough to meet her, without disclosing in my manner the altered state of my feelings, a possibility which I now dreaded fully as much as I had longed some days before to avow my affection for her, however slight its prospects of return. All my valiant resolves, and well-contrived plans for appearing unmoved and indifferent in her presence, with which I stored my mind while dressing, and when on the way to dinner, were, however, needless, for it was a party exclusively of men; and, as the coffee was served in the dinner-room, no move was made to the drawing-room by any of the company. "Quite as well as it is!" was my muttered opinion, as I got into my cab at the door. "All is at an end as regards me in her esteem, and I must not spend my days sighing for a young lady that cares for another." Very reasonable, very proper resolutions these; but, alas! I went home to bed, only to think half the night long of the fair Lucy, and dream of her the remainder of it.

When morning dawned, my first thought was, shall I see her once more? shall I leave her for ever thus abruptly? or, rather, shall I not unburden my bosom of its secret, confess my love, and say farewell? I felt such a course much more in unison with my wishes than the day before; and, as Power had told me that, before a week, we should present ourselves at Fermoy, I knew that no time was to be lost.

My determination was taken. I ordered my horse, and, early as it was, rode out to the Royal Hospital. My heart beat so strongly as I rode up to the door, that I half resolved to return. I rang the bell. Sir George was in town. Miss Dashwood had just gone five minutes before to spend some days at Carton. "It is fate!" thought I, as I turned from the spot, and walked slowly beside my horse toward Dublin.

In the few days that intervened before my leaving town, my time was occupied from morning to night; the various details of my uniform, outfit, etc., were undertaken for me by Power. My horses were sent for to Galway, and I myself, with innumerable persons to see, and a mass of business to transact, contrived, at least three times a day, to ride out to the Royal Hospital, always to make some trifling inquiry for Sir George, and always to hear repeated that Miss Dashwood had not returned.

Thus passed five of my last six days in Dublin, and, as the morning of the last opened, it was with a sorrowing spirit that I felt my hour of departure approach, without one only opportunity of seeing Lucy, even to say good-by.

While Mike was packing in one corner, and I in another was concluding a long letter to my poor uncle, my door opened and Webber entered.

"Eh, O'Malley, I'm only in time to say adieu! it seems. To my surprise this morning I found you had cut the 'Silent Sister.' I feared I should be too late to catch one glimpse of you ere you started for the wars."

"You are quite right, Master Frank, and I scarcely expected to have seen you. Your last brilliant achievement at Sir George's very nearly involved me in a serious scrape."

"A mere trifle. How confoundedly silly Power must have looked, eh? Should like so much to have seen his face. He booked up next day—very proper fellow. By-the-by, O'Malley, I rather like the little girl; she is decidedly pretty; and her foot—did you remark her foot?—capital."

"Yes, she's very good-looking," said I, carelessly.

"I'm thinking of cultivating her a little," said Webber, pulling up his cravat and adjusting his hair at the glass. "She's spoiled by all the tinsel vaporing of her hussar and aide-de-camp acquaintances; but something may be done for her, eh?"

"With your most able assistance and kind intentions."

"That's what I mean exactly. Sorry you're going—devilish sorry. You served out Stone gloriously: perhaps it's as well, though; you know they'd have expelled you: but still something might turn up; soldiering is a bad style of thing, eh? How the old General did take his sister-in-law's presence to heart. But he must forgive and forget, for I'm going to be very great friends with him and Lucy. Where are you going now?"

"I'm about to try a new horse before troops," said I. "He's staunch enough with the cry of the fox-pack in his ears, but I don't know how he'll stand a peal of artillery."

"Well, come along," said Webber; "I'll ride with you." So saying, we mounted and set off to the Park, where two regiments of cavalry and some horse artillery were ordered for inspection.

The review was over when we reached the exercising ground, and we slowly walked our horses toward the end of the Park, intending to return to Dublin by the road. We had not proceeded far, when, some hundred yards in advance, we perceived an officer riding with a lady, followed by an orderly dragoon.

"There he goes," said Webber; "I wonder if he'd ask me to dinner, if I were to throw myself in his way?"

"Who do you mean?" said I.

"Sir George Dashwood, to be sure, and, *la voilà*, Miss Lucy. The little darling rides well, too: how squarely she sits her horse. O'Malley, I've a weakness there; upon my soul I have."

"Very possible," said I; "I am aware of another friend of mine participating in the sentiment."

"One Charles O'Malley, of his Majesty's—"

"Nonsense, man—no, no. I mean a very different person, and, for all I can see, with some reason to hope for success."

"Oh, as to that, we flatter ourselves the thing does not present any very considerable difficulties."

"As how, pray?"

"Why, of course, like all such matters, a very decisive determination to be, to do, and to suffer, as Lindley Murray says, carries the day. Tell her she's an angel every day for three weeks. She may laugh a little at first, but she'll believe it in the end. Tell her that you have not the slightest prospect of obtaining her affection, but still persist in loving her. That, finally, you must die from the effects of despair, etc., but rather like the notion of it than otherwise. That you know she has no fortune; that you haven't a sixpence; and who should marry, if people whose position in the world was similar did not?"

"But halt: pray, how are you to get time and place for all such interesting conversations?"

"Time and place! Good Heavens, what a question! Is not every hour of the twenty-four the fittest? Is not every place the most suitable? A sudden pause in the organ of St. Patrick's did, it is true, catch me once in a declaration of love, but the choir came in to my aid and drowned the lady's answer. My dear O'Malley, what could prevent you this instant, if you are so disposed, from doing the amiable to the darling Lucy there?"

"With the father for an umpire, in case we disagreed," said I.

"Not at all. I should soon get rid of him."

"Impossible, my dear friend."

"Come now, just for the sake of convincing your obstinacy. If you like to say good-by to the little girl without a witness, I'll take off the he-dragon."

"You don't mean—"

"I do, man—I do mean it." So saying, he drew a crimson silk handkerchief from his pocket, and fastened it round his waist like an officer's sash. This done, and telling me to keep in their wake for some minutes, he turned from me, and was soon concealed by a copse of whitethorn near us.

I had not gone above a hundred yards farther when I heard Sir George's voice calling for the orderly. I looked, and saw Webber at a considerable distance in front, curvetting and playing all species of antics. The distance between the General and myself was now so short, that I overheard the following dialogue with his sentry.

"He's not in uniform, then?"

"No, sir; he has a round hat."

"A round hat!"

"His sash—"

"A sword and sash. This is too bad. I'm determined to find him out."

"How d'ye do, General?" cried Webber, as he rode toward the trees.

"Stop, sir," shouted Sir George.

"Good day, Sir George," replied Webber, retiring.

"Stay where you are, Lucy," said the General, as, dashing spurs into his horse, he sprang forward at a gallop, incensed beyond endurance that his most strict orders should be so openly and insultingly transgressed.

Webber led on to a deep hollow, where the road passed between two smooth slopes, covered with furze trees, and from which it emerged afterward in the thickest and most intricate part of the Park. Sir George dashed boldly after, and in less than half a minute both were lost to my view, leaving me in breathless amazement at Master Frank's ingenuity, and some puzzle as to my own future movements.

"Now then, or never!" said I, as I pushed boldly forward, and in an instant was alongside of Miss Dashwood.

Her astonishment at seeing me so suddenly, increased the confusion from which I felt myself suffering, and, for some minutes, I could scarcely speak. At last, I plucked up courage a little, and said:

"Miss Dashwood, I have looked most anxiously, for the last four days, for the moment which chance has now given me. I wished, before I parted forever with those to whom I owe already so much, that I should, at least, speak my gratitude ere I said good-by."

"But when do you think of going?"

"To-morrow. Captain Power, under whose command I am, has received orders to embark immediately for Portugal."

I thought—perhaps it was but a thought—that her cheek grew somewhat paler as I spoke; but she remained silent; and I, scarcely knowing what I had said, or whether I had finished, spoke not either.

"Papa, I am sure, is not aware," said she, after a long pause, "of your intention of leaving so soon; for, only last night, he spoke of some letters he meant to give you to some friends in the Peninsula; besides, I know"—here she smiled faintly—"that he destined some excellent advice for your ears, as to your new path in life, for he has an immense opinion of the value of such to a young officer."

"I am, indeed, most grateful to Sir George, and truly never did any one stand more in need of counsel than I do." This was said half musingly, and not intended to be heard.

"Then, pray, consult papa," said she, eagerly; "he is much attached to you, and will, I'm certain, do all in his power—"

"Alas! I fear not, Miss Dashwood."

"Why, what can you mean? Has anything so serious occurred?"

"No, no; I'm but misleading you, and exciting your sympathy with false pretenses. Should I tell you all the truth, you would not pardon, perhaps not hear me."

"You have, indeed, puzzled me; but if there is anything in which my father—"

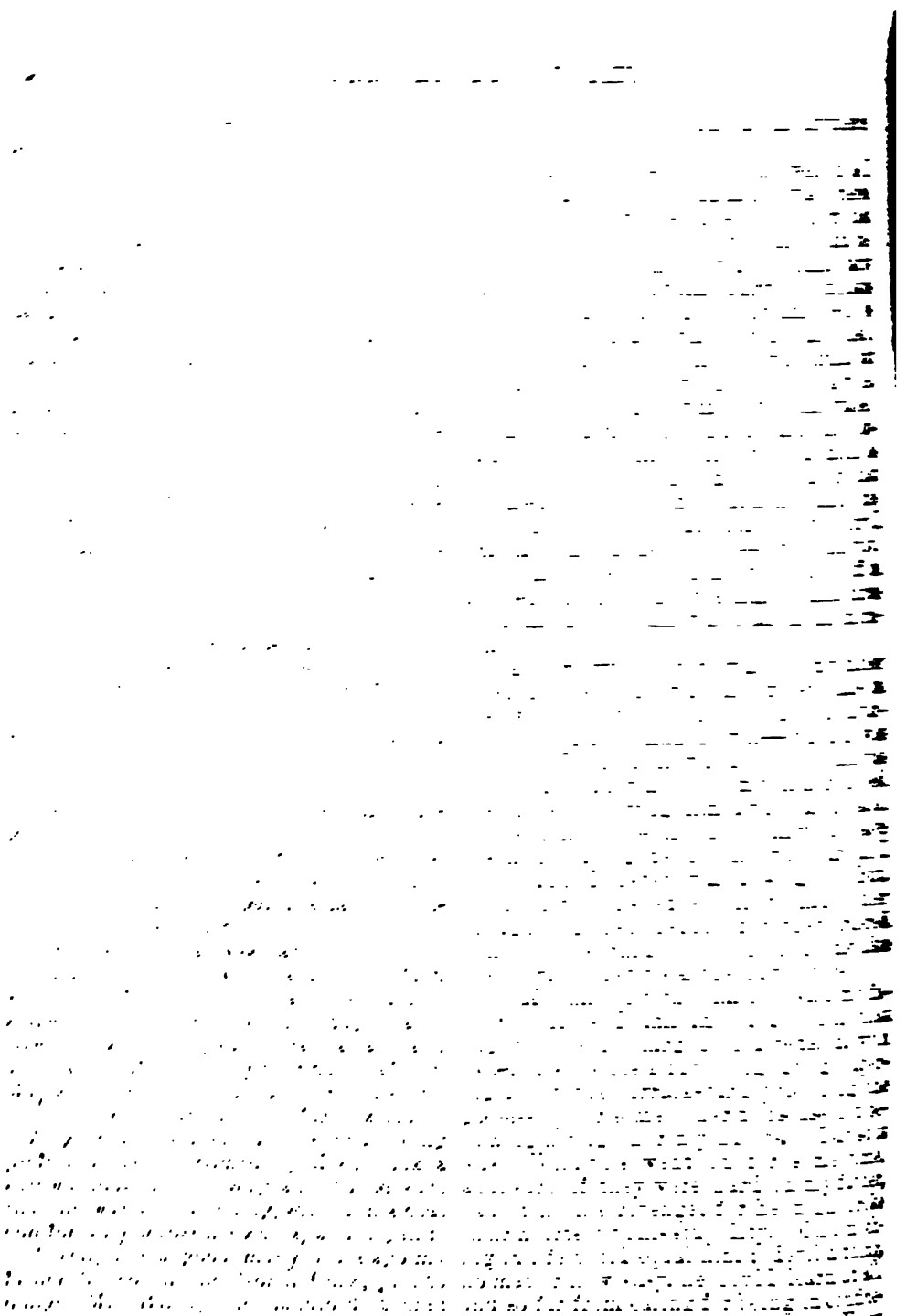
"Less him than his daughter," said I, fixing my eyes full upon her as I spoke. "Yes, Lucy, I feel I must confess it, cost what it may, I love you; stay, hear me out: I know the fruitlessness, the utter despair, that awaits such a sentiment. My own heart tells me that I am not, cannot be, loved in return; yet, would I rather cherish in its core my affection slighted and unblessed, such as it is, than own another heart. I ask for nothing, I hope for nothing; I merely entreat that, for my truth, I may meet belief, and, for my heart's worship of her whom alone I can love, compassion. I see that you at least pity me. Nay, one word more; I have one favor more to ask; it is my last, my only one. Do not, when time and distance may have separated us—perhaps forever—think that the expressions I now use are prompted by a mere sudden ebullition of boyish feeling—do not attribute to the circumstance of my youth alone the warmth of the attachment I profess; for I swear to you, by every hope I have, that, in my heart of hearts, my love to you is the source and spring of every action in my life, of every aspiration in my heart; and, when I cease to love you, I shall cease to feel.

"And now, farewell—farewell forever." I pressed her hand to my lips, gave one long, last look, turned my horse rapidly away, and, ere a minute, was far out of sight of where I had left her.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ROAD.

POWER was detained in town by some orders from the Adjutant-General, so that I started for Cork the next morning, with no other companion than my servant Mike. For the first few stages upon the road, my own thoughts sufficiently occupied me, to render me insensible or indifferent to all else. My opening career—the prospects my new life as a soldier held out—my hopes of distinction—my love of Lucy, with all its train of doubts and fears—passed in review before me, and I took no note of time till far past noon. I now looked to the back part of the coach, where Mike's voice had been, as usual, in the ascendant for some time, and perceived that he was surrounded by an eager auditory of four raw recruits, who, under the care of a sergeant, were proceeding to Cork to be enrolled in their regiment. The sergeant, whose minutes of wakefulness were only those when the coach stopped to change horses and when he got down to mix a "summat hot," paid little attention to his followers, leaving them perfectly free in all their movements, to listen to Mike's eloquence, and profit by his suggestions, should they deem fit. Master Michael's services to his new acquaintances, I began to perceive, were not exactly of the same nature as Dibdin is reported to have rendered to our navy in the late war. Far from it—his theme was no contemptuous



wood. Never a guard did my father mount, nor as much as a drill had he, nor a roll-call, nor anything at all, save and except *wait on* the Captain, his master, just as

were born to punish him, the ould rogue!

"This was going on for some time, when, one day, news came in that a body of the rebels, as they called them, was coming down from the Gap of Mulnavick to storm the town and burn all before them. The whole regiment was of coorse under

arms, and great preparations was made for a battle. Meanwhile, patrols were ordered to scour the roads, and sentries posted at every turn of the way and every rising ground to give warning when the boys came in sight; and my father was placed at the Bridge of Drumsnag, in the wildest and bleakest part of the whole country, with nothing but furze mountains on every side, and a straight road going over the top of them.

"'This is pleasant,' says my father, as soon as they left him there alone by himself, with no human creature to speak to, nor a whisky-shop within ten miles of him; 'cowld comfort,' says he, 'on a winter's day, and faix, but I have a mind to give ye the slip.'

"Well, he put his gun down on the bridge and he lit his pipe, and he sat down under an ould tree and began to ruminate upon his affairs.

"'Oh, then, it's wishing it well I am,' says he, 'for sodgering; and bad luck to the hammer that struck the shilling that listed me, that's all,' for he was mighty low in his heart.

"Just then a noise came rattling down near him. He listened, and, before he could get on his legs, down comes the General, ould Cohoon, with an orderly after him.

"'Who goes that?' says my father.

"'The round,' says the General, looking about all the time to see where was the sentry, for my father was snug under the tree.

"'What round?' says my father.

"'The grand round,' says the General, more puzzled than afore.

"'Pass on, grand round, and God save you kindly!' says my father, putting his pipe in his mouth again, for he thought all was over.

"'D—n your soul, where are you?' says the General, for sorrow bit of my father could he see yet.

"'It's here I am,' says he, 'and a cowld place I have of it; and if it wasn't for the pipe I'd be lost entirely.'

"The words wasn't well out of his mouth when the General began laughing till ye'd think he'd fall off his horse; and the dragoon behind him—more by token, they say it wasn't right for him—laughed as loud as himself.

"'Yer a droll sentry,' says the General, as soon as he could speak.

"'Be-gorra, it's little fun there's left in me,' says my father, 'with this drilling, and parading, and blackguarding about the roads all night.'

"'And is this the way you salute your officer?' says the General.

"'Just so,' says my father; 'devil a more politeness ever they taught me.'

"'What regiment do you belong to?' says the General.

"'The North Cork, bad luck to them!' says my father, with a sigh.

"'They ought to be proud of ye,' says the General.

"'I'm sorry for it,' says my father, sorrowfully, 'for maybe they'll keep me the longer.'

"'Well, my good fellow,' says the General, 'I haven't more time to waste here; but let me teach you something before I go. Whenever your officer passes, it's your duty to present to him.'

"'Arrah, it's jokin' ye are,' says my father.

"'No, I'm in earnest,' says he, 'as ye might learn, to your cost, if I brought you to a court-martial.'

"'Well, there's no knowing,' says my father, 'what they'd be up to; but sure, if that's all, I'll do it, with all "the veins," whenever yer coming this way again.'

"The General began to laugh again here, but said,

"'I'm coming back in the evening,' says he, 'and mind you don't forget your respect to your officer.'

"'Never fear, sir,' says my father; 'and many thanks to you for your kindness for telling me.'

"Away went the General, and the orderly after him, and, in ten minutes, they were out of sight.

"The night was falling fast, and one-half of the mountain was quite dark already, when my father began to think they were forgetting him entirely. He looked one way, and he looked another, but sorra bit of a sergeant's guard was coming to relieve him. There he was, fresh and fasting, and daren't go for the bare life. 'I'll give you a quarter of an hour more,' says my father, 'till the light leaves that rock up there; after that,' says he, 'by the mass! I'll be off, av it cost me what it may.'

"Well, sure enough, his courage was not needed this time; for what did he see at the same moment, but a shadow of something coming down the road opposite the bridge. He looked again; and then he made out the General himself, that was walking his horse down the steep part of the mountain, followed by the orderly. My father immediately took up his musket off the wall, settled his belts, shook the ashes out of his pipe, and put it into his pocket,

making himself as smart and neat-looking as he could be, determining, when ould Cohoon came up, to ask him for leave to go home, at least for the night. Well, by this time the General was turning a sharp part of the cliff that looks down upon the bridge, from where you might look five miles round on every side. 'He sees me,' says my father; 'but I'll be just as quick as himself.' No sooner said than done; for, coming forward to the parapet of the bridge, he up with his musket to his shoulder, and presented it straight at the General. It wasn't well there, when the officer pulled up his horse quite short, and shouted out, 'Sentry! sentry!'

"'Anan?' says my father, still covering him.

"'Down with your musket, you rascal. Don't you see it's the grand round?'

"'To be sure I do,' says my father, never changing for a minute.

"'The ruffian will shoot me,' says the General.

"'Devil a fear,' says my father, 'av it doesn't go off of itself.'

"'What do you mean by that, you villain?' says the General, scarcely able to speak with fright, for, every turn he gave on his horse, my father followed with the gun—'what do you mean?'

"'Sure, ain't I presenting?' says my father. 'Blood an ages! do you want me to fire next?'

"With that the General drew a pistol from his holster, and took deliberate aim at my father; and there they both stood for five minutes, looking at each other, the orderly all the while breaking his heart laughing behind a rock; for, ye see, the General knew av he retreated that my father might fire on purpose, and, av he came on, that he might fire by chance; and sorra bit he knew what was best to be done.

"'Are ye going to pass the evening up there, grand round?' says my father; 'for it's tired I'm getting houldin' this so long.'

"'Port arms!' shouted the General, as if on parade.

"'Sure I can't, till yer past,' says my father, angrily; 'and my hand's trembling already.'

"'By Heavens! I shall be shot,' says the General.

"'Be-gorra, it's what I'm afraid of,' says my father; and the words wasn't out of his mouth before off went the musket—bang—and down fell the General, smack on the ground, senseless. Well, the orderly ran out at this, and took him up and examined his wound; but it wasn't a wound at all, only the wadding of the gun; for my father—God be kind to him!—ye see, could do nothing right; and so he bit off the wrong end of the cartridge when he put it in the gun, and, by reason, there was no bullet in it. Well, from that day after they never got a sight of him; for, the instant that the General dropped, he sprang over the bridge-wall and got away; and what, between living in a lime-kiln for two months, eating nothing but blackberries and sloes, and other disguises, he never returned to the army, but ever after took to a civil situation, and driv a hearse for many years."

How far Mike's narrative might have contributed to the support of his theory, I am unable to pronounce; for his auditory were, at some distance from Cork, made to descend from their lofty position, and join a larger body of recruits, all proceeding to the same destination, under a strong escort of infantry. For ourselves, we reached the "beautiful city" in due time, and took up our quarters at the Old George Hotel.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CORK.

THE undress rehearsal of a new piece, with its dirty-booted actors, its cloaked and hooded actresses *en papillote*, bears about the same relation to the gala, wax-lit, and bespangled ballet, as the raw young gentleman of yesterday to the epauletted, belted, and sabretasched dragoon, whose transformation is due to a few hours of head-quarters, and a few interviews with the Adjutant.

So, at least, I felt it; and it was with a very perfect concurrence in his Majesty's taste in a uniform, and a most entire approval of the regimental tailor, that I strutted down George's street a few days after my arrival in Cork. The transports had not as yet come round; there was a great doubt of their doing so for a week or so longer; and I found myself, as the dashing Cornet, the center of a thousand polite attentions and most kind civilities.

The officer under whose orders I was placed for the time was a great friend of Sir George Dashwood's, and paid me, in consequence, much attention. Major Dalrymple had been on the staff from the commencement of his military career—had served in the Commissariat for some time—was much on foreign stations; but never, by any of the many casualties of his

life, had seen what could be called service. His ideas of the soldier's profession were, therefore, what might almost be as readily picked up by a commission in the battle-axe guards, as one in his Majesty's Fiftieth. He was now a species of district Paymaster, employed in a thousand ways, either inspecting recruits, examining accounts, revising sick certificates, or receiving contracts for mess beef. Whether the nature of his manifold occupations had enlarged the sphere of his talents and ambition, or whether the abilities had suggested the variety of his duties, I know not; but truly, the Major was a man of all work. No sooner did a young Ensign join his regiment at Cork, than Major Dalrymple's card was left at his quarters; the next day came the Major himself; the third brought an invitation to dinner; on the fourth he was told to drop in, in the evening; and, from thenceforward, he was the *ami de la maison*, in company with numerous others as newly fledged and inexperienced as himself.

One singular feature of the society at the house was that, although the Major was as well known as the flag on Spike Island, yet, somehow, no officer above the rank of an Ensign was ever to be met with there. It was not that he had not a large acquaintance; in fact, the "How are you, Major?"—"How goes it, Dalrymple?" that kept everlastingly going on as he walked the streets, proved the reverse; but, strange enough, his predilections leaned toward the newly-gazetted, far before the bronzed and scared campaigners who had seen the world, and knew more about it. The reasons for this line of conduct were twofold: in the first place, there was not an article of outfit, from a stock to a sword-belt, that he could not and did not supply to the young officer; from the gorget of the infantry to the shako of the grenadier, all came within his province: not that he actually kept a *magasin* of these articles, but he had so completely interwoven his interests with those of numerous shopkeepers in Cork, that he rarely entered a shop over whose door Dalrymple & Co. might not have figured on the sign-board. His stables were filled with a perfect infirmary of superannuated chargers, fattened and conditioned up to a miracle, and groomed to perfection. He could get you—*only you*—about three dozen of sherry, to take out with you as sea-store; he knew of such a servant; he chanced upon such a camp-furniture yesterday in his walks; in fact, why want for anything? His resources were inexhaustible—his kindness unbounded.

Then money was no object—hang it, you could pay when you liked—what signified it? In other words, a bill at thirty-one days, cashed and discounted by a friend of the Major's, would always do. While such were the unlimited advantages his acquaintance conferred, the sphere of his benefits took another range. The Major had two daughters; Matilda and Fanny were as well known in the army as Lord Fitzroy Somerset or Picton, from the Isle of Wight to Halifax, from Cape Coast to Chatham, from Belfast to the Bermudas. Where was the subaltern who had not knelt at the shrine of one or the other, if not of both, and vowed eternal love until a change of quarters? In plain words, the Major's solicitude for the service was such, that, not content with providing the young officer with all the necessary outfit of his profession, he longed also to supply him with a comforter for his woes, a charmer for his solitary hours, in the person of one of his amiable daughters. Unluckily, however, the necessity for a wife is not enforced by "general orders," as is the cut of your coat, or the length of your sabre; consequently, the Major's success in the home department of his diplomacy was not destined for the same happy results that awaited it when engaged about drill trowsers and camp kettles, and the Misses Dalrymple remained Misses through every clime and every campaign. And yet, why was it so? It is hard to say. What would men have? Matilda was a dark-haired, dark-eyed, romantic-looking girl, with a tall figure and a slender waist, with more poetry in her head than would have turned any ordinary brain: always unhappy; in need of consolation; never meeting with the kindred spirit that understood her; destined to walk the world alone, her fair thoughts smothered in the recesses of her own heart. Devilish hard to stand this, when you began in a kind of platonic friendship on both sides. More than one poor fellow nearly succumbed, particularly when she came to quote Cowley, and told him, with tears in her eyes,

"There are hearts that live and love alone," etc.

I'm assured that this *coup de grace* rarely failed in being followed by a downright avowal of open love, which, somehow, what between the route coming, what with waiting for leave from home, etc., never got further than a most tender scene, and exchange of love tokens; and, in fact, such became so often the termination, that Power swears Matty had to make a firm

resolve about cutting off any more hair, fearing a premature baldness during the recruiting season.

Now, Fanny had selected another arm of the service. Her hair was fair; her eyes blue, laughing, languishing—mischief-loving blue, with long lashes, and a look in them that was wont to leave its impression rather longer than you exactly knew of; then, her figure was *petite*, but perfect; her feet Canova might have copied; and her hand was a study for Titian; her voice, too, was soft and musical, but full of that *gaiété de cœur* that never fails to charm. While her sister's style was *il penseroso*, hers was *l'allegro;* every imaginable thing, place, or person supplied food for her mirth, and her sister's lovers all came in for their share. She hunted with Smith Barry's hounds; she yachted with the Cove Club; she coursed, practiced at a mark with a pistol, and played chicken hazard with all the cavalry; for, let it be remarked as a physiological fact, Matilda's admirers were almost invariably taken from the infantry, while Fanny's adorers were as regularly dragoons. Whether the former be the romantic arm of the service, and the latter be more adapted to dull realities, or whether the phenomenon had any other explanation, I leave to the curious. Now this arrangement, proceeding upon that principle which has wrought such wonders in Manchester and Sheffield—the division of labor—was a most wise and equitable one; each having her one separate and distinct field of action, interference was impossible; not but that when, as in the present instance, cavalry was in the ascendant, Fanny would willingly spare a dragoon or two to her sister, who likewise would repay the debt when occasion offered.

The mamma—for it is time I should say something of the head of the family—was an excessively fat, coarse-looking, dark-skinned personage, of some fifty years, with a voice like a boatswain in a quinsy. Heaven can tell, perhaps, why the worthy Major allied his fortunes with hers, for she was evidently of a very inferior rank in society; could never have been aught than downright ugly; and I never heard that she brought him any money. "Spoiled five," the national amusement of her age and sex in Cork, scandal, the changes in the army list, the failures in speculation of her luckless husband, the forlorn fortunes of the girls, her daughters, kept her in occupation; and her days were passed in one perpetual unceasing current of dissatisfaction and ill-temper with all around, that formed a heavy counterpoise to the fascinations of the young ladies. The repeated jiltings to which they had been subject had blunted any delicacy upon the score of their marriage, and if the newly introduced Cornet or Ensign was not coming forward, as became him, at the end of the requisite number of days, he was sure of receiving a very palpable admonition from Mrs. Dalrymple. Hints, at first dimly shadowed, that Matilda was not in spirits this morning; that Fanny, poor child, had a headache—directed especially at the culprit in question, grew gradually into those little motherly fondnesses in mamma, that, like the fascinations of the rattlesnake, only lure on to ruin. The doomed man was pressed to dinner when all others were permitted to take their leave; he was treated like one of the family, God help him! After dinner, the Major would keep him an hour over his wine, discussing the misery of an ill-assorted marriage; detailing his own happiness in marrying a woman like the Tonga Islander I have mentioned; hinting that girls should be brought up, not only to become companions to their husbands, but with ideas fitting their station; if his auditor were a military man, that none but an old officer (like him) could know how to educate girls (like his); and that, feeling he possessed two such treasures, his whole aim in life was to guard and keep them,—a difficult task, when proposals of the most flattering kind were coming constantly before him. Then followed a fresh bottle, during which the Major would consult his young friend upon a very delicate affair, no less than a proposition for the hand of Miss Matilda, or Fanny, whichever he was supposed to be soft upon. This was generally a *coup de maître;* should he still resist, he was handed over to Mrs. Dalrymple, with a strong indictment against him, and rarely did he escape a heavy sentence. Now, is it not strange, that two really pretty girls, with fully enough of amiable and pleasing qualities to have excited the attention and won the affections of many a man, should have gone on for years—for, alas! they did so in every climate, under every sun—to waste their sweetness in this miserable career of intrigue and mantrap, and yet nothing come of it? But so it was: the first question a newly-landed regiment was asked, if coming from where they resided, was, "Well, how are the girls?" "Oh, gloriously. Matty is there." "Ah, indeed! poor thing." "Has Fan sported a new habit?" "Is it the old gray with the hussar braiding? confound

it, that was seedy when I saw them in Corfu. And Mother Dal as fat and vulgar as ever?" "Dawson of ours was the last, and was called up for sentence when we were ordered away; of course, he bolted," etc. Such was the invariable style of question and answer concerning them; and, although some few, either from good feeling or fastidiousness, relished but little the mode in which it had become habitual to treat them, I grieve to say that, generally, they were pronounced fair game for every species of flirtation and love-making without any "intentions" for the future. I should not have trespassed so far upon my readers' patience, were I not, in recounting these traits of my friends above, narrating matters of history. How many are there who may cast their eyes upon these pages, that will say, "Poor Matilda, I knew her at Gibraltar. Little Fanny was the life and soul of us all in Quebec."

"Mr. O'Malley," said the Adjutant, as I presented myself in the afternoon of my arrival in Cork, to a short, punchy, little red-faced gentleman, in a short jacket and ducks, "you are, I perceive, appointed to the 14th; you will have the goodness to appear on parade to-morrow morning. The riding-school hours are ———. The morning drill is ———; evening drill ———. Mr. Minchin, you are a 14th man, I believe; no, I beg pardon, a Carbineer, but no matter—Mr. O'Malley, Mr. Minchin; Captain Dounie, Mr. O'Malley; you'll dine with us to-day, and to-morrow you shall be entered at the mess."

"Yours are at Santarem, I believe?" said an old weather-beaten looking officer with one arm.

"I'm ashamed to say, I know nothing whatever of them—I received my gazette unexpectedly enough."

"Ever in Cork before, Mr. O'Malley?"

"Never," said I.

"Glorious place," lisped a white-eyelashed, knocker-kneed Ensign; "splendid *gals*, eh?"

"Ah, Brunton," said Minchin, "you may boast a little, but we poor devils—"

"Know the Dals?" said the hero of the lisp, addressing me.

"I haven't that honor," I replied, scarcely able to guess whether what he alluded to were objects of the picturesque or a private family.

"Introduce him, then, at once," said the Adjutant; "we'll all go in the evening. What will the old squaw think?"

"Not I," said Minchin. "She wrote to the Duke of York about my helping Matilda at supper, and not having any honorable intentions afterward."

"We dine at 'The George' to-day, Mr. O'Malley, sharp seven. Until then—"

So saying, the little man bustled back to his accounts, and I took my leave with the rest, to stroll about the town till dinner-time.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE ADJUTANT'S DINNER.

THE Adjutant's dinner was as professional an affair as need be. A circuit or a learned society could not have been more exclusively devoted to their own separate and immediate topics than were we. Pipeclay in all its varieties came on the *tapis;* the last regulation cap—the new button—the promotions—the general orders—the Colonel, and the Colonel's wife—stoppages, and the mess fund, were all well and ably discussed; and, strange enough, while the conversation took this wide range, not a chance allusion, not one stray hint, ever wandered to the brave fellows who were covering the army with glory in the Peninsula, nor one souvenir of him that was even then enjoying a fame, as a leader, second to none in Europe. This surprised me not a little at the time; but I have, since that, learned how little interest the real services of an army possess for the ears of certain officials, who, stationed at home quarters, pass their inglorious lives in the details of drill, parade, mess-room gossip, and barrack scandal. Such, in fact, were the dons of the present dinner. We had a Commissary-General, an inspecting Brigade-Major of something, a Physician to the Forces, the Adjutant himself, and Major Dalrymple; the *oi polloi* consisting of the raw Ensign, a newly-fledged Cornet (Mr. Sparks), and myself.

The Commissary told some very pointless stories about his own department, the Doctor read a dissertation upon Walcheren fever, the Adjutant got very stupidly tipsy, and Major Dalrymple succeeded in engaging the three juniors of the party to tea, having previously pledged us to purchase nothing whatever of outfit without his advice, he well knowing (which he did) how young fellows like us were cheated, and resolving to be a father to us (which he certainly tried to be).

As we rose from the table about ten o'clock, I felt how soon a few such dinners would succeed in disenchanting me of all

my military illusions; for, young as I was, I saw that the Commissary was a vulgar bore, the Doctor a humbug, the Adjutant a sot, and the Major himself I greatly suspected to be an old rogue.

"You are coming with us, Sparks?" said Major Dalrymple, as he took me by one arm and the Ensign by the other. "We are going to have a little tea with the ladies; not five minutes' walk."

"Most happy, sir," said Mr. Sparks, with a very flattered expression of countenance.

"O'Malley, you know Sparks, and Burton too."

This served for a species of triple introduction, at which we all bowed, simpered, and bowed again. We were very happy to have the pleasure, etc.

"How pleasant to get away from these fellows!" said the Major, "they are so uncommonly prosy: that Commissary with his mess-beef, and old Pritchard, with black doses and rigors; nothing so insufferable. Besides, in reality, a young officer never needs all that nonsense: a little medicine chest—I'll get you one each tomorrow for five pounds; no, five pounds ten; the same thing—that will see you all through the Peninsula. Remind me of it in the morning." This we all promised to do, and the Major resumed: "I say, Sparks, you've got a real prize in that gray horse, such a trooper as he is. O'Malley, you'll be wanting something of that kind, if we can find it out for you."

"Many thanks, Major, but my cattle are on the way here already. I've only three horses, but I think they are tolerably good ones."

The Major now turned to Burton, and said something in a low tone, to which the other replied,

"Well, if you say so, I'll get it, but it's devilish dear."

"Dear! my young friend; cheap, dog cheap."

"Only think, O'Malley, a whole brass bed, camp-stool, basin-stand, all complete, for sixty pounds! If it was not that a widow was disposing of it in great distress, one hundred could not buy it. Here we are; come along—no ceremony. Mind the two steps; that's it. Mrs. Dalrymple, Mr. O'Malley; Mr. Sparks, Mr. Burton, my daughters. Is tea over, girls?"

"Why, papa, it's near eleven o'clock," said Fanny, as she rose to ring the bell, displaying, in so doing, the least possible portion of a very well turned ankle.

Miss Matilda Dal laid down her book, but, seemingly lost in abstraction, did not deign to look at us. Mrs. Dalrymple, however, did the honors with much politeness, and having, by a few adroit and well-put queries, ascertained everything concerning our rank and position, seemed perfectly satisfied that our intrusion was justifiable.

While my *confrère*, Mr. Sparks, was undergoing his examination, I had time to look at the ladies, whom I was much surprised at finding so very well looking; and as the Ensign had opened a conversation with Fanny, I approached my chair toward the other, and having carelessly turned over the leaves of the book she had been reading, drew her on to talk of it. As my acquaintance with young ladies hitherto had been limited to those who had "no soul," I felt some difficulty at first in keeping up with the exalted tone of my fair companion, but, by letting her take the lead for some time, I got to know more of the ground. We went on tolerably together, every moment increasing my stock of technicals, which were all that was needed to sustain the conversation. How often have I found the same plan succeed—whether discussing a question of law or medicine—with a learned professor of either; or, what is still more difficult, canvassing the merits of a preacher, or a doctrine, with a serious young lady, whose "blessed privileges" were at first a little puzzling to comprehend.

I so contrived it, too, that Miss Matilda should seem as much to be making a convert to her views as to have found a person capable of sympathizing with her; and thus long before the little supper, with which it was the Major's practice to regale his friends every evening, made its appearance, we had established a perfect understanding together—a circumstance that, a bystander might have remarked, was productive of a more widely diffused satisfaction than I could have myself seen any just cause for. Mr. Burton was also progressing, as the Yankees say, with the sister. Sparks had booked himself as purchaser of military stores enough to make the campaign of the whole globe, and we were thus all evidently fulfilling our various vocations, and affording perfect satisfaction to our entertainers.

Then came the spatch-cock, and the sandwiches, and the negus, which Fanny first mixed for papa, and, subsequently, with some little pressing, for Mr. Burton; Matilda the romantic assisted *me*. Sparks helped himself; then we laughed, and told stories, pressed Sparks to sing, which, as he declined, we only pressed the more. How, invariably, by-the-by, is it the cus-

tom to show one's appreciation of anything like a butt, by pressing him for a song. The Major was in great spirits, told us anecdotes of his early life in India, and how he once contracted to supply the troops with milk, and made a purchase, in consequence, of some score of cattle, which turned out to be bullocks. Matilda recited some lines from Pope in my ear. Fanny challenged Burton to a rowing match. Sparks listened to all around him, and Mrs. Dalrymple mixed a very little weak punch, which Dr. Lucas had recommended to her, to take the last thing at night—*Noctes cænaque*— Say what you will, these were very jovial little *réunions*. The girls were decidedly very pretty. We were in high favor, and when we took leave at the door, with a very cordial shake hands, it was with no *arrière pensée* we promised to see them in the morning.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE ENTANGLEMENT.

When we think for a moment over all the toils, all the anxieties, all the fevered excitement of a *grande passion*, it is not a little singular that love should so frequently be elicited by a state of mere idleness; and yet nothing, after all, is so predisposing a cause as this. Where is the man between eighteen and eight-and-thirty—might I not say forty—who, without any very pressing duns, and having no taste for strong liquor and *rouge et noir*, can possibly lounge through the long hours of his day, without, at least, fancying himself in love? The thousand little occupations it suggests become a necessity of existence; its very worries are like the wholesome opposition that purifies and strengthens the frame of a free state. Then, what is there half so sweet as the reflective flattery which results from our appreciation of an object who, in return, deems us the *ne plus ultra* of perfection? There it is, in fact—that confounded bump of self-esteem does it all, and has more imprudent matches to answer for than all the occipital protuberances that ever scared poor Harriet Martineau.

Now, to apply my moralizing. I very soon, to use the mess phrase, got "devilish spooney" about the "Dals." The morning drill, the riding-school, and the parade, were all most fervently consigned to a certain military character that shall be nameless, as detaining me from some appointment made the evening before; for, as I supped there each night, a party of one kind or another was always planned for the day following. Sometimes we had a boating excursion to Cove; sometimes, a picnic at Foaty; now, a rowing party to Glanmire, or a ride, at which I furnished the cavalry. These doings were all under my especial direction, and I thus became speedily the organ of the Dalrymple family; and the simple phrase, "It was Mr. O'Malley's arrangement," "Mr. O'Malley wished it," was like the "*Moi le roi*" of Louis XIV.

Though all this while we continued to carry on most pleasantly, Mrs. Dalrymple, I could perceive, did not entirely sympathize with our projects of amusement. As an experienced engineer might feel, when watching the course of some storming projectile—some brilliant congreve—flying over a besieged fortress, yet never touching the walls nor harming the inhabitants, so she looked on at all these demonstrations of attack with no small impatience, and wondered when would the breach be reported practicable. Another puzzle also contributed its share of anxiety—which of the girls was it? To be sure, he spent three hours every morning with Fanny; but, then, he never left Matilda the whole evening. He had given his miniature to one; a locket with his hair was a present to the sister. The Major thinks he saw his arm round Matilda's waist in the garden; the housemaid swears she saw him kiss Fanny in the pantry. Matilda smiles when we talk of his name with her sister's; Fanny laughs outright, and says, "Poor Matilda, the man never dreamed of her." This is becoming uncomfortable; the Major must ask his intentions—it is, certainly, one or the other; but, then, we have a right to know which. Such was a very condensed view of Mrs. Dalrymple's reflections on this important topic—a view taken with her usual tact and clear-sightedness.

Matters were in this state, when Power at length arrived in Cork, to take command of our detachment, and make the final preparations for our departure. I had been, as usual, spending the evening at the Major's, and had just reached my quarters, when I found my friend sitting at my fire, smoking his cigar and solacing himself with a little brandy and water.

"At last," said he, as I entered—"at last! Why, where the deuce have you been till this hour—past two o'clock? There is no ball, no assembly going on, eh?"

"No," said I, half blushing at the eagerness of the inquiry; "I've been spending the evening with a friend."

"Spending the evening! say, rather, the night. Why, confound you, man, what is there in Cork to keep you out of bed till near three?"

"Well, if you must know, I've been supping at a Major Dalrymple's—a devilish good fellow—with two such daughters!"

"Ahem!" said Power, shutting one eye knowingly, and giving a look like a Yorkshire horse-dealer. "Go on."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"Go on—continue."

"I've finished—I've nothing more to tell."

"So, they're here, are they!" said he, reflectingly.

"Who?" said I.

"Matilda and Fanny, to be sure."

"Why, you know them, then?"

"I should think I do?"

"Where have you met them?"

"Where have I not? When I was in the Rifles, they were quartered at Zante. Matilda was just then coming it rather strong with Villiers, of ours, a regular greenhorn. Fanny, also, nearly did for Harry Nesbitt, by riding a hurdle race. Then they left for Gibraltar, in the year ——what year was it?"

"Come, come," said I, "this is a humbug: the girls are quite young; you just have heard their names."

"Well, perhaps so; only tell me which is your peculiar weakness, as they say in the west, and maybe I'll convince you."

"Oh! as to that," said I, laughing, "I'm not very far gone on either side."

"Then Matilda, probably, has not tried you with Cowley, eh?—you look a little pink—'There are hearts that live and love alone.' Oh! poor fellow, you've got it. By Jove, how you've been coming it, though, in ten days! She ought not to have got to that for a month, at least; and how like a young one it was, to be caught by the poetry. Oh! Master Charley, I thought that the steeple-chaser might have done most with your Galway heart—the girl in the gray habit, that sings 'Moddirederoo,' ought to have been the prize. Halt! by St. George, but that tickles you also! Why, zounds, if I go on, probably, at this rate, I'll find a tender spot occupied by the 'black lady herself.'"

It was no use concealing, or attempting to conceal, anything from my inquisitive friend; so I mixed my grog, and opened *my whole* heart; told how I had been conducting myself for the entire preceding fortnight; and, when I concluded, sat silently awaiting Power's verdict, as though a jury were about to pronounce upon my life.

"Have you ever written?"

"Never; except, perhaps, a few lines, with tickets for the theater, or something of that kind."

"Have you copies of your correspondence?"

"Of course not. Why, what do you mean?"

"Has Mrs. Dal been ever present, or, as the French say, has she assisted, at any of your tender interviews with the young ladies?"

"I'm not aware that one kisses a girl before mamma."

"I'm not speaking of that; I merely allude to flirtation."

"Oh! I suppose she has seen me attentive."

"Very awkward, indeed! There is only one point in your favor; for, as your attentions were not decided, and as the law does not, as yet, permit polygamy—"

"Come, come, you know I never thought of marrying."

"Ah! but they did."

"Not a bit of it."

"Ay, but they did. What do you wager but that the Major asks your intentions, as he calls it, the moment he hears the transport has arrived?"

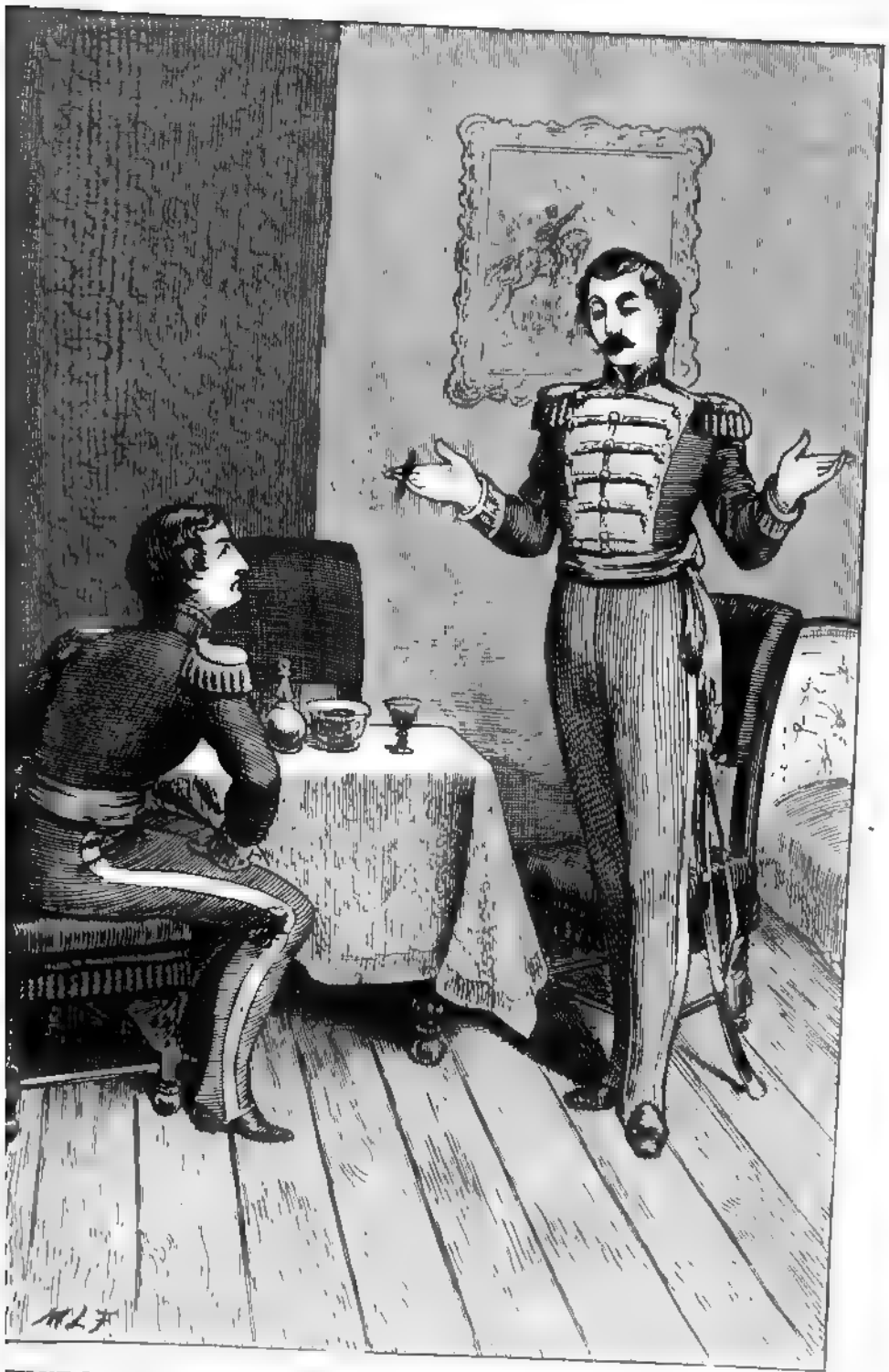
"By Jove! now you remind me, he asked this evening when he could have a few minutes' private conversation with me to-morrow, and I thought it was about some confounded military chest or sea-store, or one of his infernal contrivances that he every day assures me are indispensable; though, if every officer had only as much baggage as I have got, under his directions, it would take two armies, at least, to carry the effects of the fighting one."

"Poor fellow!" said he, starting upon his legs; "what a burst you've made of it!" So saying, he began, in a nasal twang,

"I publish the banns of marriage between Charles O'Malley, late of his Majesty's 14th Dragoons, and —— Dalrymple, spinster, of this city—"

"I'll be hanged if you do, though," said I, seeing pretty clearly, by this time, something of the estimation my friends were held in. "Come, Power, pull me through, like a dear fellow—pull me through, without doing anything to hurt the girls' feelings."

"Well, we'll see about it," said he—



CBLISH THE BANNS OF MARRIAGE BETWEEN CHARLES O'MALLEY, LATE OF HIS MAJESTY'S 14TH DRAGOONS, AND —— DALRYMPLE, SPINSTER, OF THIS CITY." (P. 716.)

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"we'll see about it in the morning; but, at the same time, let me assure me, the affair is not so easy as you may, at first blush, suppose. These worthy people have been so often 'done'—to use the cant phrase—before, that scarcely a *ruse* remains untried. It is of no use pleading that your family won't consent—that your prospects are null—that you are ordered for India—that you are engaged elsewhere—that you have nothing but your pay—that you are too young or too old—all such reasons, good and valid with any other family, will avail you little here. Neither will it serve your cause that you may be warranted by a doctor as subject to periodical fits of insanity; monomaniacal tendencies to cut somebody's throat, etc. Bless your heart, man, they have a soul above such littlenesses. They care nothing for consent of friends, means, age, health, climate, prospects, or temper. Firmly believing matrimony to be a lottery, they are not superstitious about the number they pitch upon; provided only that they get a ticket, they are content."

"Then it strikes me, if what you say is correct, that I have no earthly chance of escape, except some kind friend will undertake to shoot me."

"That has been also tried."

"Why, how do you mean?"

"A mock duel, got up at mess—we had one at Malta. Poor Vickers was the hero of that affair. It was right well planned, too. One of the letters was suffered, by mere accident, to fall into Mrs. Dal's hands, and she was quite prepared for the event, when he was reported shot, the next morning. Then the young lady, of course, whether she cared or not, was obliged to be perfectly unconcerned, lest the story of engaged affections might get wind, and spoil another market. The thing went on admirably, till one day, some few months later, they saw, in a confounded army-list, that the late George Vickers was promoted to the 18th Dragoons, so that the trick was discovered, and is, of course, stale at present."

"Then could I not have a wife already, and a large family of interesting babes?"

"No go—only swell the damages, when they come to prosecute. Besides, your age and looks forbid the assumption of such a fact. No, no; we must go deeper to work."

"But where shall we go?" said I, impatiently; "for it appears to me these good people have been treated to every trick and subterfuge that ever ingenuity suggested."

"Come, I think I have it; but it will need a little more reflection. So now, let us to bed. I'll give you the result of my lucubrations at breakfast; and, if I mistake not, we may get you through this without any ill consequences. Good-night, then, old boy; and now dream away of your lady-love till our next meeting."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PREPARATION.

To prevent needless repetitions in my story, I shall not record here the conversation which passed between my friend Power and myself on the morning following at breakfast. Suffice it to say, that the plan proposed by him for my rescue was one I agreed to adopt, reserving to myself, in case of failure, a *pis aller* of which I knew not the meaning, but of whose efficacy Power assured me I need not doubt.

"If all fail," said he,—"if every bridge break down beneath you, and no road of escape be left, why, then, I believe you must have recourse to another alternative. Still I should wish to avoid it, if possible, and I put it to you, in honor, not to employ it unless as a last expedient. You promise me this?"

"Of course," said I, with great anxiety for the dread final measure. "What is it?"

He paused, smiled dubiously, and resumed:

"And, after all—but, to be sure, there will not be need for it—the other plan will do—must do. Come, come, O'Malley, the Admiralty say that nothing encourages drowning in the navy like a life-buoy. The men have such a prospect of being picked up, that they don't mind falling overboard; so, if I give you this life-preserver of mine, you'll not swim an inch. Is it not so, eh?"

"Far from it," said I. "I shall feel in honor bound to exert myself the more, because I now see how much it costs you to part with it."

"Well, then, hear it. When everything fails—when all your resources are exhausted—when you have totally lost your memory, in fact, and your ingenuity in excuses, say—but mind, Charley, not till then—say that you must consult your friend, Captain Power, of the 14th, that's all."

"And is this it?" said I, quite disappointed at the lame and impotent conclusion to all the high-sounding exordium; "is this all?"

"Yes," said he, "that is all. But stop, Charley; is not that the Major crossing the street there? Yes, to be sure it is, and, by Jove! he has got on the old braided frock this morning. Had you not told me one word of your critical position, I should have guessed there was something in the wind from that. That same vestment has caused many a stout heart to tremble that never quailed before a shot or shell."

"How can that be? I should like to hear."

"Why, my dear boy, that's his explanation coat, as we called it at Gibraltar. He was never known to wear it except when asking some poor fellow's 'intentions.' He would no more think of sporting it as an every-day affair, than the Chief Justice would go cock-shooting in his black cap and ermine. Come, he is bound for your quarters, and, as it will not answer our plans to let him see you now, you had better hasten down-stairs, and get round by the back way into George's street, and you'll be at his house before he can return."

Following Power's directions, I seized my foraging-cap, and got clear out of the premises before the Major had reached them. It was exactly noon as I sounded my loud and now well-known summons at the Major's knocker. The door was quickly opened; but, instead of dashing up-stairs, four steps at a time, as was my wont, to the drawing-room, I turned short into the dingy-looking little parlor on the right, and desired Matthew, the venerable servitor of the house, to say that I wished particularly to see Mrs. Dalrymple for a few minutes, if the hour were not inconvenient.

There was something perhaps of excitement in my manner—some flurry in my look, or some trepidation in my voice—or perhaps it was the unusual hour—or the still more remarkable circumstance of my not going at once to the drawing-room, that raised some doubts in Matthew's mind as to the object of my visit; and, instead of at once complying with my request to inform Mrs. Dalrymple that I was there, he cautiously closed the door, and, taking a quick but satisfactory glance round the apartment to assure himself that we were alone, he placed his back against it, and heaved a deep sigh.

We were both perfectly silent; I in total amazement at what the old man could possibly mean; he, following up the train of his own thoughts, comprehended little or nothing of my surprise, and evidently was so engrossed by his reflections that he had neither ears nor eyes for aught around him. There was a most singular semi-comic expression in the old withered face that nearly made me laugh at first; but, as I continued to look steadily at it, I perceived that, despite the long-worn wrinkles that low Irish drollery and fun had furrowed around the angles of his mouth, the real character of his look was one of sorrowful compassion.

Doubtless my readers have read many interesting narratives, wherein the unconscious traveler in some remote land has been warned of a plan to murder him, by some mere passing wink, a look, a sign, which some one, less steeped in crime, less hardened in iniquity than his fellows, has ventured for his rescue. Sometimes, according to the taste of the narrator, the interesting individual is an old woman, sometimes a young one, sometimes a black-bearded bandit, sometimes a child, and, not unfrequently, a dog is humane enough to do this service. One thing, however, never varies; be the agent biped or quadruped, dumb or speechful, young or old, the stranger invariably takes the hint, and gets off scot free, for his sharpness. This never-varying trick on the doomed man, I had often been sceptical enough to suspect; however, I had not been many minutes a spectator of the old man's countenance, when I most thoroughly recanted my errors, and acknowledged myself wrong. If ever the look of a man conveyed a warning, his did; but there was more in it than even that; there was a tone of sad and pitiful compassion, such as an old gray-bearded rat might be supposed to put on at seeing a young and inexperienced one opening the hinge of an iron trap, to try its efficacy upon his neck. Many a little occasion had presented itself, during my intimacy with the family, of doing Matthew some small services, of making him some trifling presents; so that, when he assumed before me the gesture and look I have mentioned, I was not long in deciphering his intentions.

"Matthew!" screamed a sharp voice, which I recognized at once for that of Mrs. Dalrymple. "Matthew! where is the old fool?"

But Matthew heard not, or heeded not.

"Matthew! Matthew! I say."

"I'm comin', ma'am," said he, with a sigh, as, opening the parlor-door, he turned upon me one look of such import, that only the circumstances of my story can explain its force, or my reader's own ingenious imagination can supply.

"Never fear, my good old friend," said I, grasping his hand warmly, and leaving a guinea in the palm—"Never fear."

"God grant it, sir!" said he, settling on his wig in preparation for his appearance in the drawing-room.

"Matthew; the old wretch!"

"Mr. O'Malley," said the often-called Matthew, as, opening the door, he announced me unexpectedly among the ladies there assembled, who, not hearing of my approach, were evidently not a little surprised and astonished.

Had I really been the enamored swain that the Dalrymple family were willing to believe, I half suspect that the prospect before me might have cured me of my passion. A round bullet-head, *papilloté* with the *Cork Observer*, where still-born babes and maids of all work were descanted upon in very legible type, was now the substitute for the classic front and Italian ringlets of *la belle* Matilda, while the chaste Fanny herself, whose feet had been a fortune for a statuary, was, in the most slatternly and slipshod attire, pacing the room in a towering rage, at some thing, place, or person unknown (to me). If the ballet-master at the *Académie* could only learn to get his imps, demons, angels, and goblins "off" half as rapidly as the two young ladies retreated on my being announced, I answer for the piece so brought out having a run for half the season. Before my eyes had regained their position parallel to the plane of the horizon, they were gone, and I found myself alone with Mrs. Dalrymple. Now, she stood her ground, partly to cover the retreat of the main body, partly too, because—representing the baggage-wagons, ammunition stores, hospital staff, etc.—her retirement from the field demanded more time and circumspection than the light brigade

Let not my readers suppose that the *mère* Dalrymple was so perfectly faultless in costume that her remaining was a matter of actual indifference; far from it. She evidently had a struggle for it; but a sense of duty decided her, and, as Ney doggedly held back to cover the retreating forces on the march from Moscow, so did she resolutely lurk behind till the last flutter of the last petticoat assured her that the fugitives were safe. Then did she hesitate for a moment what course to take; but, as I assumed my chair beside her, she composedly sat down, and, crossing her hands before her, waited for an explanation of this ill-timed visit.

Had the Horse Guards, in the plenitude of their power and the perfection of their taste, ordained that the 79th and 42d Regiments should in future, in lieu of their respective tartans, wear flannel kilts and black worsted hose, I could readily have fallen into the error of mistaking Mrs. Dalrymple for a field-officer in the new regulation dress; the philabeg finding no mean representation in a capacious pincushion that hung down from her girdle, while a pair of shears, not scissors, corresponded to the dirk. After several ineffectual efforts upon her part to make her vestment (I know not its fitting designation) cover more of her legs than its length could possibly effect, and, after some most bland smiles and half blushes at dishabille, etc., were over, and that I had apologized most humbly for the unusually early hour of my call, I proceeded to open my negotiations, and unfurl my banner for the fray.

"The old *Racehorse* has arrived at last," said I, with a half sigh, "and I believe that we shall not obtain a very long time for our leave-taking; so that, trespassing upon your very great kindness, I have ventured upon an early call."

"The *Racehorse*, surely, can't sail to-morrow," said Mrs. Dalrymple, whose experience of such matters made her a very competent judge; "her stores—"

"Are taken in already," said I, "and an order from the Horse Guards commands us to embark in twenty-four hours; so that, in fact, we scarcely have time to look about us."

"Have you seen the Major?" inquired Mrs. Dalrymple, eagerly.

"Not to-day," I replied, carelessly; "but, of course, during the morning we are sure to meet. I have many thanks yet to give him for all his most kind attentions."

"I know he is most anxious to see you," said Mrs. Dalrymple, with a very peculiar emphasis, and evidently desiring that I should inquire the reasons of this anxiety. I, however, most heroically forbore indulging my curiosity, and added that I should endeavor to find him on my way to the barracks; and then, hastily looking at my watch, I pronounced it a full hour later than it really was, and, promising to spend the evening—my last evening—with them, I took my leave, and hurried away, in no small flurry, to be once more out of reach of Mrs. Dalrymple's fire, which I every moment expected to open upon me.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE SUPPER.

POWER and I dined together *tête-à-tête* at the hotel, and sat chatting over my ad-

ventures with the Dalrymples till nearly nine o'clock.

"Come, Charley," said he, at length, "I see your eye wandering very often toward the time-piece; another bumper, and I'll let you off. What shall it be?"

"What you like," said I, upon whom a share of three bottles of strong claret had already made a very satisfactory impression.

"Then champagne for the *coup de grace*. Nothing like your *vin mousseux* for a critical moment—every bubble that rises sparkling to the surface, prompts some bright thought, or elicits some brilliant idea, that would only have been drowned in your more sober fluids. Here's to the girl you love, whoever she be."

"To her bright eyes, then, be it," said I, clearing off a brimming goblet of nearly half the bottle, while my friend Power seemed multiplied into any given number of gentlemen standing amid something like a glass manufactory of decanters.

"I hope you feel steady enough for this business," said my friend, examining me closely with the candle.

"I'm an Archdeacon," muttered I, with one eye involuntarily closing.

"You'll not let them double on you!"

"Trust me, old boy," said I, endeavoring to look knowing.

"I think you'll do," said he; "so now march; I'll wait for you here, and we'll go on board together; for old Bloater, the skipper, says he'll certainly weigh by daybreak."

"Till then," said I, as, opening the door, I proceeded very cautiously to descend the stairs, affecting all the time considerable *nonchalance*, and endeavoring, as well as my thickened utterance would permit, to hum,

"Oh! love is the soul of an Irish dragoon."

If I was not in the most perfect possession of my faculties in the house, the change to the open air, certainly, but little contributed to their restoration, and I scarcely felt myself in the street when my brain became absolutely one whirl of maddened and confused excitement. Time and space are nothing to a man thus enlightened, and so they appeared to me; scarcely a second had elapsed when I found myself standing in the Dalrymples' drawing-room.

If a few hours had done much to metamorphose *me*, certes, they had done something for my fair friends also—anything more unlike what they appeared in the morning can scarcely be imagined. Matilda in black, with her hair in heavy madonna bands upon her fair cheek, now paler even than usual, never seemed so handsome; while Fanny, in a light blue dress, with blue flowers in her hair, and a blue sash, looked the most lovely piece of coquetry ever man set his eyes upon. The old Major, too, was smartened up, and put into an old regimental coat that he had worn during the siege of Gibraltar; and lastly, Mrs. Dalrymple herself was attired in a very imposing costume, that made her, to my not over-accurate judgment, look very like an elderly bishop in a flame-colored cassock. Sparks was the only stranger, and wore upon his countenance, as I entered, a look of very considerable embarrassment, that even my thick-sightedness could not fail of detecting.

Parlez-moi de l'amitié, my friends. Talk to me of the warm embrace of your earliest friend, after years of absence; the cordial and heartfelt shake-hands of your old school companion, when, in after-years, a chance meeting has brought you together, and you have had time and opportunity for becoming distinguished and in repute, and are rather a good hit to be known to than otherwise; of the close grip you give your second when he comes up to say, that the gentleman with the loaded detonator opposite won't fire—that he feels he's in the wrong. Any or all of these together, very effective and powerful though they be, are light in the balance, when compared with the two-handed compression you receive from the gentleman that expects you to marry one of his daughters.

"My dear O'Malley, how goes it? Thought you'd never come," said he, still holding me fast and looking me full in the face, to calculate the extent to which my potations rendered his flattery feasible.

"Hurried to death with preparations, I suppose," said Mrs. Dalrymple, smiling blandly. "Fanny dear, some tea for him."

"Oh, mamma, he does not like all that sugar; surely not," said she, looking up with a most sweet expression; as though to say, "I at least know his tastes."

"I believed you were going without seeing us," whispered Matilda, with a very glassy look about the corner of her eyes.

Eloquence was not just then my forte, so that I contented myself with a very intelligible look at Fanny, and a tender squeeze of Matilda's hand, as I seated myself at the table.

Scarcely had I placed myself at the tea-table with Matilda beside, and Fanny opposite me, each vying with the other in

their delicate and kind attentions, when I totally forgot all my poor friend Power's injunctions and directions for my management. It is true, I remembered that there was a scrape of some kind or other to be got out of, and one requiring some dexterity too, but what, or with whom, I could not for the life of me determine. What the wine had begun the bright eyes completed; and, amid the witchcraft of silky tresses and sweet looks, I lost all my reflection, till the impression of an impending difficulty remained fixed in my mind, and I tortured my poor, weak, and erring intellect to detect it. At last, and by a mere chance, my eyes fell upon Sparks, and, by what mechanism I contrived it I know not, but I immediately saddled him with the whole of my annoyances, and attributed to him and to his fault any embarrassment I labored under.

The physiological reason of the fact I'm very ignorant of, but for the truth and frequency I can well vouch, that there are certain people, certain faces, certain voices, certain whiskers, legs, waistcoats, and guard-chains, that inevitably produce the most striking effects upon the brain of a gentleman already excited by wine, and not exactly cognizant of his own peculiar fallacies.

These effects are not produced merely among those who are quarrelsome in their cups, for I call the whole 14th to witness that I am not such; but, to any person so disguised, the inoffensiveness of the object is no security on the other hand, for I once knew an eight-day clock kicked down a barrack stairs by an old Scotch major, because he thought it was laughing at him. To this source alone, whatever it be, can I attribute the feeling of rising indignation with which I contemplated the luckless Cornet, who, seated at the fire, unnoticed and uncared for, seemed a very unworthy object to vent anger or ill-temper upon.

"Mr. Sparks, I fear," said I, endeavoring at the time to call up a look of very sovereign contempt—"Mr. Sparks, I fear, regards my visit here in the light of an intrusion."

Had poor Mr. Sparks been told to proceed incontinently up the chimney before him, he could not have looked more aghast. Reply was quite out of his power; so sudden and unexpectedly was this charge of mine made, that he could only stare vacantly from one to the other, while I, warming with my subject, and perhaps —but I'll not swear it—stimulated by a gentle pressure from a soft hand near me, continued:

"If he thinks, for one moment, that my attentions in this family are in any way to be questioned by him, I can only say—"

"My dear O'Malley, my dear boy!" said the Major, with the look of a father-in-law in his eye.

"The spirit of an officer and a gentleman spoke there," said Mrs. Dalrymple, now carried beyond all prudence, by the hope that my attack might arouse my dormant friend into a counter-declaration: nothing, however, was further from poor Sparks, who began to think he had been unconsciously drinking tea with five lunatics.

"If he supposes," said I, rising from my chair, "that his silence will pass with me as any palliation—"

"Oh dear!—oh dear! there will be a duel. Papa dear, why don't you speak to Mr. O'Malley?"

"There now, O'Malley, sit down. Don't you see he is quite in error?"

"Then, let him say so," said I, fiercely.

"Ah, yes, to be sure," said Fanny; "do say it; say anything he likes, Mr. Sparks."

"I must say," said Mrs. Dalrymple, "however sorry I may feel in my own house to condemn any one, that Mr. Sparks is very much in the wrong."

Poor Sparks looked like a man in a dream.

"If he will tell Charles—Mr. O'Malley, I mean," said Matilda, blushing scarlet, "that he meant nothing by what he said—"

"But I never spoke—never opened my lips!" cried out the wretched man, at length sufficiently recovered to defend himself.

"Oh, Mr. Sparks!"

"Oh, Mr. Sparks!"

"Oh, Mr. Sparks!" chorused the three ladies.

While the old Major brought up the rear with an "Oh! Sparks, I must say—"

"Then, by all the saints in the calendar, I must be mad," said he; "but if I have said anything to offend you, O'Malley, I am sincerely sorry for it."

"That will do, sir," said I, with a look of royal condescension at the *amende* I considered as somewhat late in coming, and resumed my seat.

This little *intermezzo*, it might be supposed, was rather calculated to interrupt the harmony of our evening: not so, however. I had apparently acquitted myself

like a hero, and was evidently in a white heat, in which I could be fashioned into any shape. Sparks was humbled so far, that he would probably feel it a relief to make any proposition; so that, by our opposite courses, we had both arrived at a point at which all the dexterity and address of the family had been long since aiming without success. Conversation then resumed its flow, and, in a few minutes, every trace of our late *fracas* had disappeared.

By degrees, I felt myself more and more disposed to turn my attention toward Matilda, and, dropping my voice into a lower tone, opened a flirtation of a most determined kind. Fanny had, meanwhile, assumed a place beside Sparks, and, by the muttered tones that passed between them, I could plainly perceive they were similarly occupied. The Major took up the *Southern Reporter*, of which he appeared deep in the contemplation, while Mrs. Dal herself buried her head in her embroidery, and neither heard nor saw anything around her.

I know, unfortunately, but very little of what passed between myself and my fair companion; I can only say that, when supper was announced at twelve (an hour later than usual), I was sitting upon the sofa, with my arm round her waist, my cheek so close, that already her lovely tresses brushed my forehead, and her breath fanned my burning brow.

"Supper, at last," said the Major, with a loud voice, to arouse us from our trance of happiness, without taking any mean opportunity of looking unobserved. "Supper, Sparks: O'Malley, come now—it will be some time before we all meet this way again."

"Perhaps not so long, after all," said I, knowingly.

"Very likely not," echoed Sparks, in the same key.

"I've proposed for Fanny," said he, whispering in my ear.

"Matilda's mine," replied I, with the look of an emperor.

"A word with you, Major," said Sparks, his eye flashing with enthusiasm, and his cheek scarlet—"one word: I'll not detain you."

They withdrew into a corner for a few seconds, during which Mrs. Dalrymple amused herself by wondering what the secret could be; why Mr. Sparks couldn't tell her; and Fanny, meanwhile, pretended to look for something at a side table, and never turned her head round.

"Then give me your hand," said the Major, as he shook Sparks's with a warmth of whose sincerity there could be no question. "Bess, my love," said he, addressing his wife: the remainder was lost in a whisper; but, whatever it was, it evidently redounded to Sparks's credit, for, the next moment, a repetition of the hand-shaking took place, and Sparks looked the happiest of men.

"*A mon tour*," thought I, "now," as I touched the Major's arm, and led him toward the window. What I said may be one day matter for Major Dalrymple's memoirs, if he ever writes them; but, for my part, I have not the least idea. I only know that, while I was yet speaking, he called over Mrs. Dal, who, in a frenzy of joy, seized me in her arms and embraced me. After which, I kissed her, shook hands with the Major, kissed Matilda's hand, and laughed prodigiously, as though I had done something confoundedly droll—a sentiment evidently participated in by Sparks, who laughed too, as did the others, and a merrier, happier party never sat down to supper.

"Make your company pleased with themselves," says Mr. Walker, in his *Original* work upon dinner-giving, "and everything goes on well." Now Major Dalrymple, without having read the authority in question, probably because it was not written at the time, understood the principle fully as well as the police-magistrate, and certainly was a proficient in the practice of it.

To be sure, he possessed one grand requisite for success—he seemed most perfectly happy himself. There was that *air dégagé* about him which, when an old man puts it on among his juniors, is so very attractive. Then the ladies, too, were evidently well pleased; and the usually austere mamma had relaxed her "rigid front" into a smile, in which any *habitué* of the house could have read our fate.

We ate, we drank, we ogled, smiled, squeezed hands beneath the table, and, in fact, so pleasant a party had rarely assembled round the Major's mahogany. As for me, I made a full disclosure of the most burning love, backed by a resolve to marry my fair neighbor, and settle upon her a considerably larger part of my native county than I had ever even rode over. Sparks, on the other side, had opened his fire more cautiously; but, whether taking courage from my boldness, or perceiving with envy the greater estimation I was held in, was now going the pace fully as fast as myself, and had commenced explanations of his intentions with regard to

Fanny that evidently satisfied her friends. Meanwhile, the wine was passing very freely, and the hints half uttered an hour before began now to be more openly spoken and canvassed.

Sparks and I hob-nobbed across the table, and looked unspeakable things at each other; the girls held down their heads; Mrs. Dal wiped her eyes; and the Major pronounced himself the happiest father in Europe.

It was now wearing late, or rather early; some gray streaks of dubious light were faintly forcing their way through the half-closed curtains, and the dread thought of parting first presented itself. A cavalry trumpet, too, at this moment sounded a call that aroused us from our trance of pleasure, and warned us that our moments were few. A dead silence crept over all, the solemn feeling which leave-taking ever inspires was uppermost, and none spoke. The Major was the first to break it.

"O'Malley, my friend; and you, Mr. Sparks; I must have a word with you, boys, before we part."

"Here let it be, then, Major," said I, holding his arm as he turned to leave the room; "here, now; we are all so deeply interested, no place is so fit."

"Well, then," said the Major, "as you desire it, now that I'm to regard you both in the light of my sons-in-law—at least, as pledged to become so—it is only fair as respects—"

"I see—I understand perfectly," interrupted I, whose passion for conducting the whole affair myself was gradually gaining on me. "What you mean is, that we should make known our intentions before some mutual friends ere we part—eh, Sparks? eh, Major?

"Right, my boy—right on every point."

"Well, then, I thought of all that; and if you'll just send your servant over to my quarters for our Captain—he's the fittest person, you know, at such a time—"

"How considerate!" said Mrs. Dalrymple.

"How perfectly just his idea is!" said the Major.

"We'll, then, in his presence, avow our present and unalterable determination as regards your fair daughters; and as the time is short—"

Here I turned toward Matilda, who placed her arm within mine; Sparks possessed himself of Fanny's hand, while the Major and his wife consulted for a few seconds.

"Well, O'Malley, all you propose is perfect. Now, then, for the Captain. Who shall he inquire for?"

"Oh, an old friend of yours," said I, jocularly; "you'll be glad to see him."

"Indeed!" said all together.

"Oh, yes, quite a surprise, I'll warrant it."

"Who can it be? who on earth is it?"

"You can't guess," added I, with a very knowing look; "knew you at Corfu: a very intimate friend indeed, if he tell the truth."

A look of something like embarrassment passed around the circle at these words, while I, wishing to end the mystery, resumed:

"Come, then, who can be so proper for all parties, at a moment like this, as our mutual friend, Captain Power?"

Had a shell fallen into the cold grouse pie in the midst of us, scattering death and destruction on every side, the effect could scarcely have been more frightful than that my last words produced. Mrs. Dalrymple fell with a sough upon the floor, motionless as a corpse; Fanny threw herself, screaming, upon a sofa; Matilda went off into strong hysterics upon the hearth-rug; while the Major, after giving me a look a maniac might have envied, rushed from the room in search of his pistols, with a most terrific oath to shoot somebody, whether Sparks or myself, or both of us, on his return, I cannot say. Fanny's sobs and Matilda's cries, assisted by a drumming process by Mrs. Dal's heels upon the floor, made a most infernal concert, and effectually prevented anything like thought or reflection; and, in all probability, so overwhelmed was I at the sudden catastrophe I had so innocently caused, I should have waited in due patience for the Major's return, had not Sparks seized my arm, and cried out:

"Run for it, O'Malley; cut like fun, my boy, or we're done for."

"Run—why?—what for?—where?" said I, stupefied by the scene before me.

"Here he is!" called out Sparks, as, throwing up the window, he sprang out upon the stone sill, and leaped into the street. I followed mechanically, and jumped after him, just as the Major had reached the window. A ball whizzed by me, that soon determined my further movements; so, putting on all speed, I flew down the street, turned the corner, and regained the hotel breathless and without a hat, while Sparks arrived a moment later, pale as a ghost, and trembling like an aspen-leaf.

"Safe, by Jove!" said Sparks, throwing himself into a chair, and panting for breath.

"Safe, at last," said I, without well knowing why or for what.

"You've had a sharp run of it, apparently," said Power, coolly, and without any curiosity as to the cause; "and, now, let us on board; there goes the trumpet again. The skipper is a surly old fellow, and we must not lose his tide for him." So saying, he proceeded to collect his cloaks, cane, etc., and get ready for departure.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE VOYAGE.

WHEN I awoke from the long, sound sleep which succeeded my last adventure, I had some difficulty in remembering where I was, or how I had come there. From my narrow berth I looked out upon the now empty cabin, and, at length, some misty and confused sense of my situation crept slowly over me. I opened the little shutter beside me, and looked out. The bold headlands of the southern coast were frowning, in sullen and dark masses, about a couple of miles distant, and I perceived that we were going fast through the water, which was beautifully calm and still. I now looked at my watch; it was past eight o'clock; and, as it must evidently be evening, from the appearance of the sky, I felt that I had slept soundly for above twelve hours.

In the hurry of departure, the cabin had not been set to rights, and there lay every species of lumber and luggage in all imaginable confusion. Trunks, gun-cases, baskets of eggs, umbrellas, hampers of sea-store, cloaks, foraging-caps, maps, and sword-belts, were scattered on every side—while the *débris* of a dinner, not over-remarkable for its propriety in table equipage, added to the ludicrous effect. The heavy tramp of a foot overhead denoted the step of some one taking his short walk of exercise; while the rough voice of the skipper, as he gave the word to "Go about!" all convinced me that we were at last under weigh, and off to "the wars." The confusion our last evening on shore produced in my brain was such, that every effort I made to remember anything about it only increased my difficulty, and I felt myself in a web so tangled and inextricable, that all endeavor to escape free was impossible. Sometimes I thought that I had really married Matilda Dalrymple; then, I supposed that the father had called me out, and wounded me in a duel; and, finally, I had some confused notion about a quarrel with Sparks, but what for, when, and how it ended, I knew not. How tremendously tipsy I must have been! was the only conclusion I could draw from all these conflicting doubts; and, after all, it was the only thing like fact that beamed upon my mind. How I had come on board and reached my berth, was a matter I reserved for future inquiry; resolving that, about the real history of my last night on shore, I would ask no questions, if others were equally disposed to let it pass in silence.

I next began to wonder if Mike had looked after all my luggage, trunks, etc., and whether he himself had been forgotten in our hasty departure. About this latter point I was not destined for much doubt; for a well-known voice, from the foot of the companion-ladder, at once proclaimed my faithful follower, and evidenced his feelings at his departure from his home and country.

Mr. Free was, at the time I mention, gathered up like a ball opposite a small, low window, that looked upon the bluff headlands now fast becoming dim and misty as the night approached. He was apparently in low spirits; and hummed in a species of low, droning voice, the following ballad, at the end of each verse of which came an Irish chorus, which, to the erudite in such matters, will suggest the air of Moddirederoo:

"MICKEY FREE'S LAMENT.

"Then fare ye well, ould Erin dear;
To part—my heart does ache well:
From Carrickfergus to Cape Clear,
I'll never see your equal.
And, though to foreign parts we're bound,
Where cannibals may ate us,
We'll ne'er forget the holy ground
Of poteen and potatoes.
Moddirederoo aroo, aroo, etc.

"When good St. Patrick banished frogs,
And shook them from his garment,
He never thought we'd go abroad,
To live upon such varmint,
Nor quit the land where whisky grew,
To wear King George's button,
Take vinegar for mountain dew,
And toads for mountain mutton.
Moddirederoo aroo, aroo," etc.

"I say, Mike, stop that confounded keen, and tell me where are we?"

"Off the ould head of Kinsale, sir."

"Where is Captain Power?"

"Smoking a cigar on deck, with the Captain, sir."

"And Mr. Sparks?"

"Mighty sick in his own stateroom. Oh! but it's himself has enough of glory—bad luck to it!—by this time. He'd make your heart break to look at him."

"Who have you got on board besides?"

"The Adjutant's here, sir; and an old gentleman they call the Major."

"Not Major Dalrymple?" said I, starting up with terror at the thought, "eh, Mike?"

"No, sir, another Major; his name is Mulroon, or Mundoon, or something like that."

"Monsoon, you son of a lumper potato," cried out a surly, gruff voice from a berth opposite, "Monsoon. Who's at the other side?"

"Mr. O'Malley, 14th," said I, by way of introduction.

"My service to you, then," said the voice. "Going to join your regiment?"

"Yes; and you—are you bound on a similar errand?"

"No, Heaven be praised! I'm attached to the Commissariat, and only going to Lisbon. Have you had any dinner?"

"Not a morsel; have you?"

"No more than yourself; but I always lie by for three or four days this way, till I get used to the confounded rocking and pitching; and, with a little grog and some sleep, get over the time gayly enough. Steward, another tumbler like the last; there—very good—that will do. Your good health, Mr. —— what was it you said?"

"O'Malley."

"O'Malley—your good health—good-night." And so ended our brief colloquy, and, in a few minutes more, a very decisive snore pronounced my friend to be fulfilling his precept for killing the hours.

I now made the effort to emancipate myself from my crib, and at last succeeded in getting on the floor, where, after one *chassez* at a small looking-glass opposite, followed by a very impetuous rush at a little brass stove, in which I was interrupted by a trunk, and laid prostrate, I finally got my clothes on, and made my way to the deck. Little attuned as was my mind at the moment to admire anything like scenery, it was impossible to be unmoved by the magnificent prospect before me. It was a beautiful evening in summer; the sun had set above an hour before, leaving behind him in the west one vast arch of rich and burnished gold, stretching along the whole horizon, and tipping all the summits of the heavy rolling sea, as it rolled on, unbroken by foam or ripple, in vast moving mountains from the far coast of Labrador. We were already in blue water, though the bold cliffs that were to form our departing point were but a few miles to leeward. There lay the lofty bluff of Old Kinsale, whose crest, overhanging, peered from a summit of some hundred feet into the deep water that swept its rocky base, many a tangled lichen and straggling bough trailing in the flood beneath. Here and there, upon the coast, a twinkling gleam proclaimed the hut of the fisherman, whose swift hookers had more than once shot by us, and disappeared in a moment. The wind, which began to fall at sunset, freshened as the moon rose; and the good ship, bending to the breeze, lay gently over, and rushed through the waters with a sound of gladness. I was alone upon the deck; Power and the Captain, whom I expected to have found, had disappeared somehow, and I was, after all, not sorry to be left to my own reflections uninterrupted.

My thoughts turned once more to my home—to my first, my best, earliest friend, whose hearth I had rendered lonely and desolate, and my heart sunk within me as I remembered it. How deeply I reproached myself for the selfish impetuosity with which I had ever followed any rising fancy, any new and sudden desire, and never thought of him whose every hope was in, whose every wish was for me. Alas! alas! my poor uncle! how gladly would I resign every prospect my soldier's life may hold out, with all its glittering promise, and all the flattery of success, to be once more beside you; to feel your warm and manly grasp; to see your smile; to hear your voice; to be again where all our best feelings are born and nurtured, our cares assuaged, our joys more joyed in, and our griefs more wept—at home! These very words have more music to my ears than all the softest strains that ever syren sung. They bring us back to all we have loved, by ties that are never felt but through such simple associations. And in the earlier memories called up, our childish feelings come back once more to visit us, like better spirits, as we walk amid the dreary desolation that years of care and uneasiness have spread around us.

Wretched must he be who ne'er has felt such bliss; and thrice happy he, who, feeling it, knows that still there lives for him that same early home, with all its loved inmates, its every dear and devoted object waiting his coming, and longing for his approach.

Such were my thoughts as I stood gazing at the bold line of coast now gradually

growing more and more dim while evening fell, and we continued to stand farther out to sea. So absorbed was I all this time in my reflections, that I never heard the voices which now suddenly burst upon my ears quite close beside me. I turned, and saw for the first time that, at the end of the quarter-deck, stood what is called a roundhouse, a small cabin, from which the sounds in question proceeded. I walked gently forward, and peeped in, and certainly anything more in contrast with my late reverie need not be conceived. There sat the skipper, a bluff, round-faced, jolly-looking little tar, mixing a bowl of punch at a table, at which sat my friend Power, the Adjutant, and a tall, meager-looking Scotchman, whom I once met in Cork, and heard that he was the Doctor of some infantry regiment. Two or three black bottles, a paper of cigars, and a tallow candle were all the table equipage; but, certainly, the party seemed not to want for spirits and fun, to judge from the hearty bursts of laughing that every moment pealed forth, and shook the little building that held them. Power, as usual with him, seemed to be taking the lead, and was evidently amusing himself with the peculiarities of his companions.

"Come, Adjutant, fill up; here's to the campaign before us; we, at least, have nothing but pleasure in the anticipation; no lovely wife behind; no charming babes to fret, and be fretted for, eh?"

"Vara true," said the Doctor, who was mated with a *tartar;* "ye maun have less regrets at leaving hame; but a married man is no' entirely denied his ain consolations."

"Good sense in that," said the Skipper; "a wide berth and plenty of sea-room are not bad things now and then."

"Is that your experience also?" said Power, with a knowing look. "Come, come, Adjutant, we're not so ill off, you see; but, by Jove, I can't imagine how it is a man ever comes to thirty without having at least one wife; without counting his colonial possessions, of course."

"Yes," said the Adjutant, with a sigh, as he drained his glass to the bottom. "It is devilish strange—woman, lovely woman!" Here he filled and drank again, as though he had been proposing a toast for his own peculiar drinking.

"I say, now," resumed Power, catching at once that there was something working in his mind—"I say, now, how happened it that you, a right good-looking, soldier-like fellow, that always made his way among the fair ones, with that confounded roguish eye and slippery tongue—how the deuce did it come to pass that you never married?"

"I've been more than once on the verge of it," said the Adjutant, smiling blandly at the flattery.

"And nae bad notion yours just to stay there," said the Doctor, with a very peculiar contortion of countenance.

"No pleasing you—no contenting a fellow like you," said Power, returning to the charge; "that's the thing; you get a certain ascendancy; you have a kind of success that renders you, as the French say, *tête montée*, and you think no woman rich enough, or good-looking enough, or high enough."

"No; by Jove, you're wrong," said the Adjutant, swallowing the bait, hook and all—"quite wrong there; for, somehow, all my life, I was decidedly susceptible. Not that I cared much for your blushing sixteen, or budding beauties in white muslin, fresh from a back-board and a governess; no, my taste inclined rather to the more sober charms of two or three-and-thirty, the *embonpoint*, a good foot and ankle, a sensible breadth about the shoulders—"

"Somewhat Dutch-like, I take it," said the Skipper, puffing out a volume of smoke; "a little bluff in the bows, and great stowage, eh?"

"You leaned, then, toward the widows?" said Power.

"Exactly: I confess, a widow always was my weakness. There was something I ever liked in the notion of a woman who had got over all the awkward girlishness of early years, and had that self-possession which habit and knowledge of the world confer, and knew enough of herself to understand what she really wished, and where she would really go."

"Like the trade winds," puffed the Skipper.

"Then, as regards fortune, they have a decided superiority over the spinster class. I defy any man breathing—let him be half police-magistrate, half chancellor—to find out the figure of a young lady's dower. On your first introduction to the house, some kind friend whispers, 'Go it, old boy; forty thousand, not a penny less.' A few weeks later, as the siege progresses, a maiden aunt, disposed to puffing, comes down to twenty; this diminishes again one-half, but then 'the money is in Bank Stock, hard Three-and-a-Half.' You go a little farther, and, as you sit one day over your wine with papa, he certainly promulgates the fact that his daughter has five thousand pounds, two of which turn out

to be in Mexican bonds, and three in an Irish mortgage."

"Happy for you," interrupted Power, "that it be not in Galway, where a proposal to foreclose would be a signal for your being called out, and shot without benefit of clergy."

"Bad luck to it for Galway," said the Adjutant. "I was nearly taken in there once to marry a girl that her brother-in-law swore had eight hundred a year, and it came out afterward that so she had, but it was for one year only; and he challenged me for doubting his word too."

"There's an old formula for finding out an Irish fortune," says Power, "worth all the algebra they ever taught in Trinity. Take the half of the assumed sum, and divide it by three; the quotient will be a flattering representative of the figure sought for."

"Not in the north," said the Adjutant, firmly—"not in the north, Power; they are all well off there. There's a race of canny, thrifty, half-Scotch niggers—your pardon, Doctor, they are all Irish—linen-weaving, Presbyterian, yarn-factoring, long-nosed, hard-drinking fellows, that lay by rather a snug thing now and then. Do you know, I was very near it once in the north. I've half a mind to tell you the story; though, perhaps, you'll laugh at me."

The whole party at once protested that nothing could induce them to deviate so widely from the line of propriety; and the Skipper having mixed a fresh bowl, and filled all the glasses round, the cigars were lighted, and the Adjutant began.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE ADJUTANT'S STORY—LIFE IN DERRY.

"It is now about eight, maybe ten, years since we were ordered to march from Belfast and take up our quarters in Londonderry. We had not been more than a few weeks altogether in Ulster, when the order came; and, as we had been, for the preceding two years, doing duty in the south and west, we concluded that the island was tolerably the same in all parts. We opened our campaign in the maiden city, exactly as we had been doing with 'unparalleled success" in Cashel, Fermoy, Tuam, etc.—that is to say, we announced garrison balls and private theatricals; offered a cup to be run for in steeple-chaise; turned out a four-in-hand drag, with mottled grays; and brought over two Deal boats to challenge the north."

"The 18th found the place stupid," said his companions.

"To be sure they did; slow fellows like them must find any place stupid. No dinners; but they gave none. No fun; but they had none in themselves. In fact, we knew better: we understood how the thing was to be done; and resolved that, as a mine of rich ore lay unworked, it was reserved for us to produce the shining metal that others, less discerning, had failed to discover. Little we knew of the matter; never was there a blunder like ours. Were you ever in Derry?"

"Never," said the three listeners.

"Well, then, let me inform you, that the place has its own peculiar features. In the first place, all the large towns in the south and west have, besides the country neighborhood that surrounds them, a certain sprinkling of gentlefolk, who, though with small fortunes and not much usage of the world, are still a great accession to society, and make up the blank which, even in the most thickly-peopled country, would be sadly felt without them. Now, in Derry, there is none of this. After the great guns—and, *per Baccho!* what great guns they are!—you have nothing but the men engaged in commerce—sharp, clever, shrewd, well-informed fellows; they are deep in flax-seed, cunning in molasses, and not to be excelled in all that pertains to coffee, sassafras, cinnamon, gum, oakum, and elephants' teeth. The place is a rich one, and the spirit of commerce is felt throughout it. Nothing is cared for, nothing is talked of, nothing alluded to, that does not bear upon this; and, in fact, if you haven't a venture in Smyrna figs, Memel timber, Dutch dolls, or some such commodity, you are absolutely nothing, and might as well be at a ball with a cork leg, or go deaf to the Opera.

"Now, when I've told thus much, I leave you to guess what impression our triumphal entry into the city produced. Instead of the admiring crowds that awaited us elsewhere, as we marched gayly into quarters, here we saw nothing but grave, sober-looking, and, I confess it, intelligent-looking faces, that scrutinized our appearance closely enough, but evidently with no great approval, and less enthusiasm. The men passed on hurriedly to the counting-houses and the wharfs; the women, with almost as little interest, peeped at us from the windows, and walked away again. Oh! how we wished

for Galway—glorious Galway, that paradise of the infantry, that lies west of the Shannon. Little we knew, as we ordered the band, in lively anticipation of the gayeties before us, to strike up 'Payne's first set,' that, to the ears of the fair listeners in Ship Quay street, the rumble of a sugar hogshead, or the crank of a weighing crane, were more delightful music."

"By Jove," interrupted Power, "you are quite right. Women are strongly imitative in their tastes. The lovely Italian, whose very costume is a natural following of a Raphael, is no more like the pretty Liverpool damsel than Genoa is to Glasnevin; and yet, what the deuce have they, dear souls! with their feet upon a soft carpet and their eyes upon the pages of Scott or Byron, to do with all the cotton or dimity that ever was printed? But let us not repine: that very plastic character is our greatest blessing."

"I'm not so sure that it always exists," said the doctor, dubiously, as though his own experience pointed otherwise.

"Well, go ahead!" said the skipper, who evidently disliked the digression thus interrupting the Adjutant's story.

"Well, we marched along, looking right and left at the pretty faces—and there were plenty of them, too—that a momentary curiosity drew to the windows; but, although we smiled, and ogled, and leered, as only a newly arrived regiment can smile, ogle, or leer, by all that's provoking we might as well have wasted our blandishments upon the Presbyterian meeting-house that frowned upon us with its high-pitched roof and round windows.

"'Droll people, these,' said one; 'Rayther rum ones,' cried another; 'The black north, by Jove!' said a third: and so we went along to the barracks, somewhat displeased to think that, though the 18th were slow, they might have met their match.

"Disappointed, as we undoubtedly felt, at the little enthusiasm that marked our *entrée*, we still resolved to persist in our original plan, and, accordingly, early the following morning, announced our intention of giving amateur theatricals. The Mayor, who called upon our Colonel, was the first to learn this, and received the information with pretty much the same kind of look the Archbishop of Canterbury might be supposed to assume, if requested by a friend to ride 'a Derby.' The incredulous expression of the poor man's face, as he turned from one of us to the other, evidently canvassing in his mind whether we might not, by some special dispensation of Providence, be all insane, I shall never forget.

"His visit was a very short one whether concluding that we were not quite safe company, or whether our notification was too much for his nerves, know not.

"We were not to be balked, however our plans for gayety, long-planned and conned over, were soon announced in all form; and though we made efforts almost superhuman in the cause, our plays were performed to empty benches, our ball were unattended, our pic-nic invitations politely declined, and, in a word, all our advances treated with a cold and chilling politeness, that plainly said, 'We'll none of you.'

"Each day brought some new discomfiture, and, as we met at mess, instead of having, as heretofore, some prospect of pleasure and amusement to chat over, it was only to talk gloomily over our miserable failures, and lament the dreary quarters that our fates had doomed us to.

"Some months wore on in this fashion, and at length—what will not time do?—we began, by degrees, to forget our woes. Some of us took to late hours and brandy and water; others got sentimental, and wrote journals, and novels, and poetry; some made acquaintances among the townspeople, and cut in to a quiet rubber to pass the evening; while another detachment, among which I was, got up a little love affair to while away the tedious hours, and cheat the lazy sun.

"I have already said something of my taste in beauty; now, Mrs. Boggs was exactly the style of woman I fancied. She was a widow; she had black eyes—not your jet-black, sparkling, Dutch-doll eyes, that roll about and twinkle, but mean nothing—no; hers had a soft, subdued, downcast, pensive look about them, and were fully as melting a pair of orbs as any blue eyes you ever looked at.

"Then, she had a short upper lip, and sweet teeth; by Jove, they were pearls! and she showed them, too, pretty often. Her figure was well rounded, plump, and what the French call *nette*. To complete all, her instep and ankle were unexceptional; and lastly, her jointure was seven hundred pounds per annum, with a trifle of eight thousand more, that the late lamented Boggs bequeathed, when, after four months of uninterrupted bliss, he left Derry for another world.

"When chance first threw me in the way of the fair widow, some casual coin-

cidence of opinion happened to raise me in her estimation, and I soon afterward received an invitation to a small evening party at her house, to which I alone of the regiment was asked.

"I shall not weary you with the details of my intimacy: it is enough that I tell you I fell desperately in love. I began by visiting twice or thrice a week, and, in less than two months, spent every morning at her house, and rarely left it till the 'Roast beef' announced mess.

"I soon discovered the widow's cue; she was serious. Now, I had conducted all manner of flirtations in my previous life; timid young ladies, manly young ladies, musical, artistical, poetical, and hysterical. Bless you, I knew them all by heart; but never before had I to deal with a serious one, and a widow to boot. The case was a trying one. For some weeks it was all very up-hill work; all the red shot of warm affection I used to pour in on other occasions was of no use here. The language of love, in which I was no mean proficient, availed me not. Compliments and flattery, those rare skirmishers before the engagement, were denied me; and I verily think that a tender squeeze of the hand would have cost me my dismissal.

"'How very slow, all this!' thought I, as, at the end of two months' siege, I still found myself seated in the trenches, and not a single breach in the fortress; 'but, to be sure, it's the way they have in the north, and one must be patient.'

"While thus I was in no very sanguine frame of mind as to my prospects, in reality my progress was very considerable. Having become a member of Mr. M'Phun's congregation, I was gradually rising in the estimation of the widow and her friends, whom my constant attendance at meeting, and my very serious demeanor, had so far impressed, that very grave deliberation was held whether I should not be made an elder at the next brevet.

"If the Widow Boggs had not been a very lovely and wealthy widow—had she not possessed the eyes, lips, hips, ankles, and jointure aforesaid—I honestly avow that neither the charms of that sweet man Mr. M'Phun's eloquence, nor even the flattering distinction in store for me, would have induced me to prolong my suit. However, I was not going to despair when in sight of land. The widow was evidently softened. A little time longer, and the most scrupulous moralist, the most rigid advocate for employing time wisely, could not have objected to my daily system of courtship. It was none of your sighing, dying, ogling, hand-squeezing, waist-pressing, oath-swearing, everlasting-adoring affairs, with an interchange of rings and lockets; not a bit of it. It was confoundedly like a controversial meeting at the Rotunda, and I myself had a far greater resemblance to Father Tom Maguire than a gay Lothario.

"After all, when mess-time came, when the 'Roast beef' played, and we assembled at dinner, and the soup and fish had gone round, with two glasses of sherry in, my spirits rallied, and a very jolly evening consoled me for all my fatigues and exertions, and supplied me with energy for the morrow; for, let me observe here, that I only made love before dinner. The evenings I reserved for myself, assuring Mrs. Boggs that my regimental duties required all my time after mess hour, in which I was perfectly correct; for at six we dined; at seven I opened the claret No. 1; at eight I had uncorked my second bottle; by half-past eight I was returning to the sherry; and at ten, punctual to the moment, I was repairing to my quarters on the back of my servant, Tim Daly, who had carried me safely for eight years, without a single mistake, as the fox-hunters say. This was a way we had in the —th. Every man was carried away from mess, some sooner, some later. I was always an early riser, and went betimes.

"Now, although I had very abundant proof, from circumstantial evidence, that I was nightly removed from the mess-room to my bed in the mode I mention, it would have puzzled me sorely to prove the fact in any direct way; inasmuch as, by half-past nine, as the clock chimed, and Tim entered to take me, I was very innocent of all that was going on, and, except a certain vague sense of regret at leaving the decanter, felt nothing whatever.

"It so chanced—what mere trifles are we ruled by in our destiny!—that just as my suit with the widow had assumed its most favorable footing, old General Hinks, that commanded the district, announced his coming over to inspect our regiment. Over he came accordingly, and, to be sure, we had a day of it. We were paraded for six mortal hours; then we were marching and countermarching; moving into line; back again into column; now forming open column, then into square; till, at last, we began to think that the old General was like the Flying Dutchman, and was probably condemned to keep on drilling us to the day of judgment. To be sure, he enlivened the proceeding to me by pronouncing the regiment the worst-drilled

and appointed corps in the service, and the Adjutant (me!) the stupidest dunderhead—these were his words—he had ever met with.

"'Never mind,' thought I; 'a few days more, and it's little I'll care for the eighteen maneuvers. It's small trouble your eyes right, or your left shoulders forward, will give me. I'll sell out, and with the Widow Boggs and seven hundred a year—but no matter.'

"This confounded inspection lasted till half-past five in the afternoon; so that our mess was delayed a full hour in consequence, and it was past seven as we sat down to dinner. Our faces were grim enough as we met together at first; but what will not a good dinner and good wine do for the surliest party? By eight o'clock we began to feel somewhat more convivially disposed; and, before nine, the decanters were performing a quick step round the table, in a fashion very exhilarating and very jovial to look at.

"'No flinching to-night,' said the senior Major. 'We've had a severe day; let us also have a merry evening.'

"'By Jove! Ormond,' cried another, 'we must not leave this to-night. Confound the old humbugs and their musty whist party; throw them over.'

"'I say, Adjutant,' said Forbes, addressing me, 'you've nothing particular to say to the fair widow this evening? You'll not bolt, I hope?'

"'That he shan't,' said one near me; 'he must make up for his absence to-morrow, for to-night we all stand fast.'

"'Besides,' said another, 'she's at meeting by this. Old—what-d'ye-call-him?—is at fourteenthly before now.'

"'A note for you, sir,' said the mess waiter, presenting me with a rose-colored three-cornered billet. It was from *la chère* Boggs herself, and ran thus:

"'DEAR SIR,—Mr. M'Phun and a few friends are coming to tea at my house after meeting: perhaps you will also favor us with your company.

"'Yours truly,

"'ELIZA BOGGS.'

"What was to be done? Quit the mess—leave a jolly party just at the jolliest moment—exchange Lafitte and red hermitage for a *soirée* of elders, presided over by that sweet man, Mr. M'Phun! It was too bad!—but then, how much was in the scale? What would the widow say if I declined? What would she think? I well knew that the invitation meant nothing less than a full-dress parade of me before her friends, and that to decline was perhaps to forfeit all my hopes in that quarter for ever.

"'Any answer, sir?' said the waiter.

"'Yes,' said I, in a half-whisper, 'I'll go—tell the servant, I'll go.'

"At this moment my tender epistle was subtracted from before me, and, ere I had turned round, had made the tour of half the table. I never perceived the circumstance, however, and filling my glass, professed my resolve to sit to the last, with a mental reserve to take my departure at the very first opportunity. Ormond and the Paymaster quitted the room for a moment, as if to give orders for a broil at twelve, and now all seemed to promise a very convivial and well-sustained party for the night.

"'Is that all arranged?' inquired the Major, as Ormond entered.

"'All right,' said he; 'and now let us have a bumper and a song. Adjutant, old boy, give us a chant.'

"What shall it be, then?" inquired I, anxious to cover my intended retreat by any appearance of joviality.

"'Give us—

"When I was in the Fusiliers
Some fourteen years ago."'

"'No, no; confound it! I've heard nothing else since I joined the regiment. Let us have the "Paymaster's Daughter."'

"'Ah! that's pathetic; I like that,' lisped a young Ensign.

"'If I'm to have a vote,' grunted out the senior Major, 'I pronounce for "West India Quarters."'

"'Yes, yes,' said half a dozen voices together, 'let's have "West India Quarters." Come, give him a glass of sherry, and let him begin.'

"I had scarcely finished off my glass, and cleared my throat for my song, when the clock on the chimney-piece chimed half-past nine, and the same instant I felt a heavy hand fall upon my shoulder. I turned, and beheld my servant, Tim. This, as I have already mentioned, was the hour at which Tim was in the habit of taking me home to my quarters; and, though we had dined an hour later, he took no notice of the circumstance, but, true to his custom, he was behind my chair. A very cursory glance at my 'familiar' was quite sufficient to show me that we had somehow changed sides; for Tim, who was habitually the most sober of mankind, was, on the present occasion,

exceedingly drunk, while I, a full hour before that consummation, was perfectly sober.

"'What d'ye want, sir?' inquired I, with something of severity in my manner.

"'Come home,' said Tim, with a hiccup that set the whole table in a roar.

"'Leave the room this instant,' said I, feeling wrath at being thus made a butt of for his offenses. 'Leave the room, or I'll kick you out of it.' Now this, let me add in a parenthesis, was somewhat of a boast, for Tim was six feet three, and strong in proportion, and, when in liquor, fearless as a tiger.

"'You'll kick me out of the room—eh! will you? Try—only try it, that's all.' Here a new roar of laughter burst forth, while Tim, again placing an enormous paw upon my shoulder, continued, 'Don't be sitting there, making a baste of yourself, when you've got enough. Don't you see you're drunk?'

"I sprang to my legs on this, and made a rush to the fireplace, to secure the poker; but Tim was beforehand with me, and seizing me by the waist with both hands, flung me across his shoulders, as though I were a baby, saying, at the same time, 'I'll take you away at half-past eight, to-morrow, av you're as rampageous again.' I kicked, I plunged, I swore, I threatened, I even begged and implored to be set down; but, whether my voice was lost in the uproar around me, or that Tim only regarded my denunciations in the light of cursing, I know not, but he carried me bodily down the stairs, steadying himself by one hand on the banisters, while with the other he held me as in a vice. I had but one consolation all this while; it was this, that, as my quarters lay immediately behind the mess-room, Tim's excursion would soon come to an end, and I should be free once more; but guess my terror to find that the drunken scoundrel, instead of going, as usual, to the left, turned short to the right hand, and marched boldly into Ship Quay street. Every window in the mess-room was filled with our fellows, absolutely shouting with laughter. 'Go it, Tim!—that's the fellow!—hold him tight!—never let go!' cried a dozen voices; while the wretch, with the tenacity of drunkenness, gripped me still harder, and took his way down the middle of the street.

"It was a beautiful evening in July, a soft summer night, as I made this pleasing excursion down the most frequented thoroughfare in the maiden city; my struggles every moment exciting roars of laughter from an increasing crowd of spectators, who seemed scarcely less amused than puzzled at the exhibition. In the midst of a torrent of imprecations against my torturer, a loud noise attracted me. I turned my head, and saw—horror of horrors!—the door of the meeting-house just flung open, and the congregation issuing forth *en masse*. Is it any wonder if I remember no more? There I was, the chosen one of the Widow Boggs—the elder elect—the favored friend and admired associate of Mr. M'Phun, taking an airing on a summer's evening on the back of a drunken Irishman. Oh! the thought was horrible; and, certainly, the short and pithy epithets by which I was characterized in the crowd, neither improved my temper nor assuaged my wrath; and I feel bound to confess that my own language was neither serious nor becoming. Tim, however, cared little for all this, and pursued the even tenor of his way through the whole crowd, nor stopped till, having made half the circuit of the wall, he deposited me safe at my own door, adding, as he set me down, 'Oh! av you're as throublesome every evening, it's a wheelbarrow I'll be obleeged to bring for you.'

"The next day I obtained a short leave of absence, and, ere a fortnight expired, exchanged into the —th, preferring Halifax itself to the ridicule that awaited me in Londonderry."

CHAPTER XXX.

FRED POWER'S ADVENTURE IN PHILIPSTOWN.

THE lazy hours of the long summer day crept slowly over. The sea, unbroken by foam or ripple, shone like a broad blue mirror, reflecting here and there some fleecy patches of snow-white cloud as they stood unmoved in the sky. The good ship rocked to and fro with a heavy and lumbering motion; the cordage rattled; the bulkheads creaked; the sails flapped lazily against the masts; the very sea-gulls seemed to sleep as they rested on the long swell that bore them along; and everything in sea and sky bespoke the calm. No sailor trod the deck; no watch was stirring; the very tiller ropes were deserted; and, as they traversed backward and forward with every roll of the vessel, told that we had no steerage way, and lay a mere log upon the water.

I sat alone in the bow, and fell into a musing fit upon the past and the future. How happily for us is it ordained that, in the most stirring existences, there are

every here and there such little resting-spots of reflection, from which, as from some eminence, we look back upon the road we have been treading in life, and cast a wistful glance at the dark vista before us! When first we set out upon our worldly pilgrimage, these are, indeed, precious moments, when, with buoyant heart and spirit high, believing all things, trusting all things, our very youth comes back to us, reflected from every object we meet; and, like Narcissus, we are but worshiping our own image in the water. As we go on in life, the cares, the anxieties, and the business of the world, engross us more and more; and such moments become fewer and shorter. Many a bright dream has been dissolved, many a fairy vision replaced, by some dark reality; blighted hopes, false friendships, have gradually worn callous the heart once alive to every gentle feeling, and time begins to tell upon us; yet still, as the well-remembered melody to which we listened with delight in infancy brings to our mature age a touch of early years, so will the very association of these happy moments recur to us in our reverie, and make us young again in thought. Then it is that, as we look back upon our worldly career, we become convinced how truly is the child the father of the man, how frequently are the projects of our manhood the fruit of some boyish predilection; and that, in the emulative ardor that stirs the schoolboy's heart, we may read the *prestige* of that high daring that makes a hero of its possessor.

These moments, too, are scarcely more pleasurable than they are salutary to us. Disengaged, for the time, from every worldly anxiety, we pass in review before our own selves, and in the solitude of our own hearts are we judged. That still small voice of conscience, unheard and unlistened to amid the din and bustle of life, speaks audibly to us now; and, while chastened on one side by regrets, we are sustained on the other by some approving thought, and, with many a sorrow for the past, and many a promise for the future, we begin to feel "how good it is for us to be here."

The evening wore later; the red sun sank down upon the sea, growing larger and larger; the long line of mellow gold that sheeted along the distant horizon, grew first of a dark ruddy tinge, then paler and paler, till it became almost gray; a single star shone faintly in the east, and darkness soon set in. With night came the wind, for almost imperceptibly the sails swelled slowly out, a slight rustle at the bow followed, the ship lay gently over, and we were once more in motion. It struck four bells; some casual resemblance in the sound to the old pendulum that marked the hour at my uncle's house, startled me so that I actually knew not where I was. With lightning speed my once home rose up before me with its happy hearts; the old familiar faces were there; the gay laugh was in my ears; there sat my dear old uncle, as with bright eye and mellow voice he looked a very welcome to his guests; there Boyle; there Considine; there the grim-visaged portraits that graced the old walls, whose black oak wainscot stood in broad light and shadow, as the blazing turf fire shone upon it; there was my own place, now vacant; methought my uncle's eye was turned toward it, and that I heard him say, "My poor boy, I wonder where is he now!" My heart swelled; my chest heaved; the tears coursed slowly down my cheeks, as I asked myself, "Shall I ever see them more?" Oh! how little, how very little to us are the accustomed blessings of our life, till some change has robbed us of them: and how dear are they when lost to us. My uncle's dark foreboding that we should never meet again on earth came, for the first time, forcibly to my mind, and my heart was full to bursting. What could repay me for the agony of that moment, as I thought of him—my first, my best, my only friend—whom I had deserted? and how gladly would I have resigned my bright day-dawn of ambition to be once more beside his chair; to hear his voice; to see his smile; to feel his love for me! A loud laugh from the cabin roused me from my sad, depressing reverie; and, at the same instant, Mike's well-known voice informed me that the Captain was looking for me everywhere, as supper was on the table. Little as I felt disposed to join the party at such a moment, as I knew there was no escaping Power, I resolved to make the best of matters; so, after a few minutes, I followed Mickey down the companion, and entered the cabin.

The scene before me was certainly not calculated to perpetuate depressing thoughts. At the head of a rude old-fashioned table, upon which figured several black bottles, and various ill-looking drinking vessels of every shape and material, sat Fred Power; on his right was placed the Skipper; on his left, the Doctor; the bronzed, merry-looking, weather-beaten features of the one, contrasting ludicrously with the pale, ascetic, acute-looking expression of the other. Sparks, more than half drunk,

with the mark of a red-hot cigar upon nis nether lip, was lower down; while Major Monsoon, to preserve the symmetry of the party, had protruded his head, surmounted by a huge red nightcap, from the berth opposite, and held out his goblet to be replenished from the punch-bowl.

"Welcome, thrice welcome, thou man of Galway!" cried out Power, as he pointed to a seat, and pushed a wine-glass toward me. "Just in time, too, to pronounce upon a new brewery; taste that; a little more of the lemon you would say, perhaps? Well, I agree with you; rum and brandy; glenlivet and guava jelly; limes, green tea, and a slight suspicion of preserved ginger—nothing else, upon honor—and the most simple mixture for the cure, the radical cure, of blue devils and debt I know of; eh, Doctor? you advise it yourself, to be taken before bedtime; nothing inflammatory in it; nothing pugnacious; a mere circulation of the better juices and more genial spirits of the marly clay, without arousing any of the baser passions; whisky is the devil for that."

"I canna say that I dinna like whisky-toddy," said the Doctor; "in the cauld winter nights it's no sae bad."

"Ah! that's it," said Power; "there's the pull you Scotch have upon us poor Patlanders; cool, calculating, long-headed fellows, you only come up to the mark after fifteen tumblers; whereas we hot-brained devils, with a blood at 212 deg. of Fahrenheit and a high-pressure engine of good spirits always ready for an explosion, we go clean mad when tipsy; not but I am fully convinced that a mad Irishman is worth two sane people of any other country under heaven."

"If you mean by that insin—insin—sinuation to imply any disrespect to the English," stuttered out Sparks, "I am bound to say that I for one, and the Doctor, I am sure, for another—"

"Na, na," interrupted the Doctor, "ye mauna coont upon me; I'm no disposed to fecht ower our liquor."

"Then, Major Monsoon, I'm certain—"

"Are ye, faith?" said the Major, with a grin; "blessed are they who expect nothing—of which number you are not—for most decidedly you shall be disappointed."

"Never mind, Sparks, take the whole fight to your own proper self, and do battle like a man; and here I stand, ready at all arms to prove my position—that we drink better, sing better, court better, fight better, and make better punch than every John Bull from Berwick to the Land's End."

Sparks, however, who seemed not exactly sure how far his antagonist was disposed to quiz, relapsed into a half-tipsy expression of contemptuous silence, and sipped his liquor without reply.

"Yes," said Power, after a pause, "bad luck to it for whisky; it nearly got me broke once, and poor Tom O'Reilly of the 5th, too, the best-tempered fellow in the service; we were as near it as touch and go; and all for some confounded Loughrea spirits, that we believed to be perfectly innocent, and used to swill away freely, without suspicion of any kind."

"Let's hear the story," said I, "by all means."

"It's not a long one," said Power; "so I don't care if I tell it; and besides, if I make a clean breast of my own sins, I'll insist upon Monsoon's telling you afterward how he stocked his cellar in Cadiz; eh, Major? there's worse tipple than the King of Spain's sherry?"

"You shall judge for yourself, old boy," said Monsoon, good-humoredly; "and, as for the narrative, it is equally at your service. Of course, it goes no further. The Commander-in-Chief, long life to him! is a glorious fellow; but he has no more idea of a joke than the Archbishop of Canterbury, and it might chance to reach him."

"Recount, and fear not!" cried Power, "we are discreet as the worshipful company of apothecaries."

"But you forget you are to lead the way."

"Here goes, then," said the jolly Captain; "not that the story has any merit in it, but the moral is beautiful.

"Ireland, to be sure, is a beautiful country, but somehow it would prove a very dull one to be quartered in, if it were not that the people seem to have a natural taste for the army. From the belle of Merrion square down to the innkeeper's daughter in Tralee, the loveliest part of the creation seem to have a perfect appreciation of our high acquirements and advantages; and, in no other part of the globe, the Tonga Islands included, is a red coat more in favor. To be sure, they would be very ungrateful if it were not the case; for we, upon our sides, leave no stone unturned to make ourselves agreeable. We ride, drink, play, and make love to the ladies, from Fairhead to Killarney, in a way greatly calculated to render us popular; and, as far as making the time pass pleasantly, we are the boys for the 'greatest happiness' principle. I repeat it; we deserve our popularity. Which of us does not get head and ears in debt with garrison balls

and steeple-chases, picnics, regattas, and the thousand-and-one inventions to get rid of one's spare cash, so called for being so sparingly dealt out by our governors? Now and then, too, when all else fails, we take a newly-joined Ensign, and make him marry some pretty but penniless lass, in a country town, just to show the rest that we are not joking, but have serious ideas of matrimony, in the midst of all our flirtations. If it were all like this, the Green Isle would be a paradise; but, unluckily, every now and then, one is condemned to some infernal place, where there is neither a pretty face nor tight ankle; where the priest himself is not a good fellow; and long, ill-paved, straggling streets, filled, on market days, with booths of striped calico and soapy cheese, is the only promenade; and a ruinous barrack, with moldy walls and a tumbling chimney, the only quarters.

"In vain, on your return from your morning stroll or afternoon canter, you look on the chimney-piece for a shower of visiting cards and pink notes of invitation; in vain you ask your servant has any one called. Alas! your only visitor has been the gauger, to demand a party to assist in still-hunting, amid that interesting class of the population who, having nothing to eat, are engaged in devising drink, and care as much for the life of a redcoat as you do for that of a crow or a curlew. This may seem overdrawn; but I would ask you, were you ever for your sins quartered in that capital city of the Bog of Allen they call Philipstown? Oh, but it is a romantic spot! They tell us somewhere that much of the expression of the human face divine depends upon the objects which constantly surround us. Thus the inhabitants of mountain districts imbibe, as it were, a certain bold and daring character of expression from the scenery, very different from the placid and monotonous look of those who dwell in plains and valleys; and I can certainly credit the theory in this instance, for every man, woman, and child you meet has a brown, baked, scruffy, turf-like face, that fully satisfies you that, if Adam were formed of clay, the Philipstown people were worse treated, and only made of bog mold.

"Well, one fine morning, poor Tom and myself were marched off from Birr, where one might 'live and love forever,' to take up our quarters at this sweet spot. Little we knew of Philipstown, and, like my friend the Adjutant there, when he laid siege to Derry, we made our *entrée* with all the pomp we could muster, and though we had no band, our drums and fifes did duty for it; and we brushed along through turf-creels and wicker-baskets of new brogues that obstructed the street till we reached the barrack, the only testimony of admiration we met with being, I feel bound to admit, from a ragged urchin of ten years, who, with a wattle in his hand, imitated me as I marched along, and, when I cried halt, took his leave of us by dexterously fixing his thumb to the side of his nose and outstretching his fingers, as if thus to convey a very strong hint that we were not half so fine fellows as we thought ourselves. Well, four mortal summer months of hot sun and cloudless sky went over, and still we lingered in that vile village, the everlasting monotony of our days being marked by the same brief morning drill, the same blue-legged chicken dinner, the same smoky Loughrea whisky, and the same evening stroll along the canal bank to watch for the Dublin packet-boat, with its never-varying cargo of cattle-dealers, priests, and peelers on their way to the west country, as though the demand for such colonial productions in these parts was insatiable. This was pleasant, you will say; but what was to be done? We had nothing else. Now, nothing saps a man's temper like *ennui*. The cranky, peevish people one meets with would be excellent folk, if they only had something to do. As for us, I'll venture to say two men more disposed to go pleasantly down the current of life it were hard to meet with; and yet, such was the consequence of these confounded four months' sequestration from all other society, we became sour and cross-grained; everlastingly disputing about trifles, and continually arguing about matters which neither were interested in, nor, indeed, knew anything about. There were, it is true, few topics to discuss; newspapers we never saw; sporting there was none; but, then, the drill, the return of duty, the probable chances of our being ordered for service, were all daily subjects to be talked over, and usually with considerable asperity and bitterness. One point, however, always served us when hard pushed for a bone of contention, and which, begun by a mere accident at first, gradually increased to a sore and peevish subject, and finally led to the consequences which I have hinted at in the beginning. This was no less than the respective merits of our mutual servants; each everlastingly indulging in a tirade against the other for awkwardness, incivility, unhandiness — charges, I am bound to confess, most amply proved on either side.

"'Well, I am sure, O'Reilly, if you can stand that fellow,—it's no affair of mine, but such an ungainly savage I never met,' I would say.

"To which he would reply, 'Bad enough he is, certainly; but, by Jove! when I only think of your Hottentot, I feel grateful for what I've got.'

"Then ensued a discussion, with attack, rejoinder, charge, and recrimination, till we retired for the night, wearied with our exertions, and not a little ashamed of ourselves at bottom for our absurd warmth and excitement. In the morning the matter would be rigidly avoided by each party until some chance occasion had brought it on the *tapis*, when hostilities would be immediately renewed, and carried on with the same vigor, to end as before.

"In this agreeable state of matters we sat, one warm summer evening, before the mess-room, under the shade of a canvas awning, discussing, by way of refrigerant, our eighth tumbler of whisky punch. We had, as usual, been jarring away about everything under heaven. A lately arrived post-chaise, with an old, stiff-looking gentleman in a queue, had formed a kind of 'godsend' for debate, as to who he was, whither he was going, whether he really had intended to spend the night there, or that he only put up because the chaise was broken; each, as was customary, maintaining his own opinion with an obstinacy we have often since laughed at, though, at the time, we had few mirthful thoughts about the matter.

"As the debate waxed warm, O'Reilly asserted that he positively knew the individual in question to be a United Irishman, traveling with instructions from the French government, while I laughed him to scorn by swearing that he was the rector of Tyrrell's Pass; that I knew him well; and, moreover, that he was the worst preacher in Ireland. Singular enough it was, that all this while the disputed identity was himself standing coolly at the inn window, with his snuff-box in his hand, leisurely surveying us as we sat, appearing, at least, to take a very lively interest in our debate.

"'Come now,' said O'Reilly, 'there's only one way to conclude this, and make you pay for your obstinacy. What will you bet that he's the rector of Tyrrell's Pass?'

"'What odds will you take that he's Wolfe Tone?' inquired I, sneeringly.

"'Five to one against the rector,' said he exultingly.

"'An elephant's molar to a toothpick against Wolfe Tone,' cried I.

"'Ten pounds even that I'm nearer the mark than you,' said Tom, with a smash of his fist upon the table.

"'Done,' said I—'done. But how are we to decide the wager?'

"'That's soon done,' said he. At the same instant he sprang to his legs, and called out, 'Pat—I say, Pat—I want you to present my respects to—'

"'No, no, I bar that—no *ex parte* statements. Here, Jem, do you simply tell that—'

"'That fellow can't deliver a message. Do come here, Pat. Just beg of—'

"'He'll blunder it, the confounded fool; so, Jem, do you go?'

"The two individuals thus addressed were just in the act of conveying a tray of glasses and a spiced round of beef for supper into the mess-room; and, as I may remark that they fully entered into the feelings of jealousy their respective masters professed, each eyed the other with a look of very unequivocal dislike.

"'Arrah! you needn't be pushing me that way,' said Pat, 'an' the round o' beef in my hands.'

"'Devil's luck to ye! it's the glasses you'll be breaking with your awkward elbow.'

"'Then why don't you leave the way? ain't I your suparior?'

"'Ain't I the Captain's own man?'

"'Ay, and if you war. Don't I belong to his betters? Isn't my master the two Liftenants?'

"This, strange as it may sound, was so far true, as I held a commission in an African corps, with my Lieutenancy in the 5th.

"'Be-gorra, av he was six——there now, you done it!'

"At the same moment a tremendous crash took place, and the large dish fell in a thousand pieces on the pavement, while the spiced round rolled pensively down the yard.

"Scarcely was the noise heard, when, with one vigorous kick, the tray of glasses was sent spinning into the air, and the next moment the disputants were engaged in bloody battle. It was at this moment that our attention was first drawn toward them, and I need not say with what feelings of interest we looked on.

"'Hit him, Pat—there, Jem, under the guard—that's it—go in—well done, left hand—by Jove, that was a facer—his eye's closed—he's down—not a bit of it—how do you like that?—unfair, unfair—no such thing—I say it was—not at all—I deny it.'

"By this time we had approached the

combatants, each man patting his own fellow on the back, and encouraging him by the most lavish promises. Now it was, but in what way I never could exactly tell, that I threw out my right hand to stop a blow that I saw coming rather too near me, when, by some unhappy mischance, my doubled fist lighted upon Tom O'Reilly's nose. Before I could express my sincere regret for the accident, the blow was returned with double force, and the next moment we were at it harder than the others. After five minutes' sharp work, we both stopped for breath, and incontinently burst out a laughing. There was Tom, with a nose as large as three; a huge cheek on one side, and the whole head swinging round like a harlequin's; while I, with one eye closed, and the other like a half-shut cockle-shell, looked scarcely less rueful. We had not much time for mirth, for at the same instant, a sharp, full voice called out close beside us:

"'To your quarters, sirs. I put you both under arrest, from which you are not to be released until the sentence of a court-martial decide if conduct such as this becomes officers and gentlemen.'

"I looked round, and saw the old fellow in the queue.

"'Wolfe Tone, by all that's unlucky!' said I, with an attempt at a smile.

"'The Rector of Tyrrell's Pass,' cried out Tom, with a snuffle; 'the worst preacher in Ireland—eh, Fred?'

"We had not much time for further commentaries upon our friend, for he at once opened his frock coat, and displayed to our horrified gaze the uniform of a general officer.

"'Yes, sir, General Johnston, if you will allow me to present him to your acquaintance: and now, guard, turn out.'

"In a few minutes more the orders were issued, and poor Tom and myself found ourselves fast confined to our quarters, with a sentinel at the door, and the pleasant prospect that, in the space of about ten days, we should be broke, and dismissed the service; which verdict, as the general order would say, the Commander of the Forces has been graciously pleased to approve.

"However, when morning came, the old General, who was really a trump, inquired a little further into the matter, saw it was partly accidental, and, after a severe reprimand, and a caution about Loughrea whisky after the sixth tumbler, released us from arrest, and forgave the whole affair."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE VOYAGE.

UGH! what a miserable thing is a voyage! Here we are now eight days at sea; the eternal sameness of all around growing every hour less supportable. Sea and sky are beautiful things when seen from the dark woods and waving meadows on shore; but their picturesque effect is sadly marred from want of contrast; besides that, the "*toujours* pork," with crystals of salt as long as your wife's fingers; the potatoes, that seemed varnished in French polish; the tea, seasoned with geological specimens from the basin of London, yclept maple sugar; and the butter—ye gods!—the butter! But why enumerate these smaller features of discomfort, and omit the more glaring ones? The utter selfishness which blue water suggests, as inevitably as the cold fit follows the ague; the good fellow that shares his knapsack or his last guinea on land, here forages out the best corner to hang his hammock; jockeys you into a comfortless crib, where the uncalked deck-butt filters every rain from heaven on your head; he votes you the corner at dinner, not only that he may place you with your back to the thorough draft of the gangway ladder, but that he may eat, drink, and lie down, before you have even begun to feel the qualmishness that the dinner of a troop ship is well calculated to suggest; cuts his pencil with your best razor; wears your shirts, as washing is scarce; and winds up all by having a good story of you every evening for the edification of the other "sharp gentlemen," who, being too wide awake to be humbugged themselves, enjoy his success prodigiously. This, gentle reader, is neither confession nor avowal of mine. The passage I have here presented to you I have taken from the journal of my brother officer, Mr. Sparks, who, when not otherwise occupied, usually employed his time in committing to paper his thoughts upon men, manners, and things at sea in general; though, sooth to say, his was not an idle life; being voted by unanimous consent "a junior," he was condemned to offices that the veriest fag in Eton or Harrow had rebelled against. In the morning, under the pseudonym of *Mrs.* Sparks, he presided at breakfast, having previously made tea, coffee, and chocolate for the whole cabin, besides boiling about twenty eggs at various degrees of hardness; he was under heavy recognizances to provide a plate of buttered toast of very alarming

magnitude, fried ham, kidneys, etc., to no end. Later on, when others sauntered about the deck, vainly endeavoring to fix their attention upon a novel or a review, the poor Cornet might be seen with a white apron tucked gracefully round his spare proportions, whipping eggs for pancakes, or with up-turned shirt-sleeves fashioning dough for a pudding. As the day waned, the cook's galley became his haunt, where, exposed to a roasting fire, he inspected the details of a *cuisine*, for which, whatever his demerits, he was sure of an ample remuneration in abuse at dinner. Then came the dinner itself, that dread ordeal, where nothing was praised, and everything censured. This was followed by the punch-making, where the tastes of six different and differing individuals were to be exclusively consulted in the self-same beverage; and lastly, the supper at night, when Sparkie, as he was familiarly called, toward evening, grown quite exhausted, became the subject of unmitigated wrath and most unmeasured reprobation.

"I say, Sparks, it's getting late; the spatch-cock, old boy; don't be slumbering."

"By-the-by, Sparkie, what a mess you made of that pea-soup to-day! By Jove! I never felt so ill in my life."

"Na, na, it was na the soup; it was something he pit in the punch, that's burning me ever since I tuk it. Ou, man, but ye're an awfu' creture wi' vittals."

"He'll improve, Doctor, he'll improve; don't discourage him; the boy's young; be alive now, there; where's the toast—confound you—where's the toast?"

"There, Sparks, you like a drumstick, I know—mustn't muzzle the ox, eh? Scripture for you, old boy; eat away; hang the expense; hand him over the jug—empty—eh, Charley? Come, Sparkie, bear a hand, the liquor's out."

"But won't you let me eat?"

"Eat! heavens, what a fellow for eating! By George, such an appetite is clean against the articles of war! Come, man, it's drink we're thinking of; there's the rum, sugar, limes; see to the hot water. Well, Skipper, how are we getting on?"

"Lying our course; eight knots off the log; pass the rum. Why, Mister Sparks?"

"Eh, Sparks, what's this?"

"Sparks, my man, confound it." And then, *omnes* chorusing, "Sparks!" in every key of the gamut, the luckless fellow would be obliged to jump up from his meager fare, and set to work at a fresh brewage of punch for the others. The bowl and the glasses filled, by some little management on Power's part our friend the Cornet would be *drawn out*, as the phrase is, into some confession of his early years, which seemed to have been exclusively spent in love-making—devotion to the fair being as integral a portion of his character as tippling was of the worthy Major's.

Like most men who pass their lives in over-studious efforts to please—however ungallant the confession be—the amiable Sparks had had little success; his love, if not, as it generally happened, totally unrequited, was invariably the source of some awkward catastrophe, there being no imaginable error he had not, at some time or other, fallen into, nor any conceivable mischance to which he had not been exposed. Inconsolable widows, attached wives, fond mothers, newly-married brides, engaged young ladies, were, by some *contretemps*, continually the subject of his attachments; and the least mishap which followed the avowal of his passion was to be heartily laughed at, and obliged to leave the neighborhood. Duels, apologies, actions at law, compensations, etc., were of every-day occurrence; and to such an extent, too, that any man blessed with a smaller bump upon the occiput, would eventually have long since abandoned the pursuit, and taken to some less expensive pleasure; but poor Sparks, in the true spirit of a martyr, only gloried the more, the more he suffered; and, like the worthy man who continued to purchase tickets in the lottery for thirty years, with nothing but a succession of blanks, he ever imagined that Fortune was only trying his patience, and had some cool forty thousand pounds of happiness waiting his perseverance in the end. Whether this prize ever did turn up in the course of years, I am unable to say; but, certainly, up to the period of his history I now speak of, all had been as gloomy and unrequiting as need be. Power, who knew something of every man's adventures, was aware of so much of poor Sparks's career, and usually contrived to lay a trap for a confession that generally served to amuse us during an evening, as much, I acknowledge, from the manner of the recital, as anything contained in the story. There was a species of serious matter-of-fact simplicity in his detail of the most ridiculous scenes that left you convinced that his bearing upon the affair in question must have greatly heightened the absurdity; nothing, however comic or droll in itself, ever exciting in him the least approach to a smile. He sat with his

large light-blue eyes, light hair, long upper lip, and retreating chin, lisping out an account of an adventure, with a look of Liston about him that was inconceivably amusing.

"Come, Sparks," said Power, "I claim a promise you made me the other night, on condition we let you off making the oyster-patties at ten o'clock; you can't forget what I mean." Here the Captain knowingly touched the tip of his ear, at which signal the Cornet colored slightly, and drank off his wine in a hurried, confused way. "He promised to tell us, Major, how he lost the tip of his left ear. I have myself heard hints of the circumstance, but would much rather hear Sparks's own version of it."

"Another love story," said the Doctor, with a grin, "I'll be bound."

"Shot off in a duel?" said I, inquiringly; "close work, too."

"No such thing," replied Power; "but Sparks will enlighten you. It is, without exception, the most touching and beautiful thing I ever heard; as a simple story, it beats the 'Vicar of Wakefield' to sticks."

"You don't say so?" said poor Sparks, blushing.

"Ay, that I do, and maintain it too. I'd rather be the hero of that little adventure, and be able to recount it as you do—for, mark me, that's no small part of the effect—than I'd be full colonel of the regiment. Well, I am sure I always thought it affecting; but, somehow, my dear friend, you don't know your powers; you have that within you would make the fortune of half the periodicals going. Ask Monsoon or O'Malley there if I did not say so at breakfast, when you were grilling the old hen—which, by-the-by, let me remark, was not one of your *chefs-d'œuvre*."

"A tougher beastie I never put a tooth in."

"But the story; the story," said I.

"Yes," said Power, with a tone of command, "the story, Sparks."

"Well, if you really think it worth telling, as I have always felt it a very remarkable incident, here goes."

CHAPTER XXXII.

MR. SPARKS'S STORY.

"I SAT at breakfast one beautiful morning at the Goat Inn at Barmouth, looking out of a window upon the lovely vale of Barmouth, with its tall trees and brown trout-stream struggling through the woods, then turning to take a view of the calm sea, that, speckled over with white-sailed fishing-boats, stretched away in the distance. The eggs were fresh; the trout newly caught; the cream delicious; before me lay the *Plwdwddlwn Advertiser*, which, among the fashionable arrivals at the seaside, set forth Mr. Sparks, nephew of Sir Toby Sparks, of Manchester,—a paragraph, by the way, I always inserted. The English are naturally an aristocratic people, and set a due value upon a title."

"A very just observation," remarked Power, seriously, while Sparks continued.

"However, as far as any result from the announcement, I might as well have spared myself the trouble, for not a single person called; not one solitary invitation to dinner; not a pic-nic; not a breakfast; no, nor even a tea-party was heard of. Barmouth, at the time I speak of, was just in that transition state at which the caterpillar may be imagined, when, having abandoned his reptile habits, he still has not succeeded in becoming a butterfly. In fact, it had ceased to be a fishing-village, but had not arrived at the dignity of a watering-place. Now, I know nothing as bad as this. You have not, on one hand, the quiet retirement of a little peaceful hamlet, with its humble dwellings and cheap pleasures, nor have you the gay and animated tableau of fashion in miniature on the other; but you have noise, din, bustle, confusion, beautiful scenery, and lovely points of view, marred and ruined by vulgar associations. Every bold rock and jutting promontory has its citizen occupants; every sandy cove or tide-washed bay has its myriads of squalling babes and red baize-clad bathing-women, those veritable descendants of the nymphs of old. Pink parasols, donkey-carts, baskets of bread-and-butter, reticules, guides to Barmouth, specimens of ore, fragments of gypsum, meet you at every step, and destroy every illusion of the picturesque.

"'I shall leave this,' thought I. 'My dreams, my long-cherished dreams of romantic walks upon the sea-shore, of evening strolls by moonlight, through dell and dingle, are reduced to a short promenade through an alley of bathing-boxes, amid a screaming population of nursery-maids and sick children, with a thorough-bass of "Fresh shrimps!" discordant enough to frighten the very fish from the shores. There is no peace, no quiet, no romance, no poetry, no love.' Alas! this most of all was wanting; for, after all,

it which lights up the heart, save
e of a mutual attachment? what
fair stream of life, save the bright
arm affection? what—"
word," said Power, "it is the su-
the punch-bowl of our existence.
parks; push on."
as not long in making up my mind.
for my bill; I packed my clothes;
ed post-horses; I was ready to
me item in the bill alone detained
he frequent occurrence of the enig-
word 'crw' following my servant's
emanded an explanation, which I
he act of receiving, when a chaise-
r drove rapidly up to the house.
oment the blinds were drawn up,
h a head appeared at the window!
pause for one moment to drink in
embrance of that lovely being;
ere heaven's own blue seemed con-
d, were shaded by long, deep
f the darkest brown; a brow fair,
nd expansive, at each side of which
f dark-brown hair waved half in
, half in loose falling bands, shad-
ier pale and downy cheek, where
t rosebud tinge seemed lingering;
htly parted, as, though to speak,
the features all the play of ani-
which completed this intellectual
r, and made up—"
at I should say was a devilish pret-
' interrupted Power.
k the widow against her at long
y day," murmured the Adjutant.
was an angel! an angel!" cried
with enthusiasm.
was the widow, if you go to that,"
Adjutant, hastily.
d so is Matilda Dalrymple," said
with a sly look at me. "We are
rable men—eh, Charley?"
ahead with the story," said the
; "I'm beginning to feel an inter-
."
abella,' said a man's voice, as a
ell-dressed personage assisted her
t—'Isabella, love, you must take a
t here before we proceed farther.'
think she had better, sir,' said a
ly-looking woman, with a plaid
d a black bonnet.
y disappeared within the house,
was left alone. The bright dream
ed; she was there no longer; but
eart her image lived, and I almost
was before me. I thought I heard
ice; I saw her move; my limbs
d; my hands tingled; I rang the
ered my trunks back again to No.
s I sank upon the sofa, murmured
to myself, 'This is indeed love at first sight.'"

"How devilish sudden it was," said the Skipper.

"Exactly like camp-fever," responded the Doctor. "One moment ye are vara well; the next ye are seized wi' a kind of shivering; then comes a kind of mandering, dandering, traveling a'overness."

"D— the camp-fever," interrupted Power.

"Well, as I observed, I fell in love; and here let me take the opportunity of observing that all that we are in the habit of hearing about single or only attachments is mere nonsense. No man is so capable of feeling deeply as he who is in the daily practice of it. Love, like everything else in this world, demands a species of cultivation. The mere tyro in an affair of the heart thinks he has exhausted all its pleasures and pains; but only he who has made it his daily study for years, familiarizing his mind with every phase of the passion, can properly or adequately appreciate it. Thus, the more you love, the better you love; the more frequently has your heart yielded—"

"It's vara like the mucous membrane," said the Doctor.

"I'll break your neck with the decanter if you interrupt him again!" exclaimed Power.

"For days I scarcely ever left the house," resumed Sparks, "watching to catch one glance of the lovely Isabella. My farthest excursion was to the little garden of the inn, where I used to set every imaginable species of snare, in the event of her venturing to walk there. One day I would leave a volume of poetry; another, a copy of Paul and Virginia with a marked page; sometimes my guitar, with a broad, blue ribbon, would hang pensively from a tree; but, alas! all in vain; she never appeared. At length, I took courage to ask the waiter about her. For some minutes he could not comprehend what I meant; but, at last, discovering my object, he cried out, 'Oh! No. 8, sir; it is No. 8 you mean.'

"'It may be,' said I. 'What of her, then?'

"'Oh, sir, she's gone these three days.'

"'Gone!' said I, with a groan.

"'Yes, sir; she left this early on Tuesday with the same old gentleman and the old woman in a chaise-and-four. They ordered horses at Dolgelly to meet them; but I don't know which road they took afterward.'

"I fell back on my chair unable to speak. Here was I enacting Romeo for

three mortal days to a mere company of Welsh waiters and chambermaids, sighing, serenading, reciting, attitudinizing, rose-plucking, soliloquizing, half-suiciding, and all for the edification of a set of savages, with about as much civilization as their own goats.

"'The bill,' cried I, in a voice of thunder; 'my bill this instant.'

"I had been imposed upon shamefully; grossly imposed upon, and would not remain another hour in the house. Such were my feelings at least, and so thinking, I sent for my servant, abused him for not having my clothes ready packed; he replied; I reiterated; and, as my temper mounted, vented every imaginable epithet upon his head, and concluded by paying him his wages and sending him about his business. In one hour more I was upon the road.

"'What road, sir?' said the postilion, as he mounted into the saddle.

"'To the devil, if you please,' said I, throwing myself back in the carriage.

"'Very well, sir,' replied the boy, putting spurs to his horse.

"That evening I arrived in Bedgellert.

"The little humble inn of Bedgellert, with its thatched roof and earthen floor, was a most welcome sight to me, after eleven hours' traveling on a broiling July day. Behind the very house itself rose the mighty Snowdon, towering high above the other mountains, whose lofty peaks were lost amid the clouds; before me was the narrow valley—"

"Wake me up when he's under way again," said the skipper, yawning fearfully.

"Go on, Sparks," said Power, encouragingly; "I was never more interested in my life; eh, O'Malley?"

"Quite thrilling," responded I, and Sparks resumed:

"Three weeks did I loiter about that sweet spot, my mind filled with images of the past and dreams of the future, my fishing-rod my only companion; not, indeed, that I ever caught anything; for, somehow, my tackle was always getting foul of some willow tree or water-lily, and, at last, I gave up even the pretense of whipping the streams. Well, one day—I remember it as well as though it were but yesterday—it was the 4th of August—I had set off upon an excursion to Llanberris. I had crossed Snowdon early, and reached the little lake on the opposite side by breakfast time. There I sat down near the ruined tower of Dolbadern, and, opening my knapsack, made a hearty meal. I have ever been a day-dreamer; and there are few things I like better than to lie, upon some hot and sunny day, in the tall grass beneath the shade of some deep boughs, with running water murmuring near, hearing the summer bee buzzing monotonously, and in the distance, the clear, sharp tinkle of the sheep-bell. In such a place, at such a time, one's fancy strays playfully, like some happy child, and none but pleasant thoughts present themselves. Fatigued by my long walk, and overcome by heat, I fell asleep. How long I lay there I cannot tell, but the deep shadows were half way down the tall mountain when I awoke. A sound had startled me; I thought I heard a voice speaking close to me. I looked up, and for some seconds I could not believe that I was not dreaming. Beside me, within a few paces, stood Isabella, the beautiful vision that I had seen at Barmouth, but far, a thousand times, more beautiful. She was dressed in something like a peasant's dress, and wore the round hat which, in Wales at least, seems to suit the character of the female face so well; her long and waving ringlets fell carelessly upon her shoulders, and her cheek flushed from walking. Before I had a moment's notice to recover my roving thought, she spoke: her voice was full and round, but soft and thrilling, as she said,

"'I beg pardon, sir, for having disturbed you unconsciously; but, having done so, may I request you will assist me to fill this pitcher with water?'

"She pointed at the same time to a small stream which trickled down a fissure in the rock, and formed a little well of clear water beneath. I bowed deeply, and murmuring something—I know not what—took the pitcher from her hand, and scaling the rocky cliff, mounted to the clear source above, where, having filled the vessel, I descended. When I reached the ground beneath, I discovered that she was joined by another person, whom, in an instant, I recognized to be the old gentleman I had seen with her at Barmouth, and who in the most courteous manner apologized for the trouble I had been caused, and informed me that a party of his friends were enjoying a little picnic quite near, and invited me to make one of them.

"I need not say that I accepted the invitation, nor that with delight I seized the opportunity of forming an acquaintance with Isabella, who, I must confess, upon her part, showed no disinclination to the prospect of my joining the party.

"After a few minutes' walking, we came to a small rocky point which projected for some distance into the lake, and offered a

view for several miles of the vale of Llanberris. Upon this lovely spot we found the party assembled; they consisted of about fourteen or fifteen persons, all busily engaged in the arrangement of a very excellent cold dinner, each individual having some peculiar province allotted to him or her, to be performed by their own hands, Thus, one elderly gentleman was whipping cream under a chestnut-tree, while a very fashionably-dressed young man was washing radishes in the lake; an old lady with spectacles was frying salmon over a wood fire, opposite to a short, pursy man with a bald head and drab shorts, deep in the mystery of a chicken salad, from which he never lifted his eyes, when I came up. It was thus I found how the fair Isabella's lot had been cast, as a drawer of water; she, with the others, contributing her share of exertion for the common good. The old gentleman who accompanied her seemed the only unoccupied person, and appeared to be regarded as the ruler of the feast; at least, they all called him General, and implicitly followed every suggestion he threw out. He was a man of a certain grave and quiet manner, blended with a degree of mild good-nature and courtesy, that struck me much at first, and gained greatly on me, even in the few minutes I conversed with him as we came along. Just before he presented me to his friends, he gently touched my arm, and, drawing me aside, whispered in my ear,

"'Don't be surprised at anything you may hear to-day here; for I must inform you this is a kind of club, as I may call it, where every one assumes a certain character, and is bound to sustain it under a penalty. We have these little meetings every now and then; and, as strangers are never present, I feel some explanation necessary, that you may be able to enjoy the thing;—you understand?'

"'Oh, perfectly,' said I, overjoyed at the novelty of the scene, and anticipating much pleasure from my chance meeting with such very original characters.

"'Mr. Sparks, Mrs. Winterbottom. Allow me to present Mr. Sparks?'

"'Any news from Batavia, young gentleman?' said the sallow old lady addressed. 'How is coffee!'

"'The General passed on, introducing me rapidly as he went.

"'Mr. Doolittle, Mr. Sparks.'

"'Ah, how do you do, old boy?' said Mr. Doolittle; 'sit down beside me. We have forty thousand acres of pickled cabbage spoiling for want of a little vinegar.'

"'Fie, fie, Mr. Doolittle,' said the General, and passed on to another.

"'Mr. Sparks, Captain Crosstree.'

"'Ah, Sparks, Sparks! son of old Blazes! ha, ha, ha!" and the Captain fell back into an immoderate fit of laughter.

"'*Le Roi est servi*,' said the thin, meager figure in nankeens, bowing, cap in hand, before the General; and, accordingly, we all assumed our places upon the grass.

"'Say it again! say it again! and I'll plunge this dagger in your heart!' said a hollow voice, tremulous with agitation and rage, close beside me. I turned my head, and saw an old gentleman, with a wart on his nose, sitting opposite a meat pie, which he was contemplating with a look of fiery indignation. Before I could witness the sequel of the scene, I felt a soft hand pressed upon mine. I turned. It was Isabella herself, who, looking at me with an expression I shall never forget, said:

"'Don't mind poor Faddy; he never hurts any one.'

"Meanwhile the business of dinner went on rapidly. The servants, of whom enormous numbers were now present, ran hither and thither; and duck, ham, pigeon-pie, cold veal, apple tarts, cheese, pickled salmon, melon and rice pudding, flourished on every side. As for me, whatever I might have gleaned from the conversation around, under other circumstances, I was too much occupied with Isabella to think of any one else. My suit—for such it was—progressed rapidly. There was evidently something favorable in the circumstances we last met under; for her manner had all the warmth and cordiality of old friendship. It is true that, more than once, I caught the General's eye fixed upon us, with anything but an expression of pleasure, and I thought that Isabella blushed and seemed confused also. 'What care I?' however, was my reflection; 'my views are honorable; and the nephew and heir of Sir Toby Sparks—' Just in the very act of making this reflection, the old man in the shorts hit me in the eye with a roasted apple, calling out at the moment,

"'When did you join, thou child of the pale faces?'

"'Mr. Murdocks!' cried the General, in a voice of thunder, and the little man hung down his head, and spoke not.

"'A word with you, young gentleman,' said a fat old lady, pinching my arm above the elbow.

"'Never mind her,' said Isabella, smil-

ing; 'poor dear old Dorking, she thinks she's an hour-glass. How droll, isn't it?'

"'Young man, have you any feelings of humanity?' inquired the old lady, with tears in her eyes as she spoke; 'will you—dare you assist a fellow-creature under my sad circumstances?'

"'What can I do for you, madam?' said I, really feeling for her distress.

"'Just, like a good dear soul, just turn me up, for I'm nearly run out.'

"Isabella burst out a-laughing at the strange request—an excess which, I confess, I was unable myself to repress; upon which the old lady, putting on a frown of the most ominous blackness, said:

"'You may laugh, madam; but first, before you ridicule the misfortunes of others, ask yourself are you, too, free from infirmity? When did you see the ace of spades, madam? answer me that.'

"Isabella became suddenly pale as death, her very lips blanched, and her voice, almost inaudible, muttered:

"'Am I, then, deceived? Is not this he?' So saying, she placed her hand upon my shoulder.

"'That the ace of spades!' exclaimed the old lady, with a sneer—'that the ace of spades!'

"'Are you, or are you not, sir?' said Isabella, fixing her deep and languid eyes upon me. 'Answer, as you are honest; are you the ace of spades?'

"'He is the King of Tuscarora. Look at his war paint!' cried an elderly gentleman, putting a streak of mustard across my nose and cheek.

"'Then am I deceived,' said Isabella. And, flying at me, she plucked a handful of hair out of my whiskers.

"'Cuckoo, cuckoo!' shouted one; 'Bow, wow, wow!' roared another; 'Phiz!' went a third; and, in an instant, such a scene of commotion and riot ensued! Plates, dishes, knives, forks, and decanters flew right and left; every one pitched into his neighbor with the most fearful cries, and hell itself seemed broke loose. The hour-glass and the Moulah of Oude had got me down, and were pummeling me to death, when a short, thickset man came on all fours slap down upon them, shouting out, 'Way, make way for the Royal Bengal tiger!' at which they both fled like lightning, leaving me to the encounter single-handed. Fortunately, however, this was not of very long duration, for some well-disposed Christians pulled him from off me; not, however, before he had seized me in his grasp, and bitten off a portion of my right ear, leaving me, as you see, thus mutilated for the rest of my days."

"What an extraordinary club!" broke in the Doctor.

"Club! sir, club! it was a lunatic asylum. The General was no other than the famous Doctor Andrew Moorville, that had the great madhouse at Bangor, and who was in the habit of giving his patients every now and then a kind of country party; it being one remarkable feature of their malady that, when one takes to his peculiar flight, whatever it be, the others immediately take the hint, and go off at score. Hence my agreeable adventure; the Bengal tiger being a Liverpool merchant, and the most vivacious madman in England; while the hour-glass and the Moulah were both on an experimental tour to see whether they should not be pronounced totally incurable for life."

"And Isabella?" inquired Power.

"Ah! poor Isabella had been driven mad by a card-playing aunt at Bath, and was, in fact, the most hopeless case there. The last words I heard her speak confirmed my mournful impression of her case:

"'Yes,' said she, as they removed her to her carriage, 'I must, indeed, have but weak intellects, when I could have taken the nephew of a Manchester cotton-spinner, with a face like a printed calico, for a trump card, and the best in the pack!'"

Poor Sparks uttered these last words with a faltering accent, and, finishing his glass at one draught, withdrew without wishing us good-night.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE SKIPPER.

In such like gossipings passed our days away, for our voyage itself had nothing of adventure or incident to break its dull monotony; save some few hours of calm, we had been steadily following our seaward track with a fair breeze, and the long pennant pointed ever to the land where our ardent expectations were hurrying before it.

The latest accounts which had reached us from the Peninsula, told that our regiment was almost daily engaged; and we burned with impatience to share with the others the glory they were reaping. Power, who had seen service, felt less on this score than we who had not "fleshed our maiden swords;" but even he sometimes gave way; and, when the wind fell,

toward sunset, he would break out into some exclamation of discontent, half fearing we should be too late; "for," said he, "if we go on in this way, the regiment will be relieved, and ordered home before we reach it."

"Never fear, my boys, you'll have enough of it. Both sides like the work too well to give in; they've got a capital ground, and plenty of spare time," said the Major.

"Only to think," cried Power, "that we should be lounging away our idle hours, when these gallant fellows are in the saddle, late and early. It is too bad; eh, O'Malley? you'll not be pleased to go back with the polish on your sabre? What will Lucy Dashwood say?"

This was the first allusion Power had ever made to her, and I became red to the very forehead.

"By-the-by," added he, "I have a letter for Hammersley, which should rather have been intrusted to your keeping."

At these words I felt cold as death, while he continued:

"Poor fellow! certainly he is most desperately smitten; for, mark me, when a man at his age takes the malady, it is forty times as severe as with a younger fellow, like you. But then, to be sure, he began at the wrong end in the matter; why commence with papa? When a man has his own consent for liking a girl, he must be a contemptible fellow if he can't get her; and, as to anything else being wanting, I don't understand it. But the moment you begin by influencing the heads of the house, good-by to your chances with the dear thing herself, if she have any spirit whatever. It is, in fact, calling on her to surrender without the honors of war; and what girl would stand that?"

"It's vara true," said the Doctor; "there's a strong speerit of opposition in the sex, from physiological causes."

"Curse your physiology, old Galen: what you call opposition, is that piquant resistance to oppression that makes half the charm of the sex. It is with them—with reverence be it spoken—as with horses; the dull, heavy-shouldered ones, that bore away with the bit in their teeth, never caring whether you are pulling to the right or to the left, are worth nothing; the real luxury is in the management of your arching necked curvetter, springing from side to side with every motion of your wrist, madly bounding at restraint; yet, to the practiced hand, held in check with a silk thread; eh, Skipper—am I not right?"

"Well, I can't say I've had much to do with horse-beasts, but I believe you're not far wrong. The lively craft that answers the helm quick, goes round well in stays, luffs up close within a point or two, when you want her, is always a good sea-boat, even though she pitches and rolls a bit; but the heavy lugger that never knows whether your helm is up or down, whether she's off the wind or on it, is only fit for firewood—you can do nothing with a ship or a woman, if she hasn't got steerage way on her."

"Come, Skipper, we've all been telling our stories; let us hear one of yours?"

"My yarn won't come so well after your sky-scrapers of love and courting, and all all that. But, if you like to hear what happened to me once, I have no objection to tell you.

"I often think how little we know what's going to happen to us any minute of our lives. To-day we have the breeze fair in our favor; we are going seven knots, studding-sails set, smooth water, and plenty of sea-room; to-morrow the wind freshens to half a gale, the sea gets up, a rocky coast is seen from the lee bow, and maybe—to add to all—we spring a-leak forward; but then, after all, bad as it looks, mayhap, we rub through even this, and, with the next day, the prospect is as bright and cheering as ever. You'll perhaps ask me what has all this moralizing to do with women and ships at sea? Nothing at all with them, except that I was going to say, that when matters looked worst, very often the best is in store for us, and we should never say strike when there is a timber together. Now for my story:

"It's about four years ago, I was strolling one evening down the side of the harbor at Cove, with my hands in my pockets, having nothing to do, nor no prospect of it, for my last ship had been wrecked off the Bermudas, and nearly all the crew lost; and, somehow, when a man is in misfortune, the underwriters won't have him at no price. Well, there I was, looking about me at the craft that lay on every side waiting for a fair wind to run down channel. All was active and busy; every one getting his vessel ship-shape and tidy, tarring, painting, mending sails, stretching new bunting, and getting in sea-store; boats were plying on every side, signals flying, guns firing from the men-of-war, and everything was lively as might be; all but me. There I was, like an old water-logged timber-ship, never moving a spar, but looking for all the world as though I were a settling fast to go down stern fore-

most; maybe as how I had no objection to that same; but that's neither here nor there. Well, I sat down on the fluke of an anchor, and began a thinking if it wasn't better to go before the mast than live on that way. Just before me, where I sat down, there was an old schooner that lay moored in the same place for as long as I could remember: she was there when I was a boy, and never looked a bit the fresher nor newer as long as I recollected; her old bluff bows, her high poop, her round stern, her flush deck, all Dutch-like, I knew them well, and many a time I delighted to think what queer kind of a chap he was that first set her on the stocks, and pondered in what trade she ever could have been. All the sailors about the port used to call her Noah's Ark, and swear she was the identical craft that he stowed away all the wild beasts in during the rainy season. Be that as it might, since I fell into misfortune I got to feel a liking for the old schooner; she was like an old friend; she never changed to me, fair weather or foul; there she was, just the same as thirty years before, when all the world were forgetting and steering wide away from me. Every morning I used to go down to the harbor and have a look at her, just to see that all was right, and nothing stirred; and, if it blew very hard at night, I'd get up and go down to look how she weathered it, just as if I was at sea in her. Now and then I'd get some of the watermen to row me aboard of her, and leave me there for a few hours; when I used to be quite happy walking the deck, holding the old worm-eaten wheel, looking out ahead, and going down below, just as though I was in command of her. Day after day this habit grew on me, and at last my whole life was spent in watching her and looking after her,—there was something so much alike in our fortunes, that I always thought of her. Like myself, she had had her day of life and activity; we had both braved the storm and the breeze; her shattered bulwarks and worn cutwater attested that she had, like myself, not escaped her calamities. We both had survived our dangers, to be neglected and forgotten, and to lie rotting on the stream of life till the crumbling hand of Time should break us up, timber by timber. Is it any wonder if I loved the old craft? nor if, by any chance, the idle boys would venture aboard of her to play and amuse themselves, that I hallooed them away? or, when a newly-arrived ship, not caring for the old boat, would run foul of her, and carry away some spar or piece of running rigging, I would suddenly call out to them to sheer off and not damage us? By degrees, they came all to notice this; and I found that they thought me out of my senses, and many a trick was played off upon old Noah, for that was the name the sailors gave me.

"Well, this evening, as I was saying, I sat upon the fluke of the anchor, waiting for a chance boat to put me aboard. It was past sunset, the tide was ebbing, and the old craft was surging to the fast current that ran by with a short, impatient jerk, as though she were well weary, and wished to be at rest; her loose stays creaked mournfully, and, as she yawed over, the sea ran from many a breach in her worn sides, like blood trickling from a wound. 'Ay, ay,' thought I, 'the hour is not far off; another stiff gale, and all that remains of you will be found high and dry upon the shore.' My heart was very heavy as I thought of this, for, in my loneliness, the old Ark—though that was not her name, as I'll tell you presently—was all the companion I had. I've heard of a poor prisoner who, for many and many years, watched a spider that wove his web within his window, and never lost sight of him from morning till night; and, somehow, I can believe it well; the heart will cling to something, and, if it has no living object to press to, it will find a lifeless one,—it can no more stand alone than the shrouds can without the mast. The evening wore on, as I was thinking thus; the moon shone out, but no boat came, and I was just determining to go home again for the night, when I saw two men standing on the steps of the wharf below me, and looking straight at the Ark. Now, I must tell you I always felt uneasy when any one came to look at her, for I began to fear that some ship-owner or other would buy her to break up, though, except the copper fastenings, there was little of any value about her. Now, the moment I saw the two figures stop short, and point to her, I said to myself, 'Ah! my old girl, so they won't even let the blue water finish you, but they must set their carpenters and dockyard people to work upon you.' This thought grieved me more and more. Had a stiff sou'-wester laid her over, I should have felt it more natural, for her sand was run out; but, just as this passed through my mind, I heard a voice from one of the persons, that I at once knew to be the Port Admiral's:

"'"Well, Dawkins,' said he to the other, 'if you think she'll hold together, I'm sure I've no objection. I don't like the

job, I confess; but still the Admiralty must be obeyed.'

"'Oh, my Lord,' said the other, 'she's the very thing; she's a rakish-looking craft, and will do admirably; any repair we want, a few days will effect; secresy is the great thing.'

"'Yes,' said the Admiral, after a pause, 'as you observed, secresy is the great thing.'

"'Ho! ho!' thought I, 'there's something in the wind here;' so I laid myself out upon the anchor-stock, to listen better, unobserved.

"'We must find a crew for her, give her a few carronades, make her as ship-shape as we can, and, if the Skipper—'

"'Ay, but there is the real difficulty,' said the Admiral, hastily; 'where are we to find a fellow that will suit us? We can't every day find a man willing to jeopardize himself in such a cause as this, even though the reward be a great one.'

"'Very true, my Lord; but I don't think there is any necessity for our explaining to him the exact nature of the service.'

"'Come, come, Dawkins, you can't mean that you'll lead a poor fellow into such a scrape blindfolded?'

"'Why, my Lord, you never think it requisite to give a plan of your cruise to your ship's crew before clearing out of harbor.'

"'This may be perfectly just, but I don't like it,' said the Admiral.

"'In that case, my Lord, you are imparting the secrets of the Admiralty to a party who may betray the whole plot.'

"'I wish, with all my soul, they'd given the order to any one else,' said the Admiral, with a sigh; and, for a few moments, neither spoke a word.

"'Well, then, Dawkins, I believe there is nothing for it but what you say; meanwhile, let the repairs be got in hand, and see after a crew.'

"'Oh, as to that,' said the other, 'there are plenty of scoundrels in the fleet here fit for nothing else. Any fellow who has been thrice up for punishment in six months, we'll draft on board of her; the fellows who have only been once to the gangway, we'll make the officers.'

"'A pleasant ship's company,' thought I, 'if the devil would only take the command.'

"'And with a Skipper proportionate to their merit,' said Dawkins.

"'Begad, I'll wish the French joy of them,' said the Admiral.

"'Ho, ho!' thought I, 'I've found you out, at last; so this is a secret expedition; I see it all; they're fitting her out as a fire-ship, and going to send her slap in among the French fleet at Brest. Well,' thought I, 'even that's better; that, at least, is a glorious end, though the poor fellows have no chance of escape.'

"'Now, then,' said the Admiral, 'to-morrow you'll look out for the fellow to take the command. He must be a smart seaman, a bold fellow, too, otherwise the ruffianly crew will be too much for him; he may bid high, we'll come to his price.'

"'So you may,' thought I, 'when you are buying his life.'

"'I hope sincerely,' continued the Admiral, 'that we may light upon some one without wife or child; I never could forgive myself—'

"'Never fear, my Lord,' said the other; 'my care shall be to pitch upon one whose loss no one would feel; some one without friend or home who, setting his life for nought, cares less for the gain than the very recklessness of the adventure.'

"'That's me,' said I, springing up from the anchor-stock, and springing between them; 'I'm that man.'

"Had the very devil himself appeared at the moment, I doubt if they would have been more scared. The Admiral started a pace or two backward, whilst Dawkins, the first surprise over, seized me by the collar, and held me fast.

"'Who are you, scoundrel, and what brings you here?' said he, in a voice hoarse with passion.

"'I'm old Noah,' said I; for, somehow, I had been called by no other name for so long, I never thought of my real one.

"'Noah!' said the Admiral—'Noah! Well, but Noah, what were you doing down here at this time of night?'

"'I was a-watching the Ark, my Lord,' said I, bowing, as I took off my hat.

"'I've heard of this fellow before, my Lord,' said Dawkins; 'he's a poor lunatic that is always wandering about the harbor, and, I believe, has no harm in him.'

"'Yes, but he has been listening, doubtless, to our conversation,' said the Admiral. 'Eh, have you heard all we have been saying?'

"'Every word of it, my Lord.'

"At this the Admiral and Dawkins looked steadfastly at each other for some minutes, but neither spoke; at last Dawkins said, 'Well, Noah, I've been told you are a man to be depended on; may we rely upon your not repeating anything you overheard this evening—at least, for a year to come?'

"'You may,' said I.

"'But, Dawkins,' said the Admiral, in a half whisper, 'if the poor fellow be mad?'

"'My Lord,' said I, boldly, 'I am not mad. Misfortune and calamity I have had enough of to make me so; but, thank God, my brain has been tougher than my poor heart. I was once the part owner and commander of a goodly craft, that swept the sea, if not with a broad pennon at her mast-head, with as light a spirit as ever lived beneath one. I was rich; I had a home and a child: I am now poor, houseless, childless, friendless, and an outcast. If, in my solitary wretchedness, I have loved to look upon that old bark, it is because its fortune seemed like my own. It had outlived all that needed or cared for it; for this reason have they thought me mad, though there are those, and not few either, who can well bear testimony if stain or reproach lie at my door, and if I can be reproached with aught save bad luck. I have heard, by chance, what you have said this night; I know that you are fitting out a secret expedition; I know its dangers, its inevitable dangers, and I here offer myself to lead it; I ask no reward, I look for no price. Alas! who is left to me for whom I could labor now? Give me but the opportunity to end my days with honor on board the old craft, where my heart still clings: give me but that. Well, if you will not do so much, let me serve among the crew; put me before the mast. My Lord, you'll not refuse this; it is an old man asks, one whose gray hairs have floated many a year ago before the breeze.'

"'My poor fellow, you know not what you ask: this is no common case of danger.'

"'I know it all, my Lord: I have heard it all.'

"'Dawkins, what is to be done here?' inquired the Admiral.

"'I say, friend,' inquired Dawkins, laying his hand upon my arm, 'what is your real name? Are you he who commanded the *Dwarf* privateer in the Isle of France?'

"'The same.'

"'Then you are known to Lord Collingwood?'

"'He knows me well, and can speak to my character.'

"'What he says of himself is all true, my Lord.'

"'True,' said I, 'true! you did not doubt it, did you?'

"'We,' said the Admiral, 'must speak together again; be here to-morrow night at this hour; keep your own counsel of what has passed; and now, good-night.' So saying, the Admiral took Dawkins by the arm, and returned slowly toward the town, leaving me where I stood, meditating on this singular meeting, and its possible consequences.

"The whole of the following day was passed by me in a state of feverish excitement, which I cannot describe; this strange adventure breaking in so suddenly upon the dull monotony of my daily existence, had so aroused and stimulated me, that I could neither rest nor eat. How I longed for night to come; for, sometimes, as the day wore later, I began to fear that the whole scene of my meeting with the Admiral had been merely some excited dream of a tortured and fretted mind; and, as I stood examining the ground where I believed the interview to have occurred, I endeavored to recall the position of different objects as they stood around, to corroborate my own failing remembrance.

"At last the evening closed in; but, unlike the preceding one, the sky was covered with masses of dark and watery cloud, that drifted hurriedly across; the air felt heavy and thick, and unnaturally still and calm; the water of the harbor looked of a dull leaden hue, and all the vessels seemed larger than they were, and stood out from the landscape more clearly than usual; now and then a low rumbling noise was heard, somewhat alike in sound, but far too faint for distant thunder; while, occasionally, the boats and smaller craft rocked to and fro, as though some ground-swell stirred them, without breaking the languid surface of the sea above.

"A few drops of thick, heavy rain fell just as the darkness came on, and then all felt still and calm as before. I sat upon the anchor-stock, my eyes fixed upon the old Ark, until gradually her outline grew fainter and fainter against the dark sky, and her black hull could scarcely be distinguished from the water beneath. I felt that I was looking toward her; for, long after I had lost sight of the tall mast and high-pitched bowsprit, I feared to turn away my head, lest I should lose the place where she lay.

"The time went slowly on, and, although in reality I had not been long there, I felt as if years themselves had passed over my head. Since I had come there, my mind brooded over all the misfortunes of my life; as I contrasted its outset, bright with hope and rich in promise, with the sad reality, my heart grew heavy and my chest heaved painfully; so sunk was I in my reflections,

so lost in thought, that I never knew that the storm had broken loose, and that the heavy rain was falling in torrents. The very ground, parched with long drought, smoked as it pattered upon it; while the low, wailing cry of the sea-gull, mingled with the deep growl of far-off thunder, told that the night was a fearful one for those at sea. Wet through and shivering, I sat still; now listening, amid the noise of the hurricane and the creaking of the cordage, for any footstep to approach, and now relapsing back into a half-despairing dread, that my heated brain alone had conjured up the scene of the day before. Such were my dreary reflections, when a loud crash aboard the schooner told me that some old spar had given way. I strained my eyes through the dark to see what had happened, but in vain, the black vapor, thick with falling rain, obscured everything, and all was hid from view. I could hear that she worked violently as the waves beat against her worn sides, and that her iron cable creaked as she pitched to the breaking sea. The wind was momentarily increasing, and I began to fear lest I should have taken my last look at the old craft, when my attention was called off by hearing a loud voice cry out, 'Halloo there! Where are you?'

"'Ay, ay, sir, I'm here.' In a moment the Admiral and his friend were beside me.

"'What a night!' exclaimed the Admiral, as he shook the rain from the heavy boat-cloak, and cowered in beneath some tall blocks of granite near. 'I began half to hope that you might not have been here, my poor fellow,' said the Admiral; 'it's a dreadful time for one so poorly clad for a storm; I say, Dawkins, let him have a pull at your flask.' The brandy rallied me a little, and I felt that it cheered my drooping courage.

"'This is not a time, nor is it a place for much parley,' said the Admiral, 'so that we must even make short work of it. Since we met here last night, I have satisfied myself that you are to be trusted, that your character and reputation have nothing heavier against them than misfortune, which, certainly, if I have been rightly informed, has been largely dealt out to you. Now, then, I am willing to accept of your offer of service, if you are still of the same mind as when you made it, and if you are willing to undertake what we have to do, without any question and inquiry as to points on which we must not and dare not inform you. Whatever you may have overheard last night may, or may not, have put you in possession of our secret. If the former, your determination can be made at once; if the latter, you have only to decide whether you are ready to go blindfolded in the business.'

"'I am ready, my Lord,' said I.

"'You perhaps are then aware what is the nature of the service?'

"'I know it not,' said I. 'All that I heard, sir, leads me to suppose it one of danger, but that's all.'

"'I think, my Lord,' said Dawkins, 'that no more need now be said. Cupples is ready to engage, we are equally so to accept; the thing is pressing. When can you sail?'

"'To-night,' said I, 'if you will.'

"'Really, Dawkins,' said the Admiral, 'I don't see why—'

"'My Lord, I beg of you,' said the other, interrupting, 'let me now complete the arrangement. This is the plan,' said he, turning toward me as he spoke: 'As soon as that old craft can be got ready for sea, or some other, if she be not worth it, you will sail from this port with a strong crew, well armed and supplied with ammunition. Your destination is Malta, your object to deliver to the Admiral stationed there the dispatches with which you will be intrusted; they contain information of immense importance, which, for certain reasons, cannot be sent through a ship of war, but must be forwarded by a vessel that may not attract peculiar notice. If you be attacked, your orders are to resist; if you be taken, on no account destroy the papers, for the French vessel can scarcely escape recapture from our frigates, and it is of great consequence these papers should remain. Such is a brief sketch of our plan; the details can be made known to you hereafter.'

"'I am quite ready, my Lord: I ask for no terms; I make no stipulations. If the result be favorable, it will be time enough to speak of that. When am I to sail?'

"As I spoke, the Admiral turned suddenly round, and said something in a whisper to Dawkins, who appeared to overrule it, whatever it might be, and finally brought him over to his own opinion.

"'Come, Cupples,' said Dawkins, 'the affair is now settled; to-morrow a boat will be in waiting for you opposite Spike Island to convey you on board the *Semiramis*, where every step in the whole business shall be explained to you; meanwhile, you have only to keep your own counsel, and trust the secret to no one.'

"'Yes, Cupples,' said the Admiral, 'we rely upon you for that, so good-night.' As he spoke, he placed within my hands a crumpled note for ten pounds, and, squeezing my fingers, departed.

"My yarn is spinning out to a far greater length than I intended, so I'll try and shorten it a bit. The next day I went aboard the *Semiramis*, where, when I appeared upon the quarter-deck, I found myself an object of some interest. The report that I was the man about to command the *Brian*—that was the real name of the old craft,—had caused some curiosity among the officers, and they all spoke to me with great courtesy. After waiting a short time, I was ordered to go below, where the Admiral, his Flag-Captain Dawkins, and the others were seated. They repeated at greater length the conversation of the night before, and finally decided that I was to sail in three weeks; for, although the old schooner was sadly damaged, they had lost no time, but had her already high in dock, with two hundred ship carpenters at work upon her.

"I do not shorten sail here to tell you what reports were circulated about Cove as to my extraordinary change in circumstances, nor how I bore my altered fortunes. It is enough if I say that, in less than three weeks I weighed anchor, and stood out to sea one beautiful morning in autumn, and set out upon my expedition.

"I have already told you something of the craft. Let me complete the picture by informing you that, before twenty-four hours passed over, I discovered that so ungainly, so awkward, so unmanageable a vessel never put to sea; in light winds she scarcely stirred, or moved as if she were water-logged; if it came to blow upon the quarter, she fell off from her helm at a fearful rate; in wearing, she endangered every spar she had; and, when you put her in stays, when half round she would fall back, and nearly carry away every stitch of canvas with the shock. If the ship was bad, the crew was ten times worse. What Dawkins said turned out to be literally true: every ill-conducted, disorderly fellow who had been up the gangway once a week or so, every unreclaimed landsman of bad character and no seamanship, was sent on board of us; and, in fact, except that there was scarcely any discipline and no restraint, we appeared like a floating penitentiary of convicted felons.

"So long as we ran down channel, with a slack sea and fair wind, so long all went on tolerably well; to be sure, they only kept watch when they were tired below, when they came up reeled about the deck, did all just as they pleased, and treated me with no manner of respect. After some vain efforts to repress their excesses—vain, for I had but one to second me—I appeared to take no notice of their misconduct, and contented myself with waiting for the time when, my dreary voyage over, I should quit the command, and part company with such associates forever. At last, however, it came on to blow, and the night we passed the Lizard was indeed a fearful one. As morning broke, a sea running mountains high, a wind strong from the north-west was hurrying the old craft along at a rate I believed impossible. I shall not stop to recount the frightful scenes of anarchy, confusion, drunkenness, and insubordination which our crew exhibited; the recollection is too bad already, and I would spare you and myself the recital; but, on the fourth day from the setting in of the gale, as we entered the Bay of Biscay, some one aloft descried a strange sail to windward, bearing down as if in pursuit of us. Scarcely did the news reach the deck, when, bad as it was before, matters became now ten times worse, some resolving to give themselves up, if the chase happened to be French, and vowing that, before surrendering, the spirit-room should be forced, and every man let drink as he pleased. Others proposed, if there were anything like equality in the force, to attack, and convert the captured vessel, if they succeeded, into a slaver, and sail at once for Africa. Some were for blowing up the old *Brian* with all on board; and, in fact, every counsel that drunkenness, insanity, and crime combined could suggest was offered and descanted on. Meanwhile the chase gained rapidly upon us, and before noon we discovered her to be a French letter-of-marque, with four guns, and a long brass swivel upon the poop deck. As for us, every sheet of canvas we could crowd was crammed on, but in vain; and, as we labored through the heavy sea, our riotous crew grew every moment worse, and, sitting down sulkily in groups upon the deck, declared that, come what might, they would neither work the ship nor fight her; that they had been sent to sea in a rotten craft, merely to effect their destruction, and that they cared little for the disgrace of a flag they detested. Half furious with the taunting sarcasm I heard on every side, and nearly mad from passion, and bewildered, my first impulse was to rush amongst them with my drawn cutlass,

and, ere I fell their victim, take heavy vengeance upon the ringleaders, when suddenly a sharp booming noise came thundering along, and a round shot went flying over our heads.

"'Down with the ensign; strike at once!' cried eight or ten voices together, as the ball whizzed through the rigging. Anticipating this, and resolving, whatever might happen, to fight her to the last, I had made the mate, a stanch-hearted, resolute fellow, to make fast the signal sail-yard aloft, so that it was impossible for any one on deck to lower the bunting. Bang went another gun, and, before the smoke cleared away, a third, which, truer in its aim than the rest, went clean through the lower part of our mainsail.

"'Steady, then, boys, and clear for action,' said the mate. 'She's a French smuggling craft that will sheer off when we show fight, so that we must not fire a shot till she comes alongside.'

"'And harkee, lads,' said I, taking up the tone of encouragement he spoke with, 'if we take her, I promise to claim nothing of the prize. Whatever we capture you shall divide amongst yourselves.'

"'It's very easy to divide what we never had,' said one; 'Nearly as easy as to give it,' cried another; 'I'll never light match or draw cutlass in the cause,' said a third.

"'Surrender!' 'Strike the flag!' 'Down with the colors!' roared several voices together.

"By this time the Frenchman was close up, and ranging his long gun to sweep our decks; his crew were quite perceptible—about twenty bronzed, stout-looking fellows, stripped to the waist, and carrying pistols in broad flat belts, slung over the shoulder.

"'Come, my lads,' said I, raising my voice, as I drew a pistol from my side and cocked it, 'our time is short now; I may as well tell you that the first shot that strikes us amidship blows up the whole craft and every man on board. We are nothing less than a fire-ship, destined for Brest harbor to blow up the French fleet. If you are willing to make an effort for your lives, follow me!'

"The men looked aghast. Whatever recklessness crime and drunkenness had given them, the awful feeling of inevitable death at once repelled. Short as was the time for reflection, they felt that there were many circumstances to encourage the assertion: the nature of the vessel, her riotous, disorderly crew, the secret nature of the service, all confirmed it, and they answered with a shout of despairing vengeance, 'We'll board her; lead us on.' As the cry rose up, the long swivel from the chase rang sharply in our ears, and a tremendous discharge of grape flew through our rigging; none of our men, however, fell; and, animated now with the desire for battle, they sprang to the binnacle, and seized their arms.

"In an instant the whole deck became a scene of excited bustle; and scarcely was the ammunition dealt out, and the boarding-party drawn up, when the Frenchman broached to, and lashed his bowsprit to our own.

"One terrific yell burst from our fellows as they sprang from the rigging and the poop upon the astonished Frenchmen, who thought that the victory was already their own; with death and ruin behind, their only hope before, they dashed forward like madmen to the fray.

"The conflict was bloody and terrific, though not a long one; nearly equal in number, but far superior in personal strength, and stimulated by their sense of danger, our fellows rushed onward, carrying all before them to the quarter-deck. Here the Frenchmen rallied, and, for some minutes, had rather the advantage, until the mate, turning one of their guns against them, prepared to sweep them down in a mass. Then it was that they ceased their fire and cried out for quarter, —all, save their captain, a short, thickset fellow, with a grizzly beard and moustache, who, seeing his men fall back, turned on them one glance of scowling indignation, and, rushing forward, clove our boatswain to the deck with one blow. Before the example could have been followed, he lay a bloody corpse upon the deck, while our people, roused to madness by the loss of a favorite among the men, dashed impetuously forward, and, dealing death on every side, left not one man living among their unresisting enemies. My story is soon told now. We brought our prize safe into Malta, which we reached in five days. In less than a week our men were drafted into different men-of-war on the station. I was appointed a warrant-officer in the *Sheerwater*, forty-four guns; and, as the Admiral opened the dispatch, the only words he spoke puzzled me for many a day after.

"'You have accomplished your orders too well,' said he; 'that privateer is but a poor compensation for the whole French navy.'"

"Well," inquired Power, "and did you never hear the meaning of the words?"

"Yes," said he; "many years after, I found out that our dispatches were false ones, intended to have fallen into the hands of the French, and mislead them as to Lord Nelson's fleet, which at that time was cruising to the southward to catch them. This, of course, explained what fate was destined for us—a French prison, if not death; and, after all, either was fully good enough for the crew that sailed in the old *Brian*."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE LAND.

It was late when we separated for the night, and the morning was already far advanced ere I awoke; the monotonous tramp overhead showed me that the others were stirring, and I gently moved the shutter of the narrow window beside me to look out.

The sea, slightly rippled upon its surface, shone like a plate of fretted gold; not a wave, not a breaker appeared; but the rushing sound close by showed that we were moving fast through the water.

"Always calm hereabouts," said a gruff voice on deck which I soon recognized as the Skipper's; "no sea whatever."

"I can make nothing of it," cried out Power, from the forepart of the vessel, "it appears to me all cloud."

"No, no, sir, believe me, it's no fog-bank, that large dark mass to leeward there; that's Cintra."

"Land!" cried I, springing up, and rushing upon deck; "where, Skipper,—where is the land?"

"I say, Charley," said Power, "I hope you mean to adopt a little more clothing on reaching Lisbon; for though the climate is a warm one—"

"Never mind, O'Malley," said the Major, "the Portuguese will only be flattered by the attention, if you land as you are."

"Why, how so?"

"Surely, you remember what the niggers said when they saw the 79th Highlanders landing at St. Lucie. They had never seen a Scotch regiment before, and were consequently somewhat puzzled at the costume; till, at last, one more cunning than the rest explained it by saying, 'They are in such a hurry to kill the poor black men, that they came away without their breeches.'"

"Now, what say you?" cried the Skipper, as he pointed with his telescope to a dark blue mass in the distance; "see there!"

"Ah, true enough, that's Cintra!"

"Then we shall probably be in the Tagus before morning?"

"Before midnight, if the wind holds," said the Skipper.

We breakfasted on deck, beneath an awning; the vessel scarcely seemed to move as she cut her way through the calm water.

The misty outline of the coast grew gradually more defined, and at length the blue mountains could be seen, at first but dimly; but, as the day wore on, their many-colored hues shone forth, and patches of green verdure, dotted with sheep, or sheltered by dark foliage, met the eye. The bulwarks were crowded with anxious faces; each looked pointedly toward the shore, and many a stout heart beat high as the land drew near, fated to cover with its earth more than one amongst us.

"And that's Portingale, Mister Charles," said a voice behind me. I turned, and saw my man Mike, as, with anxious joy, he fixed his eyes upon the shore.

"They tell me it's a beautiful place, with wine for nothing, and spirits for less. Isn't it a pity they won't be raisonable, and make peace with us?"

"Why, my good fellow, we are excellent friends; it's the French who want to beat us all."

"Upon my conscience, that's not right. There's an ould saying in Connaught,—it's not fair for one to fall upon twenty. Sergeant Haggarty says that I'll see none of the divarsion at all."

"I don't well understand—"

"He does be telling me that, as I'm only your footboy, he'll send me away to the rear, where there's nothing but wounded, and wagons, and women."

"I believe the sergeant is right there; but, after all, Mike, it's a safe place."

"Ah! then, musha for the safety; I don't think much of it; sure they might circumvint us. And, av it wasn't displazing to you, I'd rather list."

"Well, I've no objection, Mickey: would you like to join my regiment?"

"By coorse, your honor. I'd like to be near yourself; bekase, too, if anything happens to you—the Lord be betune us and harm,"—here he crossed himself piously,—"sure I'd like to be able to tell the master how you died; and, sure, there's Mr. Considine—God pardon him!—he'll be beating my brains out av I couldn't explain it all."

"Well, Mike, I'll speak to some of my

friends here about you, and we'll settle it all properly; here's the Doctor."

"Arrah, Mr. Charles, don't mind him; he's a poor crayture entirely; devil a thing he knows."

"Why, what do you mean, man? he's physician to the forces."

"Oh, be-gorra, and so he may be," said Mike, with a toss of his head; "those army docthers isn't worth their salt. It's thruth I'm telling you: sure didn't he come see me when I was sick below in the hould?

"'How do you feel?' says he.

"'Terribly dhry in the mouth,' says I.

"'But your bones,' says he, 'how's them?'

"'As if cripples was kicking me,' says I.

"Well, with that he wint away, and brought back two powders.

"'Take them,' says he, 'and you'll be cured in no time.'

"'What's them?' says I.

"'They're ematics,' says he.

"'Blood and ages,' says I, 'are they?'

"'Devil a lie,' says he; 'take them immediately.'

"And I tuk them—and, would you believe me, Mister Charles?—it's thruth I'm telling you—devil a one o' them would stay on my stomach. So you see what a docther he is!"

I could not help smiling at Mike's ideas of medicine, as I turned away to talk to the Major, who was busily engaged beside me. His occupation consisted in furbishing up a very tarnished and faded uniform, whose white seams and threadbare lace betokened many years of service.

"Getting up our traps, you see, O'Malley," said he, as he looked with no small pride at the faded glories of his old vestment; "astonish them at Lisbon, we flatter ourselves. I say, Power, what a bad style of dress they've got into latterly, with their tight waists and strapped trowsers—nothing free, nothing easy, nothing *dégagé* about it. When in a campaign, a man ought to be able to stow prog for twenty-four hours about his person, and no one the wiser. A very good rule, I assure you, though it sometimes leads to awkward results. At Vimeira, I got into a sad scrape that way. Old Sir Harry, that commanded there, sent for the sick return. I was at dinner when the orderly came; so I packed up the eatables about me, and rode off. Just, however, as I came up to the quarters, my horse stumbled and threw me slap on my head.

"'Is he killed?' said Sir Harry.

"'Only stunned, your Excellency,' said some one.

"'Then he'll come to, I suppose. Look for the papers in his pocket.'

"So they turned me on my back, and plunged a hand into my side-pocket, but, the devil take it, they pulled out a roast hen. Well, the laugh was scarcely over at this, when another fellow dived into my coat behind, and lugged out three sausages; and so they went on, till the ground was covered with ham, pigeon-pie, veal, kidney, and potatoes, and the only thing like a paper was a mess roll of the 4th, with a droll song about Sir Harry, written in pencil on the back of it. Devil of a bad affair for me; I was nearly broke for it; but they only reprimanded me a little, and I was afterward attached to the victualing department."

What an anxious thing is the last day of a voyage! how slowly creep the hours, teeming with memories of the past and expectations of the future!

Every plan, every well-devised expedient to cheat the long and weary days, is at once abandoned; the chess-board and the new novel are alike forgotten, and the very quarter-deck walk, with its merry gossip and careless chit-chat, becomes distasteful. One blue and misty mountain, one faint outline of the far-off shore, has dispelled all thought of these, and, with straining eye and anxious heart, we watch for land.

As the day wears on apace, the excitement increases: the faint and shadowy forms of distant objects grow gradually clearer. Where before some tall and misty mountain peak was seen, we now descry patches of deepest blue and somber olive; the mellow corn and the waving woods, the village spire and the lowly cot, come out of the landscape; and, like some well-remembered voice, they speak of home. The objects we have seen, the sounds we have heard a hundred times before without interest, become to us now things that stir the heart.

For a time, the bright glare of the noonday sun dazzles the view, and renders indistinct the prospect; but, as evening falls, once more is all fair, and bright, and rich before us. Rocked by the long and rolling swell, I lay beside the bowsprit, watching the shore-birds that came to rest upon the rigging, or following some long and tangled sea-weed as it floated by; my thoughts now wandering back to the brown hills and the broad river of my early home—now straying off in dreary fancies of the future.

How flat and unprofitable does all ambition seem at such moments as these! how valueless, how poor, in our estima-

tion, those worldly distinctions we have so often longed and thirsted for, as with lowly heart and simple spirit we watch each humble cottage, weaving to ourselves some story of its inmates as we pass!

The night at length closed in, but it was a bright and starry one,—lending to the landscape a hue of somber shadow, while the outlines of the objects were still sharp and distinct as before. One solitary star twinkled near the horizon. I watched it as, at intervals disappearing, it would again shine out, marking the calm sea with a tall pillar of light.

"Come down, Mr. O'Malley," cried the Skipper's well-known voice; "come down below, and join us in a parting glass—that's the Lisbon light to leeward, and before two hours we drop our anchor in the Tagus."

CHAPTER XXXV.

MAJOR MONSOON.

Of my traveling companions I have already told my readers something. Power is now an old acquaintance; to Sparks I have already presented them; of the Adjutant they are not entirely ignorant; and it therefore only remains for me to introduce to their notice Major Monsoon. I should have some scruple for the digression which this occasions in my narrative, were it not that with the worthy Major I was destined to meet subsequently, and indeed served under his orders for some months in the Peninsula. When Major Monsoon had entered the army, or in what precise capacity, I never yet met the man who could tell. There were traditionary accounts of his having served in the East Indies and in Canada, in times long past. His own peculiar reminiscences extended to nearly every regiment in the service, "horse, foot, and dragoons." There was not a clime he had not basked in; not an engagement he had not witnessed. His memory, or, if you will, his invention, was never at fault; and from the siege of Seringapatam to the battle of Corunna he was perfect: besides this, he possessed a mind retentive of even the most trifling details of his profession; from the formation of a regiment to the introduction of a new button, from the laying down of a parallel to the price of a camp-kettle, he knew it all. To be sure, he had served in the Commissary-General's department for a number of years, and nothing instils such habits as this.

"The commissaries are to the army what the special pleaders are to the bar," observed my friend Power—"dry dogs; not over-creditable on the whole, but devilish useful."

The Major had begun life a two-bottle man, but, by a studious cultivation of his natural gifts, and a steady determination to succeed, he had, at the time I knew him, attained to his fifth. It need not be wondered at, then, that his countenance bore some traces of his habits. It was of a deep, sunset purple, which, becoming tropical, at the tip of the nose verged almost upon a plum color; his mouth was large, thick-lipped, and good-humored; his voice rich, mellow, and racy, and contributed, with the aid of a certain dry, chuckling laugh, greatly to increase the effect of the stories which he was ever ready to recount; and, as they most frequently bore in some degree against some of what he called his little failings, they were ever well received, no man being so popular with the world as he who flatters its vanity at his own expense. To do this the Major was ever ready, but at no time more so than when the evening wore late, and the last bottle of his series seemed to imply that any caution regarding the nature of his communication was perfectly unnecessary. Indeed, from the commencement of his evening to the close, he seemed to pass through a number of mental changes, all in a manner preparing him for this final consummation, when he confessed anything and everything; and so well-regulated had these stages become, that a friend dropping in upon him suddenly could at once pronounce, from the tone of his conversation, on what precise bottle the Major was then engaged.

Thus, in the outset he was gastronomic; discussed the dinner, from the soup to the Stilton; criticised the cutlets; pronounced upon the merits of the mutton; and threw out certain vague hints that he would one day astonish the world by a little volume upon cookery.

With bottle No. 2 he took leave of the *cuisine*, and opened his battery upon the wine. Bordeaux, Burgundy, hock, and hermitage, all passed in review before him; their flavor discussed, their treatment descanted upon, their virtues extolled; from humble port to imperial tokay, he was thoroughly conversant with all; and not a vintage escaped as to when the sun had suffered eclipse, or when a comet had wagged his tail over it.

With No. 3 he became pipeclay; talked army list and eighteen maneuvers; la-

mented the various changes in equipments which modern innovation had introduced; and feared the loss of pigtails might sap the military spirit of the nation.

With No. 4 his anecdotic powers came into play; he recounted various incidents of the war, with his own individual adventures and experience, told with an honest *naiveté* that proved personal vanity; indeed, self-respect never marred the interest of the narrative; besides, as he had ever regarded a campaign something in the light of a foray, and esteemed war as little else than a pillage excursion, his sentiments were singularly amusing.

With his last bottle, those feelings that seemed inevitably connected with whatever is last, appeared to steal over him: a tinge of sadness for pleasures fast passing and nearly passed, a kind of retrospective glance at the fallacy of all our earthly enjoyments, insensibly suggesting moral and edifying reflections, led him by degrees to confess that he was not quite satisfied with himself, though "not very bad for a commissary;" and, finally, as the decanter waxed low, he would interlard his meditations by passages of Scripture, singularly perverted by his misconception from their true meaning, and alternately throwing out prospects of censure or approval. Such was Major Monsoon; and to conclude in his own words this brief sketch, he "would have been an excellent officer if Providence had not made him such a confounded drunken old scoundrel."

"Now, then, for the King of Spain's story. Out with it, old boy; we are all good men and true here," cried Power, as we slowly came along upon the tide up the Tagus, "so you've nothing to fear."

"Upon my life," replied the Major, "I don't half like the tone of our conversation. There is a certain freedom young men affect now-a-days regarding morals that is not at all to my taste. When I was five or six and twenty—"

"You were the greatest scamp in the service," cried Power.

"Fie, fie, Fred. If I was a little wild or so"—here the Major's eyes twinkled maliciously—"it was the ladies that spoiled me; I was always something of a favorite, just like our friend Sparks there. Not that we fared very much alike in our little adventures; for, somehow, I believe I was generally in fault in most of mine, as many a good man and many an excellent man has been before." Here his voice dropped into a moralizing key, as he added, "David, you know, didn't behave well to old Uriah. Upon my life he did not, and he was a very respectable man."

"The King of Spain's sherry! the sherry!" cried I, fearing that the Major's digression might lose us a good story.

"You shall not have a drop of it," replied the Major.

"But the story, Major, the story."

"Nor the story, either."

"What," said Power, "will you break faith with us?"

"There's none to be kept with reprobates like you. Fill my glass."

"Hold there! stop!" cried Power. "Not a spoonful till he redeems his pledge."

"Well, then, if you must have a story—for most assuredly I must drink—I have no objection to give you a leaf from my early reminiscences; and, in compliment to Sparks there, my tale shall be of love."

"I dinna like to lose the King's story. I hae my thoughts it was na a bad ane."

"Nor I neither, Doctor; but—"

"Come, come, you shall have that too, the first night we meet in a bivouac, and, as I fear the time may not be very far distant, don't be impatient; besides, a love-story—"

"Quite true," said Power; "a love-story claims precedence: *place aux dames.* There's a bumper for you, old Wickedness; so go along."

The Major cleared off his glass, refilled it, sipped twice, and ogled it as though he would have no peculiar objection to sip once more, took a long pinch of snuff from a box nearly as long as, and something the shape of a child's coffin, looked around to see that we were all attention, and thus began:

"When I have been in a moralizing mood, as I very frequently am about this hour in the morning, I have often felt surprised by what little, trivial, and insignificant circumstances our lot in life seems to be cast; I mean especially as regards the fair sex. You are prospering, as it were, to-day, to-morrow a new cut of your whiskers, a novel tie of your cravat, mars your destiny and spoils your future *varium et mutabile*, as Horace has it. On the other hand, some equally slight circumstance will do what all your ingenuity may have failed to effect. I knew a fellow who married the greatest fortune in Bath, from the mere habit he had of squeezing one's hand. The lady in question thought it particular, looked conscious, and all that; he followed up the blow; and, in a word, they were married in a week. So a friend of mine, who could not help winking his left eye,

once opened a flirtation with a lively widow which cost him a special license and a settlement. In fact, you are never safe. They are like the guerillas, and they pick you off when you least expect it, and when you think there is nothing to fear. Therefore, as young fellows beginning life, I would caution you. On this head you can never be too circumspect. Do you know, I was once nearly caught by so slight a habit as sitting thus, with my legs across."

Here the Major rested his right foot on his left knee, in illustration, and continued:

"We were quartered in Jamaica. I had not long joined, and was about as raw a young gentleman as you could see; the only very clear ideas in my head being, that we were monstrous fine fellows in the 50th, and that the planters' daughters were deplorably in love with us. Not that I was much wrong on either side. For brandy-and-water, sangaree, Manilla cigars, and the ladies of color, I'd have backed the corps against the service. Proof was, of eighteen only two ever left the island; for what with the seductions of the coffee plantations, the sugar-canes, the new rum, the brown skins, the rainy season, and the yellow fever, most of us settled there.

"It's very hard to leave the West Indies if once you've been quartered there."

"So I have heard," said Power.

"In fine, if you don't knock under to the climate, you become soon totally unfit for living anywhere else. Preserved ginger, yams, flaunel jackets, and grog won't bear exportation; and the free-and-easy chuck under the chin, cherishing, waist-pressing kind of way we get with the ladies, would be quite misunderstood in less favored regions, and lead to very unpleasant consequences.

"It is a curious fact now much climate has to do with love-making. In our cold country the progress is lamentably slow: fogs, east winds, sleet storms, and cutting March weather, nip many a budding flirtation; whereas warm, sunny days, and bright moonlight nights, with genial air and balmy zephyrs, open the heart, like the cup of a camelia, and let us drink in the soft dew of—"

"Devilish poetical, that!" said Power, evolving a long blue line of smoke from the corner of his mouth.

"Isn't it, though?" said the Major, smiling graciously. "'Pon my life, I thought so myself. Where was I?"

"Out of my latitude altogether," said the poor skipper, who often found it hard to follow the thread of a story.

"Yes, I remember. I was remarking that sangaree, and calipash, mangoes, and Guava jelly, dispose the heart to love, and so they do. I was not more than six weeks in Jamaica when I felt it myself. Now, it was a very dangerous symptom, if you had it strong in you, for this reason. Our colonel, the most cross-grained old crabstick that ever breathed, happened himself to be taken in when young, and resolving, like the fox who lost his tail, and said it was not the fashion to wear one, to pretend he did the thing for fun, resolved to make every fellow marry upon the slightest provocation. Begad, you might as well enter a powder magazine with a branch of candles in your hand, as go into society in the island with a leaning toward the fair sex. Very hard this was for me particularly; for, like poor Sparks there, my weakness was ever for the petticoats. I had, besides, no petty, contemptible prejudices as to nation, habits, language, color, or complexion; black, brown, or fair, from the Muscovite to the Malabar, from the voluptuous *embonpoint* of the Adjutant's widow—don't be angry, old boy—to the fairy form of Isabella herself, I loved them all round. But, were I to give a preference anywhere, I should certainly do so to the West Indians, if it were only for the sake of the planters' daughters. I say it fearlessly, these colonies are the brightest jewels in the crown. Let's drink their health, for I'm as husky as a lime-kiln."

This ceremony being performed with suitable enthusiasm, the Major cried out, "Another cheer for Polly Hackett, the sweetest girl in Jamaica. By jove, Power, if you only saw her, as I did, five and forty years ago, with eyes black as jet, twinkling, ogling, leering, teasing, and imploring, all at once, do you mind, and a mouthful of downright pearls pouting and smiling at you, why, man, you'd have proposed for her in the first half hour, and shot yourself the next, when she refused you. She was, indeed, a perfect little beauty; *rayther* dark, to be sure; a little upon the rosewood tinge, but beautifully polished, and a very nice piece of furniture for a cottage *orné*, as the French call it. Alas, alas! how these vanities do catch hold of us! My recollections have made me quite feverish and thirsty: is there any cold punch in the bowl? Thank you, O'Malley, that will do—merely to touch my lips. Well, well, it's all passed and gone now. But I was very fond of Polly Hackett, and she was of me. We used to take our little evening walks together through the coffee plantation; very romantic little strolls

they were: she in white muslin, with a blue sash and blue shoes; I in a flannel jacket and trowsers, straw hat and cravat; a Virginia cigar, as long as a walking stick, in my mouth, puffing and courting between times; then we'd take a turn to the refining house, look in at the big boilers, quiz the niggers, and come back to Twangberry Moss to supper, where old Hackett, the father, sported a glorious table at eleven o'clock. Great feeding it was. You were always sure of a preserved monkey, a baked land-crab, or some such delicacy. And such Madeira! it makes me dry to think of it!

"Talk of West India slavery, indeed! It's the only land of liberty. There is nothing to compare with the perfect free-and-easy, devil-may-care-kind-of-a-take-yourself way that every one has there. If it would be any peculiar comfort for you to sit in the saddle of mutton, and put your legs in a soup-tureen at dinner, there would be found very few to object to it. There is no nonsense of any kind about etiquette. You eat, drink, and are merry, or, if you prefer, are sad; just as you please. You may wear uniform, or you may not; it's your own affair; and, consequently, it may be imagined how insensibly such privileges gain upon one, and how very reluctant we become ever to resign or abandon them.

"I was the man to appreciate it all. The whole course of proceeding seemed to have been invented for my peculiar convenience, and not a man in the island enjoyed a more luxurious existence than myself, not knowing all the while how dearly I was destined to pay for my little comforts. Among my plenary after-dinner indulgences I had contracted an inveterate habit of sitting cross-legged, as I showed you. Now, this was become a perfect necessity of existence to me. I could have dispensed with cheese, with my glass of port, my pickled mango, my olive, my anchovy toast, my nutshell of curaçao, but not my favorite lounge. You may smile; but I've read of a man who could never dance except in a room with an old hair-brush. Now I'm certain my stomach would not digest if my legs were perpendicular. I don't mean to defend the thing. The attitude was not graceful; it was not imposing; but it suited me somehow, and I liked it.

"From what I have already mentioned, you may suppose that West India habits exercised but little control over my favorite practice, which I indulged in every evening of my life. Well, one day, old Hackett gave us a great blow-out—a dinner of two-and-twenty souls; six days' notice; turtle from St. Lucie, guinea-fowl, claret of the year forty, Madeira *à discrétion*, and all that. Very well done the whole thing: nothing wrong, nothing wanting. As for me, I was in great feather. I took Polly in to dinner, greatly to the discomfiture of old Belson, our Major, who was making up in that quarter; for, you must know, she was an only daughter, and had a very nice thing of it in molasses and niggers. The papa preferred the Major, but Polly looked sweetly upon me. Well, down we went, and really a most excellent feed we had. Now, I must mention here that Polly had a favorite Blenheim spaniel the old fellow detested: it was always tripping him up and snarling at him; for it was, except to herself, a beast of rather vicious inclinations. With a true Jamaica taste, it was her pleasure to bring the animal always into the dinner-room, where, if papa discovered him, there was sure to be a row. Servants sent in one direction to hunt him out; others endeavoring to hide him, and so on; in fact, a tremendous hubbub always followed his introduction and accompanied his exit, upon which occasions I invariably exercised my gallantry by protecting the beast, although I hated him like the devil all the time.

"To return to our dinner. After two mortal hours of hard eating, the pace began to slacken, and, as evening closed in, a sense of peaceful repose seemed to descend upon our labors. Pastilles shed an aromatic vapor through the room. The well-iced decanters went with measured pace along; conversation, subdued to the meridian of after-dinner comfort, just murmured; the open *jalousies* displayed upon the broad verandah the orange-tree in full blossom, slightly stirring with the cool sea-breeze."

"And the piece of white muslin beside you, what of her?"

"Looked twenty times more bewitching than ever. Well, it was just the hour when, opening the last two buttons of your white waistcoat (remember we were in Jamaica), you stretch your legs to the full extent, throw your arm carelessly over the back of your chair, look contemplatively toward the ceiling, and wonder, within yourself, why it is not all 'after dinner' in this same world of ours. Such, at least, were my reflections as I assumed my attitude of supreme comfort, and inwardly ejaculated a health to Sneyd and Barton. Just at this moment I heard Polly's voice gently whisper,

"'Isn't he a love? isn't he a darling?'

"'Zounds!' thought I, as a pang of jealousy shot through my heart, 'is it the Major she means?' for old Belson, with his bag wig and rouged cheeks, was seated on the other side of her.

"'What a dear old thing it is!" said Polly.

"'Worse and worse,' said I; 'it must be him.'

"'I do so love his muzzy face.'

"'It is him!' said I, throwing off a bumper, and almost boiling over with passion at the moment.

"'I wish I could take one look at him,' said she, laying down her head as she spoke.

"The Major whispered something in her ear, to which she replied,

"'Oh! I dare not; papa will see me at once.'

"'Don't be afraid, madam,' said I, fiercely; 'your father perfectly approves of your taste.'

"'Are you sure of it,' said she, giving me such a look.

"'I know it,' said I, struggling violently with my agitation.

"The Major leaned over, as if to touch her hand beneath the cloth. I almost sprang from my chair, when Polly, in her sweetest accents, said:

"'You must be patient, dear thing, or you may be found out, and then there will be such a piece of work. Though I'm sure, Major, you would not betray me.' The Major smiled till he cracked the paint upon his cheeks. 'And I am sure that Mr. Monsoon—'

"'You may rely upon me,' said I, half sneeringly.

"The Major and I exchanged glances of defiance, while Polly continued,

"'Now, come, don't be restless. You are very comfortable there. Isn't he, Major?' The Major smiled again more graciously than before, as he added,

"'May I take a look?'

"'Just one peep, then, no more!' said she, coquettishly; 'poor dear Wowski is so timid.'

"Scarcely had these words borne balm and comfort to my heart—for I now knew that to the dog, and not to my rival, were all the flattering expressions applied—when a slight scream from Polly, and a tremendous oath from the Major, raised me from my dream of happiness.

"'Take your foot down, sir. Mr. Monsoon, how could you do so?' cried Polly.

"'What the devil, sir, do you mean?' shouted the Major.

"'Oh! I shall die of shame,' sobbed she.

"'I'll shoot him like a riddle,' muttered old Belson.

"By this time the whole table had got at the story, and such peals of laughter, mingled with suggestions for my personal maltreatment, I never heard. All my attempts at explanation were in vain. I was not listened to, much less believed, and the old Colonel finished the scene by ordering me to my quarters, in a voice I shall never forget, the whole room being, at the time I made my exit, one scene of tumultuous laughter from one end to the other. Jamaica after this became too hot for me. The story was repeated on every side; for it seems I had been sitting with my foot on Polly's lap; but, so occupied was I with my jealous vigilance of the Major I was not aware of the fact until she herself discovered it.

"I need not say how the following morning brought with it every possible offer of *amends* upon my part; anything, from a written apology to a proposition to marry the lady, I was ready for, and how the matter might have ended I know not; for, in the middle of the negotiations, we were ordered off to Halifax, where, be assured, I abandoned my oriental attitude for many a long day after."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE LANDING.

WHAT a contrast to the dull monotony of our life at sea did the scene present which awaited us on landing in Lisbon. The whole quay was crowded with hundreds of people eagerly watching the vessel which bore from her mast the broad ensign of Britain. Dark-featured, swarthy, moustached faces, with red caps rakishly set on one side, mingled with the Saxon faces and fair-haired natives of our own country. Men-of-war boats plied unceasingly to and fro across the tranquil river, some slender reefer in the stern-sheets; while behind him trailed the red pennon of some "tall admiral."

The din and clamor of a mighty city mingled with the far-off sounds of military music; and in the vistas of the opening street masses of troops might be seen, in marching order; and all betokened the near approach of war.

Our anchor had scarcely been dropped,

when an eight-oar gig, with a midshipman steering, came along side.

"Ship ahoy, there! You've troops on board?"

"Ay, ay, sir."

Before the answer could be spoken, he was on the deck.

"May I ask," said he, touching his cap slightly, "who is the officer in command of the detachment?"

"Captain Power: very much at your service," said Fred, returning the salute.

"Rear-Admiral Sir Edward Douglas requests that you will do him the favor to come on board immediately, and bring your dispatches with you."

"I'm quite ready," said Power, as he placed his papers in his sabretasche; "but first tell us what's doing here. Anything new lately?"

"I have heard nothing, except of some affair with the Portuguese; they've been drubbed again; but our people have not been engaged. I say, we had better get under way: there's our first lieutenant, with his telescope up; he's looking straight at us. So, come along. Good evening, gentlemen." And in another moment the sharp craft was cutting the clear water, while Power gayly waved us a good-by.

"Who's for shore?" said the Skipper, as half a dozen boats swarmed around the side, or held on by their boat-hooks to the rigging.

"Who is not?" said Monsoon, who now appeared in his old blue frock covered with tarnished braiding, and a cocked hat that might have roofed a pagoda. "Who is not, my old boy? Is not every man amongst us delighted with the prospect of fresh prog, cool wine, and a bed somewhat longer than four feet six? I say, O'Malley! Sparks! Where's the Adjutant? Ah, there he is! We'll not mind the Doctor; he's a very jovial little fellow but a damned bore, *entre nous;* and we'll have a cosy little supper at the Rua di Toledo. I know the place well. Whew, now! Get away, boy. Sit steady, Sparks; she's only a cockle-shell. There—that's the Plaza de la Regna—there, to the left. There's the great cathedral—you can't see it now. Another seventy-four! why, there's a whole fleet here! I wish old Power joy of his afternoon with old Douglas."

"Do you know him, then, Major?"

"Do I!—I should rather think I do. He was going to put me in irons here in this river once. A great shame it was; but I'll tell you the story another time. There—gently now; that's it. Thank God! once more upon land. How I do hate a ship: upon my life, a sauce-boat is the only boat endurable in this world."

We edged our way with difficulty through the dense crowd, and at last reached the Plaza. Here the numbers were still greater, but of a different class: several pretty and well-dressed women, with their dark eyes twinkling above their black mantillas, as they held them across their faces, watched with an intense curiosity one of the streets that opened upon the square.

In a few moments the band of a regiment was heard, and very shortly after the regular tramp of troops followed, as the Eighty-seventh marched into the Plaza, and formed a line.

The music ceased; the drums rolled along the line; and the next moment all was still. It was really an inspiriting sight to one whose heart was interested in the career, to see those gallant fellows, as, with their bronzed faces and stalwart frames, they stood motionless as a rock. All continued to look, the band marched into the middle of the square, and struck up "Garryowen." Scarcely was the first part played, when a tremendous cheer burst from the troop-ship in the river. The welcome notes had reached the poor fellows there; the well-known sounds, that told of home and country, met their ears; and the loud cry of recognition bespoke their hearts' fullness.

"There they go. Your wild countrymen have heard their *Ranz des vaches*, it seems. Lord! how they frightened the poor Portuguese! look how they're running!"

Such was actually the case. The loud cheer uttered from the river was taken up by others straggling on shore, and one universal shout betokened that fully one-third of the red-coats around came from the dear island, and in their enthusiasm had terrified the natives to no small extent.

"Is not that Ferguson there?" cried the Major, as an officer passed us with his arm in a sling. "I say, Joe—Ferguson! oh! knew it was."

"Monsoon, my hearty, how goes it?—only just arrived, I see;—delighted to meet you out here once more. Why, we've been dull as a veteran battalion without you. These your friends? pray present me." The ceremony of introduction over, the Major invited Ferguson to join our party at supper. "No, not to-night, Major," said he, "you must be my

guests this evening. My quarters are not five minutes' walk from this—I shall not promise you very luxurious fare."

"A carbonade with olives, a roast duck, a bowl of Bishop, and, if you will, a few bottles of Burgundy," said the Major; "don't put yourself out for us—soldier's fare, eh?"

I could not help smiling at the *naïve* notion of simplicity so cunningly suggested by old Monsoon. As I followed the party through the streets, my step was light, my heart not less so; for what sensations are more delightful than those of landing after a voyage?—the escape from the durance vile of shipboard, with its monotonous days and dreary nights, its ill-regulated appointments, its cramped accommodation, its uncertain duration, its eternal round of unchanging amusements, for the freedom of the shore, with a land breeze, and a firm footing to tread upon; and, certainly, not least of all, the sight of that brightest part of creation, whose soft eyes and tight ankles are, perhaps, the greatest of all imaginable pleasures to him who has been the dweller on blue water for several weeks long.

"Here we are," cried out Ferguson, as we stopped at the door of a large and handsome house. We followed up a spacious stair into an ample room, sparingly, but not uncomfortably furnished; plans of sieges, maps of the seat of war, pistols, sabres, and belts, decorated the white walls, and a few books, and a stray army-list, betokened the habits of the occupant.

While Ferguson disappeared to make some preparations for supper Monsoon commenced a congratulation to the party upon the good fortune that had befallen them. "Capital fellow is Joe—never without something good, and a rare one to pass the bottle. Oh! here he comes. Be alive there, Sparks; take a corner of the cloth; how deliciously juicy that ham looks; pass the Madeira down there; what's under that cover—stewed kidneys?" While Monsoon went on thus we took our places at table, and set to with an appetite which only a newly-landed traveler ever knows.

"Another spoonful of the gravy? Thank you. And so they say we've not been faring over well latterly?" said the Major.—"Not a word of truth in the report. Our people have not been engaged. The only thing lately was a smart brush we had at the Tamega. Poor Patrick, a countryman of ours, and myself were serving with the Portuguese brigade, when Laborde drove us back upon the town, and actually routed us. The Portuguese general, caring little for anything save his own safety, was making at once for the mountains, when Patrick called upon his battalion to face about and charge; and nobly they did it too. Down they came upon the advancing masses of the French, and literally hurled them back upon the main body. The other regiments, seeing this gallant stand, wheeled about, and poured in a volley, and then, fixing bayonets, stormed a little mount beside the hedge, which commanded the whole suburb of Villa Real. The French, who soon recovered their order, now prepared for a second attack, and came on in two dense columns, when Patrick, who had little confidence in the steadiness of his people, for any lengthened resistance, resolved upon once more charging with the bayonet. The order was scarcely given when the French were upon us; their flank, defended by some of La Houssaye's heavy dragoons. For an instant the conflict was doubtful, until poor Patrick fell mortally wounded upon the parapet; when the men, no longer hearing his bold cheer, nor seeing his noble figure in the advance, turned and fled, pell-mell, back upon the town. As for me, blocked up amid the mass, I was cut down from the shoulder to the elbow by a young fellow of about sixteen, who galloped about like a schoolboy on a holiday. The wound was only dangerous from the loss of blood, and so I contrived to reach Amacante without much difficulty; from whence, with three or four others, I was ordered here until fit for service."

"But what news from our own headquarters?" inquired I.

"All imaginable kind of rumors are afloat. Some say that Craddock is retiring; others, that a part of the army is in motion upon Caldas."

"Then we are not going to have a very long sojourn here after all, eh, Major?"—"Donna Maria de Tormes will be inconsolable. By-the-by, their house is just opposite us. Have you never heard Monsoon mention his friends there?"

"Come, come, Joe, how can you be so foolish?"

"But, Major, my dear friend, what signifies your modesty? there is not a man in the service does not know it, save those in the last *Gazette*."

"Indeed, Joe, I am very angry with you."

"Well then, by Jove! I must tell it myself; though, faith, lads, you lose not a little for want of Monsoon's tact in the narrative."

ing is better than trusting to grapher," cried the Major; "so :

I was Acting Commissary-Gen- e Portuguese forces, some few I obtained great experience of of the people; for though natu- unsuspecting temperament my- erally contrive to pick out the es of my associates, even upon a naintance. Now, my appoint- ed me very much on this score; little opportunities of examin- vorld. 'The greatest study of is man'—Sparks would say wo- no matter.

I soon discovered that our an- very excellent allies, the Portu- h a beautiful climate, delicious d very delightful wives and were the most infernal rogues drels ever met with. 'Make horoughly acquainted with the tures of the natives,' said old Sir me, in a dispatch from head- nd, faith, it was not difficult; , palpable, undisguised rascals heard of. I thought I knew a wo myself, when I landed; but, you! I was a babe; I was an in- addling clothes, compared with they humbugged me,—ay, *me!* gan to suspect that I was only my sleep.

, Monsoon,' said the General, me you were a sharp fellow, and ople here seem to work round day. This will never do. You hten up a little, or I shall be send you back.'

ral,' said I, 'they used to call me England, but, somehow, here—' derstand,' said he, 'you don't Portuguese; there's but one way a—strike quickly, and strike ever give them time for roguery; y have a moment's reflection, at the devil himself; but, when plot working, come slap down the thing your own way.'

now, there never was anything this advice, and, for the eigh- ns I acted upon it, I never knew

t a thousand measures of wheat.' or Excellenza, the crops have ably deficient, and—'

ant-major,' I would say, 'these e have no corn; it's a wine let them make up the rations

meat came in that evening.

"'One hundred and twenty bullocks wanted for the reserve.'

"'The cattle are all up the mountains.'

"'Let the alcalde catch them before night, or I'll catch *him*.

"Lord bless you! I had beef enough to feed the Peninsula. And in this way, while the forces were eating short allowance and half-rations elsewhere, our brigade were plump as aldermen.

"When we lay in Andalusia this was easy enough. What a country to be sure! Such vineyards, such gardens, such delicious valleys, waving with corn, and fat with olives; actually it seemed a kind of dispensation of Providence to make war in. There was everything you could desire; and, then, the people, like all your wealthy ones, were so timid, and so easily frightened, you could get what you pleased out of them by a little terror. My scouts managed this very well.

"'He is coming,' they would say, 'after to-morrow.'

"'*Madre de Dios!*'

"'I hope he won't burn the village.'

"'*Questos infernales Ingleses!* how wicked they are.'

"'You'd better try what a sack of moidores or doubloons might do with him; he may refuse them, but make the effort.'

"Ha!" said the Major, with a long-drawn sigh, "those were pleasant times; alas! that they should ever come to an end. Well, among the old hidalgos I met there was one Don Emanuel Selvio de Tormes, an awful old miser, rich as Crœsus, and suspicious as the arch-fiend himself. Lord, how I melted him down! I quartered two squadrons of horse and a troop of flying artillery upon him. How the fellows did eat! such a consumption of wines was never heard of; and, as they began to slacken a little, I took care to replace them by fresh arrivals—fellows from the mountains—*caçadores* they call them. At last, my friend Don Emanuel could stand it no longer, and he sent me a diplomatic envoy to negotiate terms, which, upon the whole, I must say, were fair enough, and, in a few days after, the *caçadores* were withdrawn, and I took up my quarters at the *château*. I have had various chances and changes in this wicked world, but I am free to confess that I never passed a more agreeable time than the seven weeks I spent there. Don Emanuel, when properly managed, became a very pleasant little fellow: Donna Maria, his wife, was a sweet creature. You need not be winking that way. Upon my life, she was; rather fat, to be sure, and her

age something verging upon the fifties; but she had such eyes, black as sloes, and luscious as ripe grapes; and she was always smiling, and ogling, and looking so sweet. Confound me, if I think she wasn't the most enchanting being in this world, with about ten thousand pounds' worth of jewels upon her fingers and in her ears. I have her before me at this instant, as she used to sit in the little arbor in the garden, with a Manilla cigar in her mouth and a little brandy-and-water—quite weak, you know—beside her.

"'Ah! General,' she used to say—she always called me General—'what a glorious career yours is! A soldier is *indeed* a man.'

"Then she would look at poor Emanuel, who used to sit in a corner, holding his hand to his face, for hours, calculating interest and cent. per cent., till he fell asleep.

"Now, he labored under a very singular malady—not that I ever knew it at the time—a kind of luxation of the lower jaw, which, when it came on, happened somehow to press upon some vital nerve or other, and left him perfectly paralyzed till it was restored to its proper place. In fact, during the time the agony lasted, he was like one in a trance; for though he could see and hear, he could neither speak nor move, and looked as if he had done with both for many a day to come.

"Well, as I was saying, I knew nothing of all this, till a slight circumstance made it known to me. I was seated one evening in the little arbor I mentioned with Donna Maria. There was a little table before us, covered with wines and fruits, a dish of olives, some Castile oranges, and a fresh pine. I remember it well; my eye roved over the little dessert, set out in old-fashioned, rich silver dishes, then turned toward the lady herself, with rings and brooches, earrings, and chains enough to reward one for sacking a town; and I said to myself, 'Monsoon, Monsoon, this is better than long marches in the Pyrenees, with a cork-tree for a bed-curtain, and wet grass for a mattress. How pleasantly one might jog on in this world with this little country-house for his abode, and Donna Maria for a companion!'

"I tasted the port—it was delicious. Now, I knew very little Portuguese, but I made some effort to ask if there was much of it in the cellar.

"She smiled, and said, 'Oh! yes.'

"'What a luxurious life one might lead here!' thought I; 'and, after all, perhaps Providence might remove Don Emanuel.'

"I finished the bottle as I thus meditated. The next was, if possible, more crusty.

"'This is a delicious retreat,' said I, soliloquizing.

"Donna Maria seemed to know what was passing in my mind, for she smiled too.

"'Yes,' said I, in broken Portuguese, 'one ought to be very happy here, Donna Maria.'

"She blushed, and I continued:

"'What can one want for more in this life?—all the charms that rendered Paradise what it was'—I took her hand here—'and made Adam blessed.'

"'Ah, General!' said she, with a sigh, 'you are such a flatterer.'

"'Who could flatter,' said I, with enthusiasm, 'when there are not words enough to express what he feels?' This was true, for my Portuguese was fast failing me. 'But if I ever was happy, it is now.'

"I took another pull at the port.

"'If I only thought,' said I, 'that my presence here was not thought unwelcome—'

"'Fie, General,' said she, 'how could you say such a thing?'

"'If I only thought I was not hated,' said I, tremblingly.

"'Oh!' said she again.

"'Despised.'

"'Oh!'

"'Loathed.'

"She pressed my hand—I kissed hers; she hurriedly snatched it from me, and pointed toward a lime-tree near, beneath which, in the cool enjoyment of his cigar, sat the spare and detested figure of Don Emanuel.

"'Yes,' thought I, 'there he is—the only bar to my good fortune; were it not for him, I should not be long before I became possessor of this excellent old *château*, with a most indiscretionary power over the cellar. Don Mauricius Monsoon would speedily assume his place among the grandees of Portugal.'

"I know not how long my reverie lasted, nor, indeed, how the evening passed; but I remember well the moon was up, and a sky bright with a thousand stars was shining, as I sat beside the fair Donna Maria, endeavoring, with such Portuguese as it had pleased fate to bestow on me, to instruct her touching my warlike services and deeds of arms. The fourth bottle of port was ebbing beneath my eloquence, as responsively her heart beat, when I heard a slight rustle in the branches near. I

looked, and, Heavens, what a sight did I behold! There was little Don Emanuel stretched upon the grass, with his mouth wide open, his face pale as death, his arms stretched out at either side, and his legs stiffened straight out. I ran over and asked if he were ill, but no answer came. I lifted up an arm, but it fell heavily upon the ground as I let it go; the leg did likewise. I touched his nose—it was cold.

"'Hollo,' thought I, 'is it so? This comes of mixing water with your sherry. I saw where it would end.'

"Now, upon my life, I felt sorry for the little fellow; but, somehow, one gets so familiarized with this sort of thing in a campaign, that one only half feels in a case like this.

"'Yes,' said I; 'man is but grass; but I, for one, must make hay when the sun shines. Now for the Donna Maria,' for the poor thing was asleep in the arbor all this while.

"'Donna,' said I, shaking her by the elbow,—'Donna, don't be shocked at what I'm going to say.'

"'Ah! General,' said she, with a sigh, 'say no more; I must not listen to you.'

"'You don't know that,' said I, with a knowing look;—'you don't know that.'

"'Why, what can you mean?'

"'The little fellow is done for;' for the port was working strong now, and destroyed all my fine sensibility. 'Yes, Donna,' said I, 'you are free,'—here I threw myself upon my knees,—'free to make me the happiest of commissaries and the jolliest grandee of Portugal that ever—'

"'But Don Emanuel?'

"'Run out—dry—empty,' inverting a finished decanter, to typify my words as I spoke.

"'He is not dead?' said she, with a scream.

"'Even so,' said I, with a hiccup; 'ordered for service in a better world, where there are neither inspections nor arrears.'

"Before the words were well out, she sprang from the bench, and rushed over to the spot where the little Don lay. What she said or did I know not, but the next moment he sat bolt upright on the grass, and, as he held his jaw with one hand and supported himself on the other, vented such a torrent of abuse and insult at me, that, for want of Portuguese enough to reply, I rejoined in English, in which I swore pretty roundly for five minutes. Meanwhile, the Donna had summoned the servants, who removed Don Emanuel to the house; where, on my return, I found my luggage displayed before the door, with a civil hint to deploy in orderly time, and take ground elsewhere.

"In a few days, however, his anger cooled down, and I received a polite note from Donna Maria, that the Don at length began to understand the joke, and begged that I would return to the *château*, and that he would expect me at dinner the same day."

"With which, of course, you complied?"

"Which of course I did. Forgive your enemies, my dear boy; it is only Christian-like; and really, we lived very happily ever after: the Donna was a mighty clever woman, and a dear good soul besides."

It was late when the Major concluded his story; so, after wishing Ferguson a good-night, we took our leave, and retired for the night to our quarters.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LISBON.

THE tramp of horses' feet and the sound of voices beneath my window roused me from a deep sleep. I sprang up, and drew aside the curtain. What a strange confusion beset me as I looked forth! Before me lay a broad and tranquil river, whose opposite shore, deeply wooded, and studded with villas and cottages, rose abruptly from the water's edge; vessels of war lay tranquilly in the stream, their pennants trailing in the tide. The loud boom of a morning gun rolled along the surface, awaking a hundred echoes as it passed, and the lazy smoke rested for some minutes on the glassy water as it blended with the thin air of the morning.

"Where am I?" was my first question to myself, as I continued to look from side to side, unable to collect my scattered senses.

One word sufficed to recall me to myself, as I heard Power's voice from without, call out,—

"Charley! O'Malley, I say! Come down here!"

I hurriedly threw on my clothes, and went to the door.

"Well, Charley! I've been put in harness rather sooner than I expected. Here's old Douglas has been sitting up all night, writing dispatches; and I must hasten on to head-quarters, without a moment's delay. There's work before us, that's certain; but when, where, and how, of that I know nothing. You may expect the

route every moment; the French are still advancing. Meanwhile, I have a couple of commissions for you to execute. First, here's a packet for Hammersley; you are sure to meet him with the regiment in a day or two. I have some scruples about asking you this—but, confound it!—you're too sensible a fellow to care—"

Here he hesitated; and, as I colored to the eyes, for some minutes he seemed uncertain how to proceed. At length, recovering himself, he went on:

"Now for the other. This is a most loving epistle from a poor devil of a midshipman, written last night, by a tallow candle, in the cockpit, containing vows of eternal adoration and a lock of hair. I promised faithfully to deliver it myself; for the *Thunderer* sails for Gibraltar next tide, and he cannot go ashore for an instant. However, as Sir Arthur's billet may be of more importance than the reefer's, I must intrust its safe keeping to your hands. Now, then, don't look so devilish sleepy; but seem to understand what I am saying. This is the address:—'La Senhora Inez da Silviero, Rua Nuova, opposite the barber's;' you'll not neglect it. So now, my dear boy, till our next meeting, *adios!*"

"Stop! for Heaven's sake, not so fast, I pray. Where's the street?"

"The Rua Nuova. Remember Figaro, my boy. Cinque perruche."

"But what am I to do?"

"To do! what a question! Anything; everything. Be a good diplomate; speak of the torturing agony of the lover, for which I can vouch (the boy is only fifteen); swear that he is to return in a month, first lieutenant of the *Thunder Bomb*, with intentions that even Madame Dalrymple would approve."

"What nonsense," said I, blushing to the eyes.

"And if that suffice not, I know of but one resource."

"Which is?"

"Make love to her yourself. Ay, even so. Don't look so confoundedly vinegar; the girl, I hear, is a devilish pretty one, the house pleasant, and I sincerely wish I could exchange duties with you, leaving you to make your bows to his Excellency the C. O. F., and myself free to make mine to La Senhora. And now, push along, old red-cap."

So saying, he made a significant cut of his whip at the Portuguese guide, and in another moment was out of sight.

My first thought was one of regret at *Power's* departure. For some time past we had been inseparable companions; and, notwithstanding the reckless and wild gayety of his conduct, I had ever found him ready to assist me in every difficulty, and that with an address and dexterity a more calculating adviser might not have possessed. I was now utterly alone; for, though Monsoon and the Adjutant were still in Lisbon, as was also Sparks, I never could make intimates of them.

I ate my breakfast with a heavy heart; my solitary position again suggesting thoughts of home and kindred. Just at this moment my eyes fell upon the packet destined for Hammersley; I took it up and weighed it in my hand. "Alas!" thought I, "how much of my destiny may lie within that envelope! how fatally may my after-life be influenced by it!" It felt heavy, as though there was something besides letters. True, too true; there was a picture; Lucy's portrait! The cold drops of perspiration stood upon my forehead as my fingers traced the outline of a miniature-case in the parcel. I became deadly weak, and sank, half-fainting, upon a chair. And such is the end of my first dream of happiness! How have I duped, how have I deceived myself! For, alas! though Lucy had never responded to my proffered vows of affection, yet had I ever nurtured in my heart a secret hope that I was not altogether uncared for. Every look she had given me, every word she had spoken, the tone of her voice, her step, her every gesture were before me, all confirming my delusion—and yet—I could bear no more, and burst into tears.

The loud call of a cavalry trumpet aroused me.

How long I had passed in this state of despondency I knew not; but it was long past noon when I rallied myself. My charger was already awaiting me; and a second blast of the trumpet told that the inspection in the Plaza was about to commence.

As I continued to dress, I gradually rallied from my depressing thoughts; and, ere I belted my sabretasche, the current of my ideas had turned from their train of sadness to one of hardihood and daring. Lucy Dashwood had treated me like a willful schoolboy. Mayhap, I may prove myself as gallant a soldier as even him she has preferred before me.

A third sound of the trumpet cut short my reflections, and I sprang into the saddle, and hastened toward the Plaza. As I dashed along the streets, my horse maddened with the impulse that stirred my own heart, curvetted and plunged uncea-

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WITH ONE SPRING HE ROSE, AND CLEARED IT AT A BOUND. (P. 768.)

ingly. As I reached the Plaza, the crowd became dense, and I was obliged to pull up. The sound of the music, the parade, the tramp of the infantry, and the neighing of the horses, were, however, too much for my mettlesome steed, and he became nearly unmanageable; he plunged fearfully, and twice reared as though he would have fallen back. As I scattered the foot passengers right and left with terror, my eye fell upon one lovely girl, who, tearing herself from her companion, rushed wildly toward an open doorway for shelter; suddenly, however, changing her intention, she came forward a few paces, and then, as if overcome by fear, stood stock-still, her hands clasped upon her bosom, her eyes upturned, her features deadly pale, while her knees seemed bending beneath her. Never did I behold a more beautiful object. Her dark hair had fallen loose upon her shoulder, and she stood the very *idéal* of the "Madonna Supplicating." My glance was short as a lightning flash; for, the same instant, my horse swerved, and dashed forward right at the place where she was standing. One terrific cry rose from the crowd, who saw her danger. Beside her stood a muleteer, who had drawn up his mule and cart close beside the footway for safety; she made one effort to reach it, but her outstretched arms alone moved, and, paralyzed by terror, she sank motionless upon the pavement. There was but one course open to me now; so, collecting myself for the effort, I threw my horse upon his haunches, and then, dashing the spurs into his flanks, breasted him at the mule cart. With one spring he rose, and cleared it at a bound, while the very air rang with the acclamations of the multitude, and a thousand bravos saluted me as I alighted upon the opposite side.

"Well done, O'Malley!" sang out the little Adjutant, as I flew past, and pulled up in the middle of the Plaza.

"Something devilish like Galway in that leap," said a very musical voice beside me; and at the same instant a tall, soldier-like man, in an undress dragoon frock, touched his cap, and said, "A Fourteenth man, I perceive, sir. May I introduce myself?—Major O'Shaughnessy."

I bowed, and shook the Major's proffered hand, while he continued:

"Old Monsoon mentioned your name to us this morning. You came out together, if I mistake not?"

"Yes; but, somehow, I've missed the Major since my landing."

"Oh, you'll see him presently; he'll be on parade. By-the-by, he wishes particularly to meet you. We dine to-day at the 'Quai de Soderi,' and if you're not engaged— Yes, this is the person," said he, turning at the moment toward a servant, who, with a card in his hand, seemed to search for some one in the crowd.

The man approached, and handed it to me.

"What can this mean?" said I. "Don Emanuel de Blacas y Silviero, Rua Nuova."

"Why, that's the great Portuguese contractor, the intendant of half the army, the richest fellow in Lisbon. Have you known him long?"

"Never heard of him till now."

"By Jove, you're in luck? No man gives such dinners; he has such a cellar! I'll wager a fifty it was his daughter you took in the flying leap a while ago. I hear she is a beautiful creature."

"Yes," thought I, "that must be it; and yet, strange enough, I think the name and address are familiar to me."

"Ten to one, you've heard Monsoon speak of him; he's most intimate there. But here comes the Major."

And, as he spoke, the illustrious Commissary came forward, holding a vast bundle of papers in one hand, and his snuff-box in the other, followed by a long string of clerks, contractors, assistant-surgeons, paymasters, etc., all eagerly pressing forward to be heard.

"It's quite impossible; I can't do it to-day. Victualing and physicking are very good things, but must be done in season. I have been up all night at the accounts—haven't I, O'Malley?"—here he winked at me most significantly;—"and then I have the forage and stoppage fund to look through (We dine at six, sharp," said he, *sotto voce*), "which will leave me without one minute unoccupied for the next twenty-four hours. Look to your toggery this evening; I've something in my eye for you, O'Malley."

"Officers unattached to their several corps will fall into the middle of the Plaza," said a deep voice among the crowd; and, in obedience to the order, I rode forward and placed myself with a number of others, apparently newly joined, in the open square. A short gray-haired old Colonel, with a dark, eagle look, proceeded to inspect us, reading from a paper as he came along:

"Mr. Hepton, 6th foot; commission bearing date 11th January; drilled; proceed to Ovar, and join his regiment.

"Mr. Gronow, Fusilier Guards, remains with the depôt.

"Captain Mortimer, 1st Dragoons; appointed aide-de-camp to the General commanding the cavalry brigade.

"Mr. Sparks—where is Mr. Sparks? Mr. Sparks absent from parade; make a note of it.

"Mr. O'Malley, 14th Light Dragoons. Mr. O'Malley—oh, I remember; I have received a letter from Sir George Dashwood concerning you. You will hold yourself in readiness to march. Your friends desire that, before you may obtain any staff appointment, you should have the opportunity of seeing some service. Am I to understand such is your wish?"

"Most certainly."

"May I have the pleasure of your company at dinner to-day?"

"I regret that I have already accepted an invitation to dine with Major Monsoon."

"With Major Monsoon? ah, indeed! Perhaps it might be as well I should mention—But no matter. I wish you good-morning."

So saying, the little Colonel rode off, leaving me to suppose that my dinner engagement had not raised me in his estimation, though why, I could not exactly determine.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE RUA NUOVA.

Our dinner was a long and uninteresting one, and, as I found that the Major was likely to prefer his seat, as chairman of the party, to the seductions of ladies' society, I took the first opportunity of escaping, and left the room.

It was a rich moonlight night, as I found myself in the street. My way, which led along the banks of the Tagus, was almost as light as in day-time, and crowded with walking parties, who sauntered carelessly along, in the enjoyment of the cool, refreshing night air. On inquiring, I discovered that the Rua Nuova was at the extremity of the city; but, as the road led along by the river, I did not regret the distance, but walked on with increasing pleasure at the charms of so heavenly a climate and country.

After three-quarters of an hour's walk, the streets became by degrees less and less crowded. A solitary party passed me now and then; the buzz of distant voices succeeded to the gay laughter and merry *tones* of the passing groups, and, at *length*, my own footsteps alone awoke the echoes along the deserted pathway. I stopped every now and then to gaze upon the tranquil river, whose eddies were circling in the pale silver of the moonlight. I listened with attentive ear, as the night breeze wafted to me the far-off sounds of a guitar, and the deep tones of some lovers' serenade; while again the tender warbling of the nightingale came borne across the stream, on a wind rich with the odor of the orange-tree.

As thus I lingered on my way, the time stole on; and it was near midnight ere I had roused myself from the reverie surrounding objects had thrown about me. I stopped suddenly, and for some minutes I struggled with myself to discover if I was really awake. As I walked along, lost in my reflections, I had entered a little garden beside the river; fragrant plants and lovely flowers bloomed on every side: the the orange, the camelia, the cactus, and the rich laurel of Portugal were blending their green and golden hues around me, while the very air was filled with delicious music. "Was it a dream? Could such ecstasy be real?" I asked myself, as the rich notes swelled upward in their strength, and sank in soft cadence to tones of melting harmony, now bursting forth in the full force of gladness, the voices blended together in one stream of mellow music, and, suddenly ceasing, the soft but thrilling shake of a female voice rose upon the air, and, in its plaintive beauty, stirred the very heart. The proud tramp of martial music succeeded to the low wailing cry of agony; then came the crash of battle, the clang of steel;—the thunder of the fight rolled on in all its majesty, increasing in its maddening excitement till it ended in one loud shout of victory.

All was still; not a breath moved, not a leaf stirred, and again was I relapsing into my dreamy skepticism, when again the notes swelled upward in concert. But now their accents were changed, and, in low, subdued tones, faintly and slowly uttered, the prayer of thanksgiving rose to heaven, and spoke their gratefulness. I almost fell upon my knees, and already the tears filled my eyes as I drank in the sounds. My heart was full to bursting, and even now as I write it, my pulse throbs as I remember the hymn of the Abencerrages.

When I rallied from my trance of excited pleasure, my first thought was—where was I, and how came I there? Before I could resolve my doubts upon the question, my attention was turned in another direction, for close beside me the branches moved forward, and a pair of

arms were thrown around my neck, while a delicious voice cried out, in an accent of childish delight, "*Trovado!*" At the same instant a lovely head sank upon my shoulder, covering it with tresses of long brown hair. The arms pressed me still more closely, till I felt her very heart beating against my side.

"*Mio fradre,*" said a soft, trembling voice, as her fingers played in my hair and patted my temples.

What a situation mine! I well knew that some mistaken identity had been the cause; but, still, I could not repress my inclination to return the embrace, as I pressed my lips upon the fair forehead that leaned upon my bosom; at the same moment, she threw back her head, as if to look me more fully in the face. One glance sufficed; blushing deeply over her cheeks and neck, she sprang from my arms, and, uttering a faint cry, staggered against a tree. In an instant I saw it was the lovely girl I had met in the morning; and, without losing a second, I poured out apologies for my intrusion with all the eloquence I was master of, till she suddenly interrupted me by asking if I spoke French. Scarcely had I recommenced my excuses in that language, when a third party appeared upon the stage. This was a short, elderly man, in a green uniform, with several decorations upon his breast, and a cocked hat, with a most flowing plume, in his right hand.

"May I beg to know whom I have the honor of receiving?" inquired he, in very excellent English, as he advanced with a look of very ceremonious and distant politeness.

I immediately explained that, presuming upon the card which his servant had presented me, I had resolved on paying my respects, when a mistake had led me accidentally into his garden.

My apologies had not come to an end, when he folded me in his arms and overwhelmed me with thanks, at the same time saying a few words in Portuguese to his daughter; she stooped down, and taking my hand gently within her own, touched it with her lips.

This piece of touching courtesy—which I afterward found meant little or nothing—affected me deeply at the time, and I felt the blood rush to my face and forehead, half in pride, half in a sense of shame. My confusion was, however, of short duration, for, taking my arm, the old gentleman led me along a few paces, and turning round a small clump of olives, entered a little summer-house. Here a considerable party were assembled, which for their picturesque effect could scarcely have been better managed on the stage.

Beneath the mild luster of a large lamp of stained glass, half hid in the overhanging boughs, was spread a table covered with vessels of gold and silver plate of gorgeous richness; drinking cups and goblets of antique pattern shone among cups of Sèvres china or Venetian glass; delicious fruit, looking a thousand times more tempting for being contained in baskets of silver foliage, peeped from amid a profusion of fresh flowers, whose odor was continually shed around by a slight *jet d'eau* that played among the leaves. Around, upon the grass, seated upon cushions or reclining on Genoa carpets, were several beautiful girls, in most becoming costumes, their dark locks and darker eyes speaking of "the soft south," while their expressive gestures and animated looks betokened a race whose temperament is glowing as their clime. There were several men also, the greater number of whom appeared in uniform—bronzed, soldier-like fellows, who had the jaunty air and easy carriage of their calling—among whom was one Englishman, or at least so I guessed from his wearing the uniform of a heavy dragoon regiment.

"This is my daughter's *fête,*" said Don Emanuel, as he ushered me into the assembly,—"her birthday; a sad day it might have been for us had it not been for your courage and forethought." So saying, he commenced a recital of my adventure to the bystanders, who overwhelmed me with civil speeches and a shower of soft looks that completed the fascination of the fairy scene. Meanwhile, the fair Inez had made room for me beside her, and I found myself at once the lion of the party, each vying with her neighbor who should show me most attention, la Senhora herself directing her conversation exclusively to me; a circumstance which, considering the awkwardness of our first meeting, I felt no small surprise at, and which led me, somewhat maliciously I confess, to make a half allusion to it, feeling some interest in ascertaining for whom the flattering reception was really intended.

"I thought you were Charles," said she, blushing in answer to my question.

"And you were right," said I, "I am Charles."

"Nay, but I meant *my* Charles."

There was something of touching softness in the tones of these few words that made me half wish I were *her* Charles.

Whether my look evinced as much or not, I cannot tell, but she speedily added:

"He is my brother; he is a captain in the *caçadores*, and I expected him here this evening. Some one saw a figure pass the gate and conceal himself in the trees, and I am sure it was he."

"What a disappointment!" said I.

"Yes; was it not?" said she, hurriedly; and then, as if remembering how ungracious was the speech, she blushed more deeply and hung down her head.

Just at this moment, as I looked up, I caught the eye of the English officer fixed steadfastly upon me. He was a tall, fine-looking fellow, of about two or three and thirty, with marked and handsome features, which, however, conveyed an expression of something sneering and sinister, that struck me the moment I saw him. His glass was fixed in his eye, and I perceived that he regarded us both with a look of no common interest. My attention did not, however, dwell long upon the circumstance, for Don Emanuel, coming behind my shoulder, asked me if I would not take out his daughter in the bolero that was just forming.

To my shame I was obliged to confess that I had not even seen the dance; and, while I continued to express my resolve to correct the errors of my education, the Englishman came up and asked the Senhora to be his partner. This put the very keystone upon my annoyance, and I half turned angrily away from the spot, when I heard her decline his invitation, and avow her determination not to dance.

There was something which pleased me so much at this refusal, that I could not help turning upon her a look of most grateful acknowledgment; but, as I did so, I once more encountered the gaze of the Englishman, whose knitted brows and compressed lips were bent upon me in a manner there was no mistaking. This was neither the fitting time nor place to seek any explanation of the circumstance; so, wisely resolving to wait a better occasion, I turned away and resumed my attentions toward my fair companion.

"Then you don't care for the bolero?" said I, as she reseated herself upon the grass.

"Oh! I delight in it," said she, enthusiastically.

"But you refused to dance?"

She hesitated, blushed, tried to mutter something, and was silent.

"I had determined to learn it," said I, half jestingly; "but, if you will not dance with me—"

"Yes; that I will—indeed I will."

"But you declined my countryman. Is it because he is inexpert?"

The Senhora hesitated; looked confused for some minutes; at length, coloring slightly, she said, "I have already made one rude speech to you this evening; I fear lest I should make a second. Tell me, is Captain Trevyllian your friend?"

"If you mean that gentleman yonder, I never saw him before."

"Nor heard of him?"

"Nor that either. We are total strangers to each other."

"Well, then, I may confess it. I do not like him. My father prefers him to any one else, invites him daily here, and, in fact, installs him as his first favorite. But still, I cannot like him; and yet I have done my best to do so."

"Indeed!" said I, pointedly. "What are his chief demerits? Is he not agreeable? is he not clever?"

"Oh! on the contrary, most agreeable; fascinating, I should say, in conversation; has traveled; seen a great deal of the world; is very accomplished, and has distinguished himself on several occasions; he wears, as you see, a Portuguese order."

"And, with all that—"

"And, with all that, I cannot bear him. He is a duelist, a notorious duelist. My brother, too, knows more of him, and avoids him. But let us not speak further: I see his eyes are again fixed on us; and, somehow, I fear him, without well knowing wherefore."

A movement among the party; shawls and mantillas were sought for on all sides; and the preparations for leave-taking appeared general. Before, however, I had time to express my thanks for my hospitable reception, the guests had assembled in a circle around the Senhora, and, toasting her with a parting bumper, they commenced in concert a little Portuguese song of farewell, each verse concluding with a Good-night! which, as they separated and held their way homeward, might now and then be heard, rising upon the breeze, and wafting their last thoughts back to her. The concluding verse, which struck me much, I have essayed to translate. It ran somehow thus:

"The morning breezes chill
Now close our joyous scene,
And yet we linger still,
Where we've so happy been.
How blest were it to live
With hearts like ours so light,
And only part to give
One long and last Good-night!
Good-night!"

With many an invitation to renew my visit, most kindly preferred by Don Emanuel, and warmly seconded by his daughter, I, too, wished my Good-night! and turned my steps homeward.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE VILLA.

THE first object which presented itself to my eye, the next morning, was the midshipman's packet, intrusted to my care by Power. I turned it over to read the address more carefully, and what was my surprise to find that the name was that of my fair friend, Donna Inez!

"This certainly thickens the plot," thought I; "and so I have now fallen upon the real Simon Pure, and the reefer has had the good fortune to distance the dragoon. Well, thus far, I cannot say that I regret it. Now, however, for the parade, and then for the villa."

"I say, O'Malley," cried out Monsoon, as I appeared on the Plaza, "I have accepted an invitation for you to-day. We dine across the river. Be at my quarters a little before six, and we'll go together."

I should rather have declined the invitation, but, not well knowing why, and having no ready excuse, acceded, and promised to be punctual.

"You were at Don Emanuel's last night; I heard of you!"

"Yes: I spent a most delightful evening."

"That's your ground, my boy; a million of moidores, and such a campagna in Valencia; a better thing than the Dalrymple affair. Don't blush. I know it all. But stay; here they come."

As he spoke, the General commanding, with a numerous staff, rode forward. As they passed, I recognized a face which I had certainly seen before, and in a moment remembered it was that of the dragoon of the evening before. He passed quite close, and fixing his eyes steadfastly on me, evinced no sign of recognition.

The parade lasted above two hours, and it was with a feeling of impatience, I mounted a fresh horse to canter out to the villa. When I arrived, the servant informed me that Don Emanuel was in the city, but that the Senhora was in the garden, offering, at the same time, to escort me. Declining this honor, I intrusted my horse to his keeping, and took my way toward the arbor where last I had seen her.

I had not walked many paces, when the sound of a guitar struck on my ear. I listened. It was the Senhora's voice. She was singing a Venetian canzonetta, in a low, soft, warbling tone, as one lost in a reverie; as though the music was a mere accompaniment to some pleasant thought. I peeped through the dense leaves, and there she sat upon a low garden seat; an open book on the rustic table before her; beside her, embroidery, which seemed only lately abandoned. As I looked, she placed her guitar upon the ground, and began to play with a small spaniel, that seemed to have waited with impatience for some testimony of favor. A moment more, and she grew weary of this; then, heaving a long but gentle sigh, leaned back upon her chair, and seemed lost in thought. I now had ample time to regard her, and, certainly, never beheld anything more lovely. There was a character of classic beauty, and her brow, though fair and ample, was still strongly marked upon the temples; the eyes, being deep and squarely set, imparted a look of intensity to her features which their own softness alone subdued, while the short upper lip, which trembled with every passing thought, spoke of a nature tender and impressionable, and yet impassioned. Her foot and ankle peeped from beneath her dark robe, and certainly nothing could be more faultless; while her hand, fair as marble, blue-veined and dimpled, played amid the long tresses of her hair, that, as if in the wantonness of beauty, fell carelessly upon her shoulders.

It was some time before I could tear myself away from the fascination of so much beauty, and it needed no common effort to leave the spot. As I made a short *détour* in the garden before approaching the arbor, she saw me as I came forward, and, kissing her hand gayly, made room for me beside her.

"I have been fortunate in finding you alone, Senhora," said I, as I seated myself by her side, "for I am the bearer of a letter to you. How far it may interest you I know not, but to the writer's feelings I am bound to testify."

"A letter to me? you jest, surely?"

"That I am in earnest, this will show," said I, producing the packet.

She took it from my hands, turned it about and about, examined the seal, while, half doubtingly, she said:

"The name is mine; but still—"

"You fear to open it: is it not so? But, after all, you need not be surprised if it's from Howard; that's his name, I think."

"Howard! from little Howard!" exclaimed she, enthusiastically; and, tearing open the letter, she pressed it to her lips, her eyes sparkling with pleasure, and her cheek glowing as she read. I watched her as she ran rapidly over the lines; and I confess that, more than once, a pang of discontent shot through my heart that the midshipman's letter could call up such interest; not that I was in love with her myself, but yet, I know not how it was, I had fancied her affections unengaged, and, without asking myself wherefore, I wished as much.

"Poor, dear boy!" said she, as she came to the end.

How these few and simple words sank into my heart as I remembered how they had once been uttered to myself, and in perhaps no very dissimilar circumstances.

"But where is the souvenir he speaks of?" said she.

"The souvenir. I'm not aware—"

"Oh, I hope you have not lost the lock of hair he sent me!"

I was quite dumfounded at this, and could not remember whether I had received it from Power or not; so answered, at random,

"Yes; I must have left it on my table."

"Promise me, then, to bring it to-morrow with you?"

"Certainly," said I, with something of pique in my manner. "If I find such a means of making my visit an agreeable one, I shall certainly not omit it."

"You are quite right," said she, either not noticing, or not caring for the tone of my reply; "you will, indeed, be a welcome messenger. Do you know he was one of my lovers?"

"One of them! Indeed! Then pray how many do you number at this moment?"

"What a question! as if I could possibly count them. Besides, there are so many absent; some on leave, some deserters, perhaps, that I might be reckoning among my troops, but who, possibly, form part of the forces of the enemy. Do you know little Howard?"

"I cannot say that we are personally acquainted, but I am enabled, through the medium of a friend, to say that his sentiments are not strange to me. Besides, I have really pledged myself to support the prayer of his petition."

"How very good of you! For which reason you've forgotten, if not lost the lock of hair."

"That you shall have to-morrow," said I, pressing my hand solemnly to my heart.

"Well, then, don't forget it. But hush; here comes Captain Trevyllian. So you say Lisbon really pleases you?" said she, in a tone of voice totally changed, as the dragoon of the preceding evening approached.

"Mr. O'Malley, Captain Trevyllian."

We bowed stiffly and haughtily to each other, as two men salute who are unavoidably obliged to bow, with every wish on either side to avoid acquaintance. So, at least, I construed his bow; so I certainly intended my own.

It requires no common tact to give conversation the appearance of unconstraint and ease when it is evident that each person opposite is laboring under excited feelings; so that, notwithstanding the Senhora's efforts to engage our attention by the commonplaces of the day, we remained almost silent, and after a few observations of no interest, took our several leaves. Here again a new source of awkwardness arose; for, as we walked together toward the house, where our horses stood, neither party seemed disposed to speak.

"You are probably returning to Lisbon?" said he, coldly.

I assented by a bow; upon which, drawing his bridle within his arm, he bowed once more, and turned away in an opposite direction; while I, glad to be relieved of an unsought-for companionship, returned alone to the town.

CHAPTER XL.

THE DINNER.

It was with no peculiar pleasure that I dressed for our dinner-party. Major O'Shaughnessy, our host, was one of that class of my countrymen I cared least for—a riotous, good-natured, noisy, loud-swearing, punch-drinking western; full of stories of impossible fox hunts, and unimaginable duels, which all were acted either by himself or some member of his family. The company consisted of the Adjutant, Monsoon, Ferguson, Trevyllian, and some eight or ten officers with whom I was unacquainted. As is usual on such occasions, the wine circulated freely, and, amid the din and clamor of excited conversation, the fumes of Burgundy, and the vapor of cigar-smoke, we most of us became speedily mystified. As for me, my evil destiny would have it that I was placed exactly opposite Trevyllian, with whom, upon more than one occasion, I happened to differ in

opinion, and the question was in itself some trivial and unimportant one; yet the tone which he assumed, and of which I, too, could not divest myself in reply, boded anything rather than an amicable feeling between us. The noise and turmoil about prevented the others remarking the circumstance; but I could perceive in his manner what I deemed a studied determination to promote a quarrel, while I felt within myself a most unchristian-like desire to indulge his fancy.

"Worse fellows at passing the bottle than Trevyllian and O'Malley, there, I have rarely sojourned with," cried the Major; "look if they haven't got eight decanters between them, and here we are in a state of African thirst."

"How can you expect him to think of thirst when such perfumed billets as that come showering upon him?" said the Adjutant, alluding to a rose-colored epistle a servant had placed within my hands.

"Eight miles of a stone-wall country in fifteen minutes!—devil a lie in it!" said O'Shaughnessy, striking the table with his clenched fist; "show me the man would deny it!"

"Why, my dear fellow—"

"Don't be dearing me. Is it no you'll be saying to me?"

"Listen, now: there's O'Reilly, there—"

"Where is he?"

"He's under the table."

"Well, it's the same thing. His mother had a fox—bad luck to you: don't scald me with the jug!—his mother had a fox-cover in Shinrohan."

When O'Shaughnessy had got thus far in his narrative, I had the opportunity of opening my note, which merely contained the following words: "Come to the ball at the Casino, and bring the cadeau you promised."

I had scarcely read this over once, when a roar of laughter at something said attracted my attention. I looked up, and perceived Trevyllian's eyes bent upon me with the fierceness of a tiger; the veins in his forehead were swollen and distorted, and the whole expression of his face betokened rage and passion. Resolved no longer to submit to such evident determination to insult, I was rising from my place at table, when, as if anticipating my intention, he pushed back his chair, and left the room. Fearful of attracting attention by immediately following him, I affected to join in the conversation around me, while my temples throbbed, and my hands tingled with impatience to get away.

"Poor M'Manus!" said O'Shaughnessy, "rest his soul! he'd have puzzled the bench of bishops for hard words. Upon my conscience, I believe he spent his mornings looking for them in the Old Testament. Sure ye might have heard what happened to him at Banagher, when he commanded the Kilkennys,—ye never heard the story? well, then, ye shall. Push the sherry along first, though—old Monsoon, there, always keeps it lingering beside his left arm!

"Well, when Peter was Lieutenant-Colonel of the Kilkennys—who, I may remark, *en passant*, as the French say, were the seediest-looking devils in the whole service—he never let them alone from morning till night, drilling and pipe-claying, and polishing them up. 'Nothing will make soldiers of you,' said Peter; 'but, by the rock of Cashel, I'll keep you as clean as a new musket!' Now, poor Peter himself was not a very warlike figure; he measured five feet one in his tallest boots; but certainly, if Nature denied him length of stature, she compensated for it in another way, by giving him a taste of the longest words in the language. An extra syllable or so in a word was always a strong recommendation; and, whenever he could not find one to his mind, he'd take some quaint outlandish one, that more than once led to very awkward results. Well, the regiment was one day drawn up for parade in the town of Banagher, and, as M'Manus came down the lines, he stopped opposite one of the men, whose face, hands, and accoutrements exhibited a most woeful contempt of his orders. The fellow looked more like a turf-stack than a light-company man!

"'Stand out, sir!' cried M'Manus, in a boiling passion. 'Sergeant O'Toole, inspect this individual.' Now, the Sergeant was rather a favorite with Mac; for he always pretended to understand his phraseology, and, in consequence, was pronounced by the Colonel a very superior man for his station in life. 'Sergeant,' said he, 'we shall make an exemplary illustration of our system here!'

"'Yes, sir,' said the Sergeant, sorely puzzled at the meaning of what he spoke.

"'Bear him to the Shannon, and lave him there!' This he said in a kind of Coriolanus tone, with a toss up of his head, and a wave of his right arm, signs, whenever he made them, incontestably showing that further parley was out of the question, and that he had summed up, and charged the jury for good and all.

"'*Lave* him in the river?' said O'Toole, his eyes starting from the sockets, and his

whole face working in strong anxiety; 'is it *lave* him in the river, yer honor means?'

"'I have spoken!' said the little man, bending an ominous frown upon the Sergeant, which, whatever construction he might have put upon his words, there was no mistaking.

"'Well, well, av it's God's will he's drowned, it will not be on my head,' says O'Toole, as he marched the fellow away, between two rank and file.

"The parade was nearly over, when Mac happened to see the Sergeant coming up, all splashed with water, and looking quite tired.

"'Have you obeyed my orders?' said he.

"'Yes, yer honor; and tough work we had of it, for he struggled hard!'

"'And where is he now?'

"'Oh, troth, he's there safe! Divil a fear he'll get out!'

"'Where?' said Mac.

"'In the river, yer honor.'

"'What have you done, you scoundrel?'

"'Didn't I do as you bid me?' says he; 'didn't I throw him in, and *lave* [leave] him there?'

"And faith so they did; and if he wasn't a good swimmer, and got over to Moystown, there's little doubt but he'd have been drowned, and all because Peter M'Manus could not express himself like a Christian."

In the laughter which followed O'Shaughnessy's story, I took the opportunity of making my escape from the party, and succeeded in gaining the street unobserved. Though the note I had just read was not signed, I had no doubt from whom it came; so I hastened at once to my quarters, to make search for the lock of Ned Howard's hair, to which the Senhora alluded. What was my mortification, however, to discover that no such thing could be found anywhere! I searched all my drawers; I tossed about my papers and letters; I hunted every likely, every unlikely spot I could think of, but in vain; now cursing my carelessness for having lost it; now swearing most solemnly to myself that I never could have received it. What was to be done? It was already late: my only thought was how to replace it. If I only knew the color, any other lock of hair would, doubtless, do just as well. The chances were, as Howard was young, and an Englishman, that his hair was light; light-brown, probably; something like my own. Of course it was! why didn't that thought occur to me before? how stupid I was. So saying, I seized a pair of scissors, and cut a long lock beside my temple; this, in a calm moment, I might have hesitated about. "Yes," thought I, "she'll never discover the cheat; and, besides, I do feel—I know not exactly why—rather gratified to think that I shall have left this *souvenir* behind me, even though it call up other recollections than of me." So thinking, I wrapped my cloak about me, and hastened toward the Casino.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE ROUTE.

I HAD scarcely gone a hundred yards from my quarters, when a great tramp of horses' feet attracted my attention. I stopped to listen, and soon heard the jingle of dragoon accoutrements, as the noise came nearer. The night was dark, but perfectly still; and before I stood many minutes I heard the tones of a voice which I well knew could belong to but one, and that, Fred Power.

"Fred Power!" said I, shouting at the same time at the top of my voice—"Power!"

"Ah, Charley, is that you? come along to the Adjutant-General's quarters. I'm charged with some important dispatches, and can't stop till I've delivered them. Come along, I've glorious news for you!" So saying, he dashed spurs to his horse, and followed by two mounted dragoons, galloped past. Power's few and hurried words had so excited my curiosity, that I turned at once to follow him, questioning myself, as I walked along, to what he could possibly allude. He knew of my attachment to Lucy Dashwood—could he mean anything of her? But what could I expect there? by what flattery could I picture to myself any chance of success in that quarter? and yet, what other news could I care for or value, than what bore upon her fate upon whom my own depended? Thus ruminating, I reached the door of the spacious building in which the Adjutant-General had taken up his abode, and soon found myself among a crowd of persons whom the rumor of some important event had assembled there, though no one could tell what had occurred. Before many minutes the door opened, and Power came out; bowing hurriedly to a few, and whispering a word or two as he passed down the steps, he seized me by the arm and led me across the street. "Charley," said he, "the curtain's rising; the piece

is about to begin; a new commander-in-chief is sent out; Sir Arthur Wellesley, my boy, the finest fellow in England, is to head us on, and we march to-morrow. There's news for you!" A raw boy, unread, uninformed as I was, I knew but little of his career whose name had even then shed such luster upon our army; but the buoyant tone of Power as he spoke, the kindling energy of his voice roused me, and I felt every inch a soldier. As I grasped his hand, in delightful enthusiasm, I lost all memory of my disappointment, and, in the beating throb that shook my head, I felt how deeply slept the ardor of military glory that first led me from my home to see a battle-field.

"There goes the news!" said Frederick, pointing, as he spoke, to a rocket that shot up into the sky, and, as it broke into ten thousand stars, illuminated the broad stream where the ships of war lay darkly resting. In another moment the whole air shone with similar fires, while the deep roll of the drum sounded along the silent streets, and the city, so lately sunk in sleep, became, as if by magic, thronged with crowds of people; the sharp clang of the cavalry trumpet blended with the gay carol of the light-infantry bugle, and the heavy tramp of the march was heard in the distance. All was excitement, all bustle; but in the joyous tone of every voice was spoken the longing anxiety to meet the enemy; the gay, reckless tone of an Irish song would occasionally reach us, as some Connaught Ranger, or some Seventy-eighth man passed, his knapsack on his back; or the low monotonous pibroch of the Highlander, swelling into a war-cry, as some kilted corps drew up their ranks together. We turned to regain our quarters, when, at the corner of a street, we came suddenly upon a merry party, seated around a table before a little inn; a large street-lamp, unhung for the occasion, had been placed in the midst of them, and showed us the figures of several soldiers in undress; at the end, and raised a little above his compeers, sat one whom, by the unfair proportion he assumed of the conversation, not less than by the musical intonation of his voice, I soon recognized as my man, Mickey Free.

"I'll be hanged if that's not your fellow there, Charley," said Power, as he came to a dead stop a few yards off. "What an impertinent varlet he is: only to think of him there, presiding among a set of fellows that have fought all the battles in the Peninsular war. At this moment, I'll be hanged, if he is not going to sing."

Here a tremendous thumping upon the table announced the fact, and after a few preliminary observations from Mike, illustrative of his respect to the service in which he had so often distinguished himself, he began, to the air of the "Young May Moon," a ditty of which I only recollect the following verses:

"The pickets are fast retreating, boys,
The last tattoo is beating, boys;
So let every man
Finish his can,
And drink to our next merry meeting, boys!

"The colonel so gayly prancing, boys,
Has a wonderful trick of advancing, boys;
When he sings out so large,
'Fix bayonets and charge,'
He sets all the Frenchmen a-dancing, boys!

"Let Mounseer look ever so big, my boys,
Who cares for fighting a fig, my boys?
When we play Garryowen,
He'd rather go home;
For somehow, he's no taste for a jig, my boys!"

This admirable lyric seemed to have a perfect success, if one were only to judge from the thundering of voices, hands, and drinking vessels which followed; while a venerable gray-haired sergeant rose to propose Mr. Free's health, and speedy promotion to him.

We stood for several minutes in admiration of the party; when the loud roll of the drums beating to arms awakened us to the thought that our moments were numbered.

"Good-night, Charley!" said Power, as he shook my hand warmly; "good-night! It will be your last night under a curtain for some months to come; make the most of it. Adieu!"

So saying, we parted: he to his quarters, and I to all the confusion of my baggage, which lay in most admired disorder about my room.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE FAREWELL.

THE preparations for the march occupied me till near morning; and, indeed, had I been disposed to sleep, the din and clamor of the world without would have totally prevented it. Before daybreak the advanced guard was already in motion, and some squadrons of heavy cavalry had begun their march.

I looked around my now dismantled room as one does usually for the last time ere leaving, and bethought me if I had not

forgotten anything. Apparently all was remembered: but stay—what is this? To be sure, how forgetful I had become! It was the packet I destined for Donna Inez, and which, in the confusion of the night before, I had omitted to bring to the Casino.

I immediately dispatched Mike to the Commissary, with my luggage, and orders to ascertain when we were expected to march. He soon returned, with the intelligence that our corps was not to move before noon; so that I had yet some hours to spare, and make my adieux to the Senhora.

I cannot exactly explain the reason, but I certainly did bestow a more than common attention upon my toilet that morning. The Senhora was nothing to me. It is true, she had, as she lately most candidly informed me, a score of admirers, among whom I was not even reckoned: she was evidently a coquette, whose greatest pleasure was to sport and amuse herself with the passions she excited in others. And, even if she were not,—if her heart were to be won to-morrow, what claim—what right had I to seek it? My affections were already pledged; promised, it is true, to one who gave nothing in return, and who, perhaps, even loved another. Ah! there was the rub: that one confounded suspicion, lurking in the rear, chilled my courage and wounded my spirit.

If there be anything more disheartening to an Irishman, in his little *affaires de cœur*, than another, it is the sense of rivalry. The obstinacy of fathers, the ill-will of mothers, the coldness, the indifference of the lovely object herself,—obstacles though they be,—he has tact, spirit, and perseverance to overcome them; but, when a more successful candidate for the fair presents himself; when the eye that remains downcast at *his* suit, lights up with animation at *another's* coming; when the features, whose cold and chilling apathy to him have blended in one smile of welcome to another,—it is all up with him: he sees the game lost, and throws his cards upon the table. And yet, why is this? why is it that he, whose birthright it would seem to be sanguine when others despond, —to be confident when all else are hopeless,—should find his courage fail him here? The reason is, simply—But, in good sooth, I am ashamed to confess it!

Having jogged on so far with my reader, in all the sober seriousness which the matter-of-fact material of these memoirs demands, I fear lest a seeming paradox may cause me to lose my good name for veracity; and that, while merely maintaining a national trait of my country, I may appear to be asserting some unheard-of and absurd proposition: so far have mere vulgar prejudices gone to sap our character as a people.

The reason, then, is this—for I have gone too far to retreat—the Irishman is essentially bashful. Well, laugh if you wish; for I conclude that, by this time, you have given way to a most immoderate excess of risibility; but still, when you have perfectly recovered your composure, I beg to repeat, the Irishman is essentially a bashful man!

Do not, for a moment, fancy that I would by this imply that, in any new or unexpected situation—that from any unforeseen conjuncture of events—the Irishman would feel confused or abashed, more than any other; far from it. The cold and habitual reserve of the Englishman, the studied caution of the North Tweeder himself, would exhibit far stronger evidences of awkwardness in such circumstances as these. But, on the other hand, when measuring his capacity, his means of success, his probabilities of being preferred, with those of the natives of any other country, I back the Irishman against the world for distrust of his own powers, for an under-estimate of his real merits; in one word, for his bashfulness. But let us return to Donna Inez.

As I rode up to the villa, I found the family assembled at breakfast. Several officers were also present, among whom I was not sorry to recognize my friend Monsoon.

"Ah, Charley!" cried he, as I seated myself beside him, "what a pity all our fun is so soon to have an end! Here's this confounded Soult won't be quiet and peaceable; but he must march upon Oporto, and Heaven knows where besides, just as we were really beginning to enjoy life. I had got such a contract for blankets! and now they've ordered me to join Beresford's corps in the mountains; and you,"—here he dropped his voice,—"and you were getting on so devilish well in this quarter; upon my life, I think you'd have carried the day; old Don Emanuel—you know he's a friend of mine—likes you very much. And then, there's Sparks—"

"Ay, Major, what of him? I have not seen him for some days."

"Why, they've been frightening the poor devil out of his life, O'Shaughnessy and a set of them. They tried him by court-martial yesterday, and sentenced him to mount guard with a wooden sword

and a shooting jacket, which he did. Old Colbourne, it seems, saw him; and, faith, there would be the devil to pay if the route had not come. Some of them would certainly have got a long leave to see their friends."

"Why is not the Senhora here, Major? I don't see her at table."

"A cold; a sore throat; a wet-feet affair of last night, I believe. Pass that cold pie down here. Sherry, if you please. You didn't see Power to-day?"

"No: we parted last night; I have not been to bed."

"Very bad preparation for a march: take some burnt brandy in your coffee."

"Then you don't think the Senhora will appear?"

"Very unlikely. But stay, you know her room—the small drawing-room that looks out upon the flower-garden; she usually passes the morning there. Leap the little wooden paling round the corner, and the chances are ten to one you find her."

I saw from the occupied air of Don Antonio that there was little fear of interruption on his part; so, taking an early moment to escape unobserved, I rose and left the room. When I sprang over the oak fence, I found myself in a delicious little garden, where roses, grown to a height never seen in our colder climate, formed a deep bower of rich blossom.

The Major was right. The Senhora was in the room, and in one moment I was beside her.

"Nothing but my fears of not bidding you farewell could palliate my thus intruding, Donna Inez; but as we are ordered away—"

"When? not so soon, surely?"

"Even so; to-day, this very hour. But you see that, even in the hurry of departure, I have not forgotten my trust; this is the packet I promised you."

So saying, I placed the paper with the lock of hair within her hand, and, bending downward, pressed my lips upon her taper fingers. She hurriedly snatched her hand away, and, tearing open the inclosure, took out the lock. She looked steadily for a moment at it, then at me, and again at it, and, at length, bursting into a fit of laughing, threw herself upon a chair in a very ecstasy of mirth.

"Why, you don't mean to impose this auburn ringlet upon me for one of poor Howard's jetty curls? What downright folly to think of it! and then, with how little taste the deception was practiced—upon your very temples, too! One comfort is, you are utterly spoiled by it."

Here she again relapsed into a fit of laughter, leaving me perfectly puzzled what to think of her, as she resumed:

"Well, tell me now, am I to reckon this as a pledge of your own allegiance, or am I still to believe it to be Edward Howard's? Speak, and truly."

"Of my own, most certainly," said I, "if it will be accepted."

"Why, after such treachery, perhaps it ought not; but, still, as you have already done yourself such injury, and look so very silly withal—"

"That you are even resolved to give me cause to look more so," added I.

"Exactly," said she; "for here, now, I reinstate you among my true and faithful admirers. Kneel down, sir knight! in token of which you will wear this scarf—"

A sudden start which the donna gave at these words brought me to my feet. She was pale as death and trembling.

"What means this?" said I. "What has happened?"

She pointed with her finger toward the garden; but, though her lips moved, no voice came forth, I sprang through the open window. I rushed into the copse, the only one which might afford concealment for a figure, but no one was there. After a few minutes' vain endeavor to discover any trace of an intruder, I returned to the chamber. The donna was there still; but how changed! her gayety and animation were gone, her pale cheek and trembling lip bespoke fear and suffering, and her cold hand lay heavily beside her.

"I thought—perhaps it was merely fancy—but I thought I saw Trevyllian beside the window."

"Impossible!" said I. "I have searched every walk and alley. It was nothing but imagination—believe me, no more. There, be assured; think no more of it."

While I endeavored thus to reassure her, I was very far from feeling perfectly at ease myself; the whole bearing and conduct of this man had inspired me with a growing dislike of him, and I felt already half-convinced that he had established himself as a spy upon my actions.

"Then you really believe I was mistaken?" said the donna, as she placed her hand within mine.

"Of course I do: but speak no more of it. You must not forget how few my moments are here. Already I have heard the tramp of horses without; ah! there they are: in a moment more I shall be missed; so, once more, fairest Inez—Nay, I beg pardon if I have dared to call you thus;

but think, if it be the first it may also be the last time I shall ever speak it."

Her head gently drooped as I said these words, till it sunk upon my shoulder, her long and heavy hair falling upon my neck and across my bosom. I felt her heart almost beat against my side; I muttered some words, I know not what; I felt them like a prayer; I pressed her cold forehead to my lips; rushed from the room; cleared the fence at a spring, and was far upon the road to Lisbon ere I could sufficiently collect my senses to know whither I was going. Of little else was I conscious: my mind was full to bursting, and, in the confusion of my excited brain, fiction and reality were so inextricably mingled as to defy every endeavor at discrimination. But little time had I for reflection; as I reached the city, the brigade to which I was attached was already under arms, and Mike impatiently waiting my arrival with the horses.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE MARCH.

WHAT a strange spectacle did the road to Oliveira present upon the morning of the 7th of May! A hurried or incautious observer might, at first sight, have pronounced the long line of troops which wended their way through the valley as the remains of a broken and routed army, had not the ardent expression and bright eye that beamed on every side assured him that men who looked thus could not be beaten ones. Horse, foot, baggage, artillery, dismounted dragoons, even the pale and scarcely recovered inhabitants of the hospital, might have been seen hurrying on; for the order, "Forward!" had been given at Lisbon, and those whose wounds did not permit their joining, were more pitied for their loss that its cause. More than one officer was seen at the head of his troop with an arm in a sling, or a bandaged forehead; while, among the men, similar evidences of devotion were not unfrequent. As for me, long years and many reverses have not obliterated — scarcely blunted—the impression that sight made on me. The splendid spectacle of a review had often excited and delighted me; but here there was the glorious reality of war; the bronzed faces, the worn uniforms; the well-tattered flags, the roll of the heavy guns mingling with the wild pibroch of *the Highlander*, or scarcely less wild recklessness of the Irish quick-step; while the long line of cavalry, their helmets and accoutrements shining in the morning sun, brought back one's boyish dreams of joust and tournament, and made the heart beat high with chivalrous enthusiasm.

"Yes," said I, half aloud, "this is indeed a realization of what I longed and thirsted for," the clang of the music and the tramp of the cavalry responding to my throbbing pulses as we moved along.

"Close up, there; trot!" cried out a deep and manly voice; and immediately a general officer rode by, followed by an aide-de-camp.

"There goes Cotton," said Power; "you may feel easy in your mind now, Charley; there's some work before us."

"You have not heard our destination?" said I.

"Nothing is known for certain, yet. The report goes, that Soult is advancing upon Oporto; and the chances are, Sir Arthur intends to hasten on to its relief. Our fellows are at Ovar, with General Murray."

"I say, Charley, old Monsoon is in a devil of a flurry. He expected to have been peaceably settled down in Lisbon for the next six months, and he has received orders to set out for Beresford's head-quarters immediately; and, from what I hear, they have no idle time."

"Well, Sparks, how goes it man? Better fun this than the cook's galley, eh?"

"Why, do you know, these hurried movements put me out confoundedly. I found Lisbon very interesting, the little I could see of it last night."

"Ah! my dear fellow, think of the lovely Andalusian lasses, with their brown transparent skins and liquid eyes; why, you'd have been over head and ears in love in twenty-four hours more, had we stayed."

"Are they really so pretty?"

"Pretty!—downright lovely, man. Why, they have a way of looking at you, over their fans—just one glance, short and fleeting, but so smelting, by Jove— Then their walk—if it be not profane to call that springing, elastic gesture by such a name—why it's regular witchcraft. Sparks, my man, I tremble for you. Do you know, by-the-by, that same pace of theirs is a devilish hard thing to learn. I never could come it; and yet, somehow, I was formerly rather a crack fellow at a ballet. Old Alberto used to select me for a *pas de zéphyr* among a host; but there's a kind of a hop, and a slide, and a spring—in fact, you must have been wearing petticoats for eighteen years, and have an Andalusian instep, and an india-rubber sole to your foot,

or it's no use trying it. How I used to make them laugh at the old San Josef convent, formerly, by my efforts in the cause!"

"Why, how did it ever occur to you to practice it?"

"Many a man's legs have saved his head, Charley, and I put it to mine to do a similar office for me."

"True; but I never heard of a man that performed a *pas seul* before the enemy."

"Not exactly; but still you're not very wide of the mark. If you'll only wait till we reach Pontalegue, I'll tell you the story; not that it is worth the delay, but talking at this brisk pace I don't admire."

"You leave a detachment here, Captain Power," said an aide-de-camp, riding hastily up; "and General Cotton requests you will send a subaltern and two sergeants forward toward Berar, to reconnoiter the pass. Franchesca's cavalry are reported in that quarter." So speaking, he dashed spurs to his horse, and was out of sight in an instant.

Power, at the same moment, wheeled to the rear, from which he returned in an instant, accompanied by three well-mounted light dragoons. "Sparks," said he, "now for an occasion of distinguishing yourself. You heard the order—lose no time; and, as your horse is an able one, and fresh, lose not a second, but forward."

No sooner was Sparks dispatched on, what it was evident he felt to be anything but a pleasant duty, than I turned toward Power, and said, with some tinge of disappointment in the tone, "Well, if you really felt there was anything worth doing there—I flattered myself—that—"

"Speak out, man. That I should have sent you, eh—is it not so?"

"Yes, you've hit it."

"Well, Charley, my peace is easily made on this head. Why, I selected Sparks simply to spare you one of the most unpleasant duties that can be imposed upon a man; a duty which, let him discharge it to the uttermost, will never be acknowledged, and the slightest failure in which will be remembered for many a day against him; besides the pleasant and very probable prospect of being selected as a bull's-eye for a French rifle, or carried off a prisoner; eh, Charley? there's no glory in that, devil a ray of it! Come, come, old fellow, Fred Power's not the man to keep his friend out of the *mêlée*, if only anything can be made by being in it. Poor Sparks, I'd swear, is as little satisfied with the arrangement as yourself, if one knew but all."

"I say, Power," said a tall, dashing-looking man of about five-and-forty, with a Portuguese order on his breast—"I say, Power, dine with us at the halt."

"With pleasure, if I may bring my young friend here."

"Of course; pray introduce us."

"Major Hixley, Mr. O'Malley,— a 14th man, Hixley."

"Delighted to make your acquaintance, Mr. O'Malley. Knew a famous fellow in Ireland of your name, a certain Godfrey O'Malley, member of some county or other."

"My uncle," said I, blushing deeply, with a pleasurable feeling, at even this sight praise of my oldest friend.

"Your uncle! give me your hand. By Jove, his nephew has a right to good treatment at my hands; he saved my life in the year '98; and how is old Godfrey?"

"Quite well, when I left him some months ago; a little gout, now and then."

"To be sure he has; no man deserves it better; but it's a gentlemanlike gout, that merely jogs his memory in the morning of the good wine he has drank overnight. By-the-by, what became of a friend of his, a devilish eccentric fellow, who held a command in the Austrian service?"

"Oh, Considine—the Count?"

"The same."

"As eccentric as ever; I left him on a visit with my uncle. And Boyle—did you know Sir Harry Boyle?"

"To be sure I did; shall I ever forget him, and his capital blunders, that kept me laughing the whole time I spent in Ireland? I was in the house when he concluded a panegyric upon a friend, by calling him 'the father to the poor, and uncle to Lord Donoughmore.'"

"He was the only man who could render by a bull what it was impossible to convey more correctly," said Power. "You've heard of his duel with Dick Toler?"

"Never; let's hear it."

"It was a bull from beginning to end. Boyle took it into his head that Dick was a person with whom he had a serious row in Cork. Dick, on the other hand, mistook Boyle for Old Caples, whom he had been pursuing with horse-whipping intentions for some months; they met in Kildare-street Club, and very little colloquy satisfied them that they were right in their conjectures, each party being so eagerly ready to meet the views of the other. It never was a difficult matter to find a friend in Dublin; and to do them justice, Irish seconds, generally speaking, are perfectly

free from any imputation upon the score of mere delay. No men have less impertinent curiosity as to the cause of the quarrel; wisely supposing that the principals know their own affairs best, they cautiously abstain from indulging any prying spirit, but proceed to discharge their functions as best they may. Accordingly, Sir Harry and Dick were 'set up,' as the phrase is, at twelve paces, and to use Boyle's own words, for I have heard him relate the story—

"We blazed away, sir, for three rounds. I put two in his hat, and one in his neckcloth; his shots went all through the skirt of my coat.

"'We'll spend the day here,' says Considine, 'at this rate. Couldn't you put them closer?'

"'And give us a little more time in the word,' says I.

"'Exactly,' said Dick.

"Well, they moved us forward two paces, and set to loading the pistols again.

"By this time we were so near, that we had full opportunity to scan each other's faces; well sir, I stared at him, and he at me.

"'What!' said I.

"'Eh!' said he.

"'How's this?' said I.

"'You're not Billy Caples?' said he.

"'Devil a bit,' said I, 'nor I don't think you're Archy Devine;' and, faith, sir, so it appeared, we were fighting away all the morning for nothing; for, somehow, it turned out *it was neither of us!*"

What amused me most in this anecdote was the hearing it at such a time and place. That poor Sir Harry's eccentricities should turn up for discussion on a march in Portugal was singular enough; but, after all, life is full of such incongruous accidents. I remember once supping with Calzoo on the Blue Mountains, in Jamaica. By way of entertaining his guests, some English officers, he ordered one of his suite to sing. We were of course pleased at the opportunity of hearing an Indian warchant, with a skull and thigh-bone accompaniment; but what was our astonishment to hear the Indian—a ferocious-looking dog, with an awful scalp-lock, and two streaks of red paint across his chest—clear his voice well for a few seconds, and then begin, without discomposing a muscle of his gravity, "The Laird of Cockpen!" I need not say that the "Great Raccoon" was a Dumfries man, who had quitted Scotland forty years before, and, with characteristic prosperity, had attained his present rank in a foreign service.

"Halt, halt!" cried a deep-toned, manly voice in the leading column, and the word was repeated from mouth to mouth to the rear.

We dismounted, and picketing our horses beneath the broad-leaved foliage of the cork-trees, stretched ourselves out at full length upon the grass, while our messmen prepared the dinner. Our party at first consisted of Hixley, Power, the Adjutant, and myself; but our number was soon increased by three officers of the 6th Foot, about to join their regiment.

"Barring the ladies, God bless them!" said Power, "there's no such picnics as campaigning presents; the charms of scenery are greatly enhanced by their coming unexpectedly on you. Your chance good-fortune in the prog has an interest that no ham-and-cold-chicken affair, prepared by your servants beforehand, and got ready with a degree of fuss and worry that converts the whole party into an assembly of cooks, can ever afford; and, lastly, the excitement that this same life of ours is never without, gives a zest—"

"There you've hit it," cried Hixley, "it's that same feeling of uncertainty that those who meet now may ever do so again, full as it is of sorrowful reflection, that still teaches us, as we become inured to war, to economize our pleasures, and be happy when we may. Your health, O'Malley, and your uncle Godfey's too."

"A little more of the pastry?"

"What a capital guinea fowl this is!"

"That's some of old Monsoon's own particular port."

"Pass it round here; really this is pleasant."

"My blessing on the man who left that vista yonder; see what a glorious valley stretches out there, undulating in its richness; and look at those dark trees, where just one streak of soft sunlight is kissing their tops, giving them one chaste good-night—"

"Well done, Power!"

"Confound you, you've pulled me short, and I was about becoming downright pastoral. *A propos* of kissing, I understand Sir Arthur won't allow the convents to be occupied by troops."

"And *à propos* of convents," said I, "let's hear your story; you promised it a while ago."

"My dear Charley, it's far too early in the evening for a story; I should rather indulge my poetic fancies here, under the shade of melancholy boughs. And, besides, I am not half screwed up yet!"

"Come, Adjutant, let's have a song."

"I'll sing you a Portuguese serenade when the next bottle comes in. What capital port! Have you much of it?"

"Only three dozen. We got it late last night; forged an order from the commanding officer, and sent it up to old Monsoon —'for hospital use.' He gave it with a tear in his eye, saying, as the sergeant marched away, 'Only think of such wine for fellows that may be in the next world before morning. It's a downright sin!'"

"I say, Power, there's something going on there."

At this instant the trumpet sounded "boot and saddle," and, like one man, the whole mass rose up, when the scene, late so tranquil, became one of excited bustle and confusion. An aide-de-camp galloped past toward the river, followed by two orderly sergeants; and the next moment Sparks rode up, his whole equipment giving evidence of a hurried ride, while his cheek was deadly pale and haggard.

Power presented to him a goblet of sherry, which having emptied at a draught, he drew a long breath, and said,

"They are coming—coming in force."

"Who are coming?" said Power; "take time, man, and collect yourself."

"The French! I saw them a devilish deal closer than I liked; they wounded one of the orderlies, and took the other prisoner."

"Forward!" cried out a hoarse voice in the front. "March—trot!"

And before we could obtain any further information from Sparks, whose faculties seemed to have received a terrific shock, we were once more in the saddle, and moving at a brisk pace onward.

Sparks had barely time to tell us that a large body of French cavalry occupied the pass of Berar, when he was sent for by General Cotton to finish his report.

"How frightened the fellow is!" said Hixley.

"I don't think the worse of poor Sparks for all that," said Power; "he saw these fellows for the first time, and no bird's-eye view of them either."

"Then we are in for a skirmish at least," said I.

"It would appear not, from that," said Hixley, pointing to the head of the column, which, leaving the high-road upon the left, entered the forest by a deep cleft that opened upon a valley traversed by a broad river.

"That looks very like taking up a position, though," said Power.

"Look—look down yonder!" cried Hixley, pointing to a dip in the plain beside the river; "is there not a cavalry picket there?"

"Right, by Jove! I say, Fitzroy," said Power to an aide-de-camp as he passed, "what's going on?"

'Soult has carried Oporto," cried he, "and Franchesca's cavalry have escaped."

"And who are these fellows in the valley?"

"Our own people coming up."

In less than half an hour's brisk trotting we reached the stream, the banks of which were occupied by two cavalry regiments advancing to the main army; and what was my delight to find that one of them was our own corps, the 14th Light Dragoons.

"Hurra!" cried Power, waving his cap as he came up. "How are you, Sedgewick? Baker, my hearty, how goes it? How is Hampton and the Colonel?"

In an instant we were surrounded by our brother officers, who all shook me cordially by the hand, and welcomed me to the regiment with most gratifying warmth.

"One of us," said Power, with a knowing look, as he introduced me, and the freemasonry of these few words secured me a hearty greeting.

"Halt, halt! Dismount!" sounded again from front to rear; and in a few minutes we were once more stretched upon the grass, beneath the deep and mellow moonlight, while the bright stream ran placidly beside us, reflecting on its calm surface the varied groups as they lounged or sat around the blazing fires of the bivouac.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE BIVOUAC.

WHEN I contrasted the gay and lively tone of the conversation which ran on around our bivouac fire, with the dry monotony and prosaic tediousness of my first military dinner at Cork, I felt how much the spirit and adventure of a soldier's life can impart of chivalrous enthusiasm to even the dullest and least susceptible. I saw even many who, under common circumstances, would have possessed no interest, nor excited any curiosity, but now, connected as they were with the great events occurring around them, absolutely became heroes; and it was with a strange, wild throbbing of excitement, I listened to the details of movements and marches, whose objects I knew not, but in which

the magical words, Corunna, Vimeira, were mixed up, and gave to the circumstances an interest of the highest character. How proud, too, I felt, to be the companion in arms of such fellows! here they sat, the tried and proved soldiers of a hundred fights, treating me as their brother and their equal. Who need wonder if I felt a sense of excited pleasure? Had I needed such a stimulant, that night beneath the cork-trees had been enough to arouse a passion for the army in my heart, and an irrepressible determination to seek for a soldier's glory.

"Fourteenth!" called out a voice from the wood behind; and, in a moment after, the aide-de-camp appeared with a mounted orderly.

"Colonel Merivale?" said he, touching his cap to the stalwart, soldier-like figure before him.

The Colonel bowed.

"Sir Stapleton Cotton desires me to request that at an early hour to-morrow you will occupy the pass, and cover the march of the troops. It is his wish that all the reinforcements should arrive at Oporto by noon. I need scarcely add, that we expect to be engaged with the enemy."

These few words were spoken hurriedly, and, again saluting our party, he turned his horse's head and continued his way toward the rear.

"There's news for you, Charley," said Power, slapping me on the shoulder. "Lucy Dashwood or Westminster Abbey!"

"The regiment was never in finer condition, that's certain," said the Colonel, "and most eager for a brush with the enemy."

"How your old friend, the Count, would have liked this work," said Hixley; "gallant fellow he was."

"Come," cried Power, "here's a fresh bowl coming. Let's drink the ladies, wherever they be: we most of us have some soft spot on that score."

"Yes," said the Adjutant, singing:

"'Here's to the maiden of blushing fifteen,
Here's to the damsel that's merry,
Here's to the flaunting, extravagant queen—'"

"And," sang Power, interrupting,

"'Here's to the 'Widow of Derry.'"

"Come, come, Fred, no more quizzing on that score. It's the only thing ever gives me a distaste to the service, the souvenir of that adventure. When I reflect what I might have been, and think what I am; when I contrast a Brussels carpet with wet grass, silk hangings with a canvas tent, Sneyd's claret with ration brandy, and Sir Arthur for a Commander-in-Chief *vice* Boggs, a widow—"

"Stop there," cried Hixley; "without disparaging the fair widow, there's nothing beats campaigning, after all; eh, Fred?"

"And to prove it," said the Colonel, "Power will sing us a song."

Power took his pencil from his pocket, and, placing the back of a letter across his shako, commenced inditing his lyric; saying, as he did so,

"I'm your man in five minutes: just fill my glass in the mean time."

"That fellow beats Dibdin hollow," whispered the Adjutant. "I'll be hanged if he'll not knock you off a song like lightning."

"I understand," said Hixley, "they have some intention at the Horse Guards of having all the general orders set to popular tunes, and sung at every mess in the service. You've heard that, I suppose, Sparks?"

"I confess I had not before."

"It will certainly come very hard upon the subalterns," continued Hixley, with much gravity; "they'll have to brush up their *sol mi fas;* all the solos are to be their part."

"What rhymes with slaughter?" said Power.

"Brandy-and-water!" said the Adjutant.

"Now, then," said Power, "are you all ready?"

"Ready!"

"You must chorus, mind; and, mark me, take care you give the hip, hip, hurra! well, as that's the whole force of the chant. Take the time from me. Now for it. Air, 'Garryowen,' with spirit, but not too quick.

"Now that we've pledged each eye of blue,
And every maiden fair and true,
And our green island home—to you
The ocean's wave adorning,
Let's give one hip, hip, hip, hurra!
And drink e'en to the coming day,
When, squadrons square,
We'll all be there,
To meet the French in the morning.

"May his bright laurels never fade,
Who leads our fighting fifth brigade,
Those lads so true in heart and blade,
And famed for danger scorning:
So join me in one hip, hurra!
And drink e'en to the coming day,
When, squadron square,
We'll all be there,
To meet the French in the morning.

"And, when with years and honors crowned,
You sit some homeward hearth around,
And hear no more the stirring sound
That spoke the trumpet's warning,—
You'll fill, and drink, one hip, hurra!
And pledge the memory of the day,
When, squadrons square,
They all were there,
To meet the French in the morning."

"Gloriously done, Fred!" cried Hixley. "If I ever get my deserts in this world, I'll make you Laureate to the Forces, with a hogshead of your own native whisky for every victory of the army."

"A devilish good chant," said Merivale; "but the air surpasses anything I ever heard: thoroughly Irish, I take it."

"Irish! upon my conscience, I believe you!" shouted O'Shaughnessy, with an energy of voice and manner that created a hearty laugh on all sides. "It's few people ever mistook it for a Venetian melody. Hand over the punch—the sherry, I mean. When I was in the Clare militia, we always went to dinner to 'Tatter Jack Walsh,' a sweet air, and had 'Garryowen' for a quick-step. Ould M'Manus, when he got the regiment, wanted to change; he said they were damned vulgar tunes, and wanted to have 'Rule Britannia,' or the 'Hundredth Psalm;' but we would not stand it; there would have been a mutiny in the corps."

"The same fellow, wasn't he, that you told the story of, the other evening, in Lisbon?" said I.

"The same. Well, what a character he was! As pompous and conceited a little fellow as ever you met with: and then, he was so bullied by his wife, he always came down to revenge it on the regiment. She was a fine, showy, vulgar woman, with a most cherishing affection for all the good things in this life, except her husband, whom she certainly held in due contempt. 'Ye little crayture,' she'd say to him with a sneer, 'it ill becomes you to drink and sing, and be making a man of yourself. If you were like O'Shaughnessy there, six foot three in his stockings—' Well, well, it looks like boasting; but no matter: here's her health, anyway."

"I knew you were tender in that quarter," said Power. "I heard it when quartered in Limerick."

"May be you heard, too, how I paid off Mac, when he came down on a visit to that county?"

"Never: let's hear it now."

"Ay, O'Shaughnessy, now's your time; the fire's a good one, the night fine, and liquor plenty."

"I'm *convanient*," said O'Shaughnessy, as, depositing his enormous legs on each side of the burning fagots, and placing a bottle between his knees, he began his story:

"It was a cold rainy night in January, in the year '98, I took my place in the Limerick mail, to go down for a few days to the west country. As the waiter of the Hibernian came to the door with a lantern, I just caught a glimpse of the other insides; none of whom were known to me, except Colonel M'Manus, that I met once in a boarding-house in Molesworth street. I did not, at the time, think him a very agreeable companion; but, when morning broke, and we began to pay our respects to each other in the coach, I leaned over, and said, 'I hope you're well, Colonel M'Manus,' just by way of civility like. He didn't hear me at first; so that I said it again, a little louder.

"I wish you saw the look he gave me; he drew himself up to the height of his cotton umbrella, put his chin inside his cravat, pursed up his dry, shriveled lips, and, with a voice he meant to be awful, replied:

"'You appear to have the advantage of me.'

"'Upon my conscience, you're right,' said I, looking down at myself, and then over at him, at which the other travelers burst out a-laughing—'I think there's few will dispute that point.' When the laugh was over, I resumed—for I was determined not to let him off so easily. 'Sure I met you at Mrs. Cayle's,' said I; 'and, by the same token—it was a Friday, I remember it well,—maybe you didn't pitch into the salt cod? I hope it didn't disagree with you?'

"'I beg to repeat, sir, that you are under a mistake,' said he.

"'Maybe so, indeed,' said I. 'Maybe you're not Colonel M'Manus at all; maybe you wasn't in a passion for losing seven-and-sixpence at loo with Mrs. Moriarty; maybe you didn't break the lamp in the hall with your umbrella, pretending you touched it with your head, and wasn't within three foot of it; maybe Counselor Brady wasn't going to put you in the box of the Foundling Hospital, if you wouldn't behave quietly in the streets—'

"Well, with this the others laughed so heartily, that I could not go on; and the next stage the bold Colonel got outside with the guard, and never came in till we reached Limerick. I'll never forget his face, as he got down at Swinburne's Hotel. 'Good-by, Colonel,' said I; but he

wouldn't take the least notice of my politeness, but, with a frown of utter defiance, he turned on his heel and walked away.

"'I haven't done with you yet,' says I; and, faith, I kept my word.

"I hadn't gone ten yards down the street, when I met my old friend Darby O'Grady.

"'Shaugh, my boy,' says he,—he called me that way for shortness,—dine with me to-day at Mosey's: a green goose and gooseberries; six to a minute.'

"'Who have you?' says I.

"'Tom Keane and the Wallers, a counselor or two, and one M'Manus, from Dublin.'

"'The Colonel?'

"The same,' said he.

"'I'm there, Darby!' said I; 'but mind, you never saw me before.'

"'What!' said he.

"'You never set eyes on me before; mind that.'

"'I understand,' said Darby, with a wink; and we parted.

"I certainly was never very particular about dressing for dinner, but on this day I spent a considerable time at my toilet; and, when I looked in my glass at its completion, was well satisfied that I had done myself justice. A waistcoat of brown rabbit-skin with flaps, a red worsted comforter round my neck, an old gray shooting jacket, with a brown patch on the arm, corduroys and leather gaiters, with a tremendous oak cudgel in my hand, made me a most presentable figure for a dinner party.

"'Will I do, Darby?' says I, as he came into my room before dinner.

"'If it's for robbing the mail you are,' says he, 'nothing could be better. Your father wouldn't know you!'

"'Would I be the better of a wig?'

"'Leave your hair alone,' said he. 'It's painting the lily to alter it.'

"'Well, God's will be done,' says I, 'so come now.'

"Well, just as the clock struck six I saw the Colonel come out of his room, in a suit of most accurate sable, stockings, and pumps. Down-stairs he went, and I heard the waiter announce him.

"'Now's my time,' thought I, as I followed slowly after.

"When I reached the door I heard several voices within, among which I recognized some ladies. Darby had not told me about them; 'But no matter,' said I; 'it's *all as* well;' so I gave a gentle tap at the *door with* my knuckles.

"'Come in,' said Darby.

"I opened the door slowly, and, puttin in only my head and shoulders, took a cau tious look round the room.

"'I beg pardon, gentlemen,' said I 'but I was only looking for one Colone M'Manus, and, as he *is* not here—'

"'Pray walk in, sir,' said O'Grady, wit a polite bow. 'Colonel M'Manus is here There's no intrusion whatever. I say Colonel,' said he, turning round, 'a gen tleman here desires to—'

"'Never mind it now,' said I, as I step ped cautiously into the room; 'he's goin to dinner; another time will do just a well.'

"'Pray come in?'

"'I could not think of intruding—'

"'I must protest,' said M'Manus, color ing up, 'that I cannot understand thi gentleman's visit.'

"'It is a little affair I have to settl with him,' said I, with a fierce look, tha I saw produced its effect.

"'Then perhaps you would do me the very great favor to join him at dinner, said O'Grady. 'Any friend of Colonel M'Manus—'

"'You are really too good,' said I, 'but as an utter stranger—'

"'Never think of that for a moment. My friend's friend, as the adage says.'

"'Upon my conscience, a good saying, said I, 'but you see there's another difficulty. I've ordered a chop and potatoes up in No. 5.'

"'Let that be no obstacle,' said O'Grady. 'The waiter shall put it in my bill; if you will only do me the pleasure.'

"'You're a trump,' said I. 'What's your name?'

"'O'Grady, at your service.'

"'Any relation of the counselor?' said I. 'They're all one family, the O'Gradys. I'm Mr. O'Shaughnessy, from Ennis; won't you introduce me to the ladies?'

"While the ceremony of presentation was going on I caught one glance at M'Manus, and had hard work not to roar out laughing. Such an expression of surprise, amazement, indignation, rage, and misery, never was mixed up in one face before. Speak he could not; and I saw that, except for myself, he had neither eyes, ears, nor senses for anything around him. Just at this moment dinner was announced, and in we went. I never was in such spirits in my life; the trick upon M'Manus had succeeded perfectly; he believed in his heart that I had never met O'Grady in my life before, and that, upon the faith of our friendship, I had received

my invitation. As for me, I spared him but little. I kept up a running fire of droll stories; had the ladies in fits of laughing, made everlasting allusions to the Colonel; and, in a word, ere the soup had disappeared, except himself, the company were entirely with me.

"'O'Grady,' said I, 'forgive the freedom, but I feel as if we were old acquaintances.'

"'As Colonel McManus's friend,' said he, 'you can take no liberty here to which you are not perfectly welcome.'

"'Just what I expected,' said I. 'Mac and I,'—I wish you saw his face when I called him Mac—'Mac and I were schoolfellows five-and-thirty years ago; though he forgets me, I don't forget him: to be sure it would be hard for me. I'm just thinking of the day Bishop Oulahan came over to visit the college. Mac was coming in at the door of the refectory as the Bishop was going out. "Take off your caubeen, you young scoundrel, and kneel down for his reverence to bless you," said one of the masters, giving his hat a blow at the same moment that sent it flying to the other end of the room, and, with it, about twenty ripe pears that Mac had just stolen in the orchard, and had in his hat. I wish you only saw the Bishop; and Mac himself, he was a picture. Well, well, you forget it all now, but I remember it as if it was only yesterday. Any champagne, Mr. O'Grady? I'm mighty dry.'

"'Of course,' said Darby. 'Waiter, some champagne here.'

"'Ah, it's himself was the boy for every kind of fun and devilment, quiet and demure as he looks over there. Mac, your health. It's not every day of the week we get champagne.'

"He laid down his knife and fork as I said this: his face and temples grew deep purple, his eyes started as if they would spring from his head, and he put both his hands to his forehead, as if trying to assure himself that it was not some horrid dream.

"'A little slice more of the turkey,' said I, 'and then, O'Grady, I'll try your hock. It's a wine I'm mighty fond of, and so is Mac there. Oh! it's seldom, to tell you the truth, it troubles us. There, fill up the glass; that's it. Here now, Darby—that's your name, I think—you'll not think I'm taking a liberty in giving a toast: here, then, I'll give M'Manus's health, with all the honors; though it's early yet, to be sure, but we'll do it again, by-and-by, when the whisky comes. Here's M'Manus's good health! and, though his wife, they say, does not treat him well, and keeps him down—'

"The roar of laughing that interrupted me here, was produced by the expression of poor Mac's face. He had started up from the table, and, leaning with both his hands upon it, stared round upon the company like a maniac—his mouth and eyes wide open, and his hair actually bristling with amazement. Thus he remained for a full minute, gasping like a fish in a landing-net. It seemed a hard struggle for him to believe he was not deranged. At last his eyes fell upon me; he uttered a deep groan, and with a voice tremulous with rage, thundered out:

"'The scoundrel! I never saw him before.'

"He rushed from the room and gained the street. Before our roar of laughter was over he had secured post-horses, and was galloping toward Ennis at the top speed of his cattle.

"He exchanged at once into the line; but they say that he caught a glimpse of my name in the army list, and sold out the next morning; be that as it may, we never met since."

I have related O'Shaughnessy's story here, rather from the memory I have of how we all laughed at it at the time, than from any feeling as to its real desert; but, when I think of the voice, look, accent, and gesture of the narrator, I can scarcely keep myself from again giving way to laughter.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE DOURO.

NEVER did the morning break more beautifully than on the 12th of May, 1809. Huge masses of fog-like vapor had succeeded to the starry cloudless night, but, one by one, they moved onward toward the sea, disclosing as they passed, long tracts of lovely country, bathed in a rich golden glow. The Douro, with its transparent current, shone out like a bright colored ribbon, meandering through the deep garment of fairest green; the darkly shadowed mountains, which closed the background, loomed even larger than they were; while their summits were tipped with the yellow glory of the morning. The air was calm and still, and the very smoke that arose from the peasant's cot, labored as it ascended through the perfumed air, and, save the ripple of the stream, all was silent as the grave.

The squadron of the 14th, with which I was, had diverged from the road beside the river, and, to obtain a shorter path, had entered the skirts of a dark pine wood: our pace was a sharp one; an orderly had been already dispatched to hasten our arrival, and we pressed on at a brisk trot. In less than an hour we reached the verge of the wood, and, as we rode out upon the plain, what a spectacle met our eyes! Before us, in a narrow valley, separated from the river by a low ridge, were picketed three cavalry regiments; their noiseless gestures and perfect stillness bespeaking, at once, that they were intended for a surprise party. Farther down the stream, and upon the opposite side, rose the massive towers and tall spires of Oporto, displaying from their summits the broad ensign of France; while, far as the eye could reach, the broad dark masses of troops might be seen; the intervals between their columns glittering with the bright equipments of their cavalry, whose steel caps and lances were sparkling in the sunbeams. The bivouac fires were still smoldering, and marking where some part of the army had passed the night; for, early as it was, it was evident that their position had been changed; and, even now, the heavy masses of dark infantry might be seen moving from place to place, while the long line of the road to Vallonga was marked with a vast cloud of dust. The French drum and the light infantry bugle told, from time to time, that orders were passing among the troops; while the glittering uniform of a staff officer as he galloped from the town, bespoke the note of preparation.

"Dismount. Steady: quietly, my lads," said the Colonel, as he alighted upon the grass. "Let the men have their breakfast."

The little amphitheatre we occupied hid us entirely from all observation on the part of the enemy, but equally so excluded us from perceiving their movements. It may readily be supposed, then, with what impatience we waited here, while the din and clangor of the French force, as they marched and countermarched so near us, were clearly audible. The orders were, however, strict that none should approach the bank of the river, and we lay anxiously awaiting the moment when this inactivity should cease. More than one orderly had arrived among us, bearing dispatches from head-quarters; but where our main body was, or what the nature of the orders, no one could guess. As for me, *my excitement* was at its height, and I *could* not speak for the very tension of my nerves. The officers stood in littl groups of two and three, whisperin anxiously together; but all I could collec was, that Soult had already begun his re treat upon Amarante, and that, with th broad stream of the Douro between us, h defied our pursuit.

"Well, Charley," said Power, laying hi arm upon my shoulder, "the French hav given us the slip this time: they are al ready in march, and, even if we dare force a passage, in the face of such a enemy, it seems there is not a boat to b found. I have just seen Hammersley."

"Indeed! Where is he?" said I.

"He's gone back to Villa de Conde; he asked after you most particularly; don't blush, man; I'd rather back your chance than his, notwithstanding the long letter that Lucy sends him. Poor fellow! he has been badly wounded, but, it seems, declines going back to England."

"Captain Power," said an orderly, touching his cap, "General Murray desires to see you."

Power hastened away, but returned in a few moments.

"I say, Charlie, there's something in the wind here. I have just been ordered to try where the stream is fordable. I've mentioned your name to the General, and I think you'll be sent for soon. Good-by."

I buckled on my sword, and looking to my girths, stood watching the groups around me; when, suddenly, a dragoon pulled his horse short up, and asked a man near me if Mr. O'Malley was there?

"Yes; I am he."

"Orders from General Murray, sir," said the man, and rode off at a canter.

I opened and saw that the dispatch was addressed to Sir Arthur Wellesley, with the mere words, "With haste!" on the envelope.

Now which way to turn I knew not; so, springing into the sandle, I galloped to where Colonel Merivale was stanning talking to the Colonel of a heavy dragoon regiment.

"May I ask, sir, by which road I am to proceed with this dispatch?"

"Along the river, sir," said the heavy—a large, dark-browed man, with a most forbidding look. "You'll soon see the troops: you'd better stir yourself, sir, or Sir Arthur is not very likely to be pleased with you."

Without venturing a reply to what I felt a somewhat unnecessary taunt, I dashed spurs into my horse, and turned toward the river. I had not gained the bank

above a minute, when the loud ringing of a rifle struck upon my ear; bang went another, and another. I hurried on, however, at the top of my speed, thinking only of my mission and its pressing haste. As I turned an angle of the stream, the vast column of the British came in sight, and scarcely had my eye rested upon them when my horse staggered forward, plunged twice with his head nearly to the earth, and then, rearing madly up, fell backward upon the ground. Crushed and bruised as I felt by my fall, I was soon aroused to the necessity of exertion; for, as I disengaged myself from the poor beast, I discovered he had been killed by a bullet in the counter; and scarcely had I recovered my legs when a shot struck my shako and grazed my temples. I quickly threw myself to the ground, and, creeping on for some yards, reached at last some rising ground, from which I rolled gently downward into a little declivity, sheltered by the bank from the French fire.

When I arrived at head-quarters, I was dreadfully fatigued and heated; but resolving not to rest till I had delivered my dispatches, I hastened toward the convent of La Sierra, where I was told the Commander-in-Chief was.

As I came into the court of the convent, filled with general officers and people of the staff, I was turning to ask how I should proceed, when Hixley caught my eye.

"Well, O'Malley, what brings you here?"

"Dispatches from General Murray."

"Indeed; oh, follow me."

He hurried me rapidly through the buzzing crowd, and ascending a large gloomy stair, introduced me into a room, where about a dozen persons in uniform were writing at a long deal table.

"Captain Gordon," said he, addressing one of them, "dispatches requiring immediate attention have just been brought by this officer."

Before the sentence was finished the door opened, and a short, slight man, in a gray undress coat, with a white cravat and a cocked hat, entered. The dead silence that ensued was not necessary to assure me that he was one in authority: the look of command his bold stern features presented; the sharp piercing eye, the compressed lip, the impressive expression of the whole face, told plainly that he was one who held equally himself and others in mastery.

"Send General Sherbroke here," said he to an aide-de-camp. "Let the light brigade march into position;" and then turning suddenly to me, "Whose dispatches are these?"

"General Murray's, sir."

I needed no more than that look to assure me that this was he of whom I had heard so much, and of whom the world was still to hear so much more.

He opened them quickly, and, glancing his eye across the contents, crushed the paper in his hand. Just as he did so, a spot of blood upon the envelope attracted his attention.

"How's this—are you wounded?"

"No, sir; my horse was killed—"

"Very well, sir; join your brigade. But stay, I shall have orders for you. Well, Waters, what news?"

This question was addressed to an officer in a staff uniform, who entered at the moment, followed by the short and bulky figure of a monk, his shaven crown and large cassock strongly contrasting with the gorgeous glitter of the costumes around him.

"I say, who have we here?"

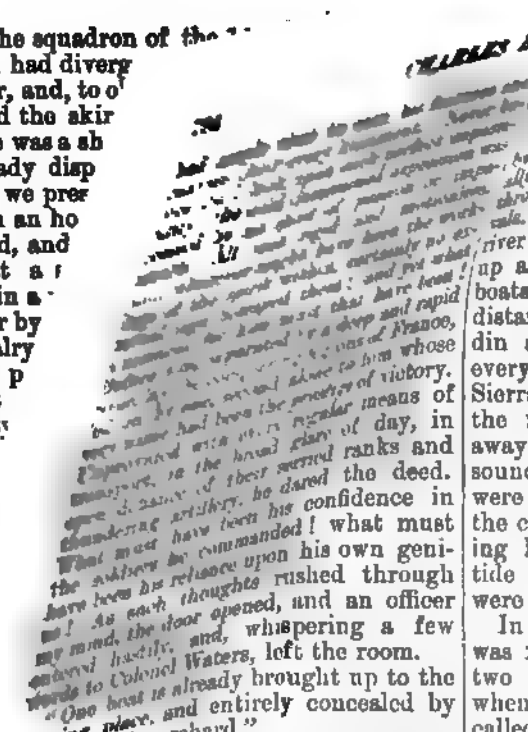
"The Prior of Amarante, sir," replied Waters, "who has just come over. We have already, by his aid, secured three large barges—"

"Let the artillery take up position in the convent at once," said Sir Arthur, interrupting. "The boats will be brought round to the small creek beneath the orchard. You, sir," turning to me, "will convey to General Murray—but you appear weak— You, Gordon, will desire Murray to effect a crossing at Avintas with the Germans and the 14th. Sherbroke's division will occupy the Villa Nuova. What number of men can that seminary take?"

"From three to four hundred, sir. The padre mentions that all the vigilance of the enemy is limited to the river below the town."

"I perceive it," was the short reply of Sir Arthur, as, placing his hands carelessly behind his back, he walked toward the window, and looked out upon the river.

All was still as death in the chamber; not a lip murmured. The feeling of respect for him in whose presence we were standing, checked every thought of utterance, while the stupendous gravity of the events before us engrossed every mind and occupied every heart. I was standing near the window; the effect of my fall had stunned me for a time, but I was gradually recovering, and watched with a thrilling heart the scene before me. Great and absorbing as was my interest in what was passing without, it was nothing compared with what I felt as I looked at him upon whom our destiny was then hanging. I



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"The French are in retreat!" and pointing at the same moment to the Vallonga road, we saw a long line of smoke and dust leading from the town, through which, as we gazed, the colors of the enemy might be seen as they defiled, while the unbroken lines of the wagons and heavy baggage proved that it was no partial movement, but the army itself retreating.

"Fourteenth, threes about, close up, trot," called out the loud and manly voice of our leader, and the heavy tramp of our squadrons shook the very ground as we advanced toward the road to Vallonga.

As we came on, the scene became one of overwhelming excitement; the masses of the enemy that poured unceasingly from the town could now be distinguished more clearly; and, amid all the crash of gun-carriages and caissons, the voices of the staff officers rose high as they hurried along the retreating battalions. A troop of flying artillery galloped forth at top speed, and, wheeling their guns into position with the speed of lightning, prepared, by a flanking fire, to cover the retiring column. The gunners sprang from their seats, the guns were already unlimbered, when Sir George Murray, riding up at our left, called out,

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The word was scarcely spoken, when the loud cheer answered the welcome sound,

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I remember no more. The din, the smoke, the crash—the cry for quarter, mingled with the shout of victory—the flying enemy—the agonizing shrieks of the wounded—all are commingled in my mind, but leave no trace of clearness or connection between them; and it was only when the column wheeled to re-form, behind the advancing squadrons, that I awoke from my trance of maddening excitement, and perceived that we had carried the position, and cut off the guns of the enemy.

"Well done, 14th!" said an old gray-headed colonel, as he rode along our line—"gallantly done, lads!" The blood trickled from a sabre-cut on his temple, along his cheek, as he spoke; but he either knew it not, or heeded it not.

"There go the Germans!" said Power, pointing to the remainder of our brigade, as they charged furiously upon the French infantry, and rode them down in masses.

Our guns came up at this time, and a plunging fire was opened upon the thick and retreating ranks of the enemy. The carnage must have been terrific, for the long breaches in their lines showed where the squadrons of the cavalry had passed, or the most destructive tide of the artillery had swept through them. The speed of the flying columns grew momentarily more; the road became blocked up, too, by broken carriages and wounded; and, to add to their discomfiture, a damaging fire now opened from the town upon the retreating column, while the brigade of Guards and the 29th pressed hotly on their rear.

The scene was now beyond anything maddening in its interest. From the walls of Oporto the English infantry poured forth in pursuit; while the whole river was covered with boats, as they still continued to cross over. The artillery thundered from the Sierra, to protect the landing, for it was even still contested in places; and the cavalry, charging in flank, swept the broken ranks, and bore down upon the squares.

It was now, when the full tide of victory ran highest in our favor, that we were ordered to retire from the road. Column after column passed before us, unmolested and unassailed; and not even a cannon-shot arrested their steps.

Some unaccountable timidity of our leader directed this movement; and, while before our very eyes the gallant infantry were charging the retiring columns, we remained still and inactive.

How little did the sense of praise we had already won repay us for the shame and indignation we experienced at this moment, as, with burning cheek and compressed lip, we watched the retreating files. "What can he mean?" "Is there not some mistake?" "Are we never to charge?" were the muttered questions around, as a staff officer galloped up with the order to take ground still further back, and nearer to the river.

The word was scarcely spoken, when a young officer, in the uniform of a general, dashed impetuously up; he held his plumed cap high above his head, as he called out, "14th, follow me! Left face—wheel—charge!"

So, with the word, we were upon them. The French rear-guard was at this moment at the narrowest part of the road which opened by a bridge upon a large open space; so that, forming with a narrow front, and favored by a declivity in the ground, we actually rode them down. Twice the French formed, and twice were they broken. Meanwhile, the carnage was dreadful on both sides; our fellows dashing madly forward where the ranks were thickest—the enemy resisting with the stubborn courage of men fighting for their last spot of ground. So impetuous was the charge of our squadrons, that we stopped not till, piercing the dense column of the retreating mass, we reached the open ground beyond. Here we wheeled, and prepared once more to meet them; when suddenly some squadrons of Cuirassiers debouched from the road, and, supported by a field piece, showed front against us. This was the moment that the remainder of our brigade should have come to our aid; but not a man appeared. However, there was not an instant to be lost; already the plunging fire of the four-

had ample time to scan his features and canvass their every lineament. Never before did I look upon such perfect impassibility; the cold determined expression was crossed by no show of passion or impatience. All was rigid and motionless, and, whatever might have been the workings of the spirit within, certainly no external sign betrayed them; and yet what a moment for him must that have been! Before him, separated by a deep and rapid river, lay the conquering legions of France, led on by one, second alone to him whose very name had been the *prestige* of victory. Unprovided with every regular means of transport, in the broad glare of day, in open defiance of their serried ranks and thundering artillery, he dared the deed. What must have been his confidence in the soldiers he commanded! what must have been his reliance upon his own genius! As such thoughts rushed through my mind, the door opened, and an officer entered hastily, and, whispering a few words to Colonel Waters, left the room.

"One boat is already brought up to the crossing place, and entirely concealed by the wall of the orchard."

"Let the men cross," was the brief reply.

No other word was spoken as, turning from the window, he closed his telescope, and, followed by all the others, descended to the court-yard.

This simple order was enough; an officer, with a company of the Buffs, embarked, and thus began the passage of the Douro.

So engrossed was I in my vigilant observation of our leader, that I would gladly have remained at the convent, when I received an order to join my brigade, to which a detachment of artillery was already proceeding.

As I reached Avintas all was in motion. The cavalry was in readiness beside the river; but as yet no boats had been discovered, and, such was the impatience of the men to cross, it was with difficulty they were prevented trying the passage by swimming, when suddenly Power appeared, followed by several fishermen. Three or four small skiffs had been found, half sunk in mud, among the rushes, and with such frail assistance we commenced to cross.

"There will be something to write home to Galway soon, Charley, or I'm terribly mistaken," said Fred, as he sprang into the boat beside me. "Was I not a true prophet when I told you 'We'd meet the French in the morning?'"

"They're at it already," said Hixley, as a wreath of blue smoke floated across the stream below us, and the loud boom of a large gun resounded through the air.

Then came a deafening shout, followed by a rattling volley of small arms, gradually swelling into a hot sustained fire, through which the cannon pealed at intervals. Several large meadows lay along the river side, where our brigade was drawn up as the detachments landed from the boats: and here, although nearly a league distant from the town, we now heard the din and crash of battle, which increased every moment. The cannonade from the Sierra convent, which at first was merely the fire of single guns, now thundered away in one long roll, amid which the sounds of falling walls and crashing roofs were mingled. It was evident to us, from the continual fire kept up, that the landing had been effected, while the swelling tide of musketry told that fresh troops were momentarily coming up.

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pounder had swept through our files, and every moment increased our danger.

"Once more, my lads, forward!" cried out our gallant leader, Sir Charles Stewart, as, waving his sabre, he dashed into the thickest of the fray.

So sudden was our charge, that we were upon them before they were prepared. And here ensued a terrific struggle; for, as the cavalry of the enemy gave way before us, we came upon the close ranks of the infantry, at half-pistol distance, who poured a withering volley into us as we approached. But what could arrest the sweeping torrent of our brave fellows, though every moment falling in numbers?

Harvey, our major, lost his arm near the shoulder. Scarcely an officer was not wounded. Power received a deep sabre-cut in the cheek, from an aide-de-camp of General Foy, in return for a wound he gave the General, while I, in my endeavor to save General Laborde, when unhorsed, was cut down through the helmet, and so stunned that I remembered no more around me. I kept my saddle, it is true, but I lost every sense of consciousness; my first glimmering of reason coming to my aid as I lay upon the river bank, and felt my faithful follower Mike bathing my temples with water, as he kept up a running fire of lamentations for my being *murthered* so young.

"Are you better, Mister Charles? Spake to me, alanah; say that you're not kilt, darling; do now. Oh, wirra! what'll I ever say to the master? and you doing so beautiful! Wouldn't he give the best baste in his stable to be looking at you to-day? There, take a sup; it's only water. Bad luck to them, but it's hard work beatin' them. They're only gone now. That's right; now you're coming to."

"Where am I, Mike?"

"It's here you are, darling, resting yourself."

"Well, Charley, my poor fellow, you've got sore bones too," cried Power, as, his face swathed in bandages and covered with blood, he lay down on the grass beside me.

"It was a gallant thing while it lasted, but has cost us dearly. Poor Hixley—"

"What of him?" said I, anxiously.

"Poor fellow, he has seen his last battle-field. He fell across me as we came out upon the road. I lifted him up in my arms, and bore him along above fifty yards; but he was stone dead. Not a sigh, not a word escaped him; shot through the fore-*head.*" As he spoke, his lips trembled, and his voice sank to a mere whisper at the last words,—"You remember what he said last night. Poor fellow! he was every inch a soldier."

Such was his epitaph.

I turned my head toward the scene of our late encounter. Some dismounted guns and broken wagons alone marked the spot; while, far in the distance, the dust of the retreating columns showed the beaten enemy, as they hurried toward the frontiers of Spain.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE MORNING.

THERE are few sadder things in life than the day after a battle. The high-beating hope, the bounding spirits, have passed away; and in their stead comes the depressing reaction by which every overwrought excitement is followed. With far different eyes do we look upon the compact ranks and glistening files,

> "With helm arrayed,
> And lance and blade,
> And plume in the gay wind dancing!"

and upon the cold and barren heath, whose only memory of the past is the blood-stained turf, a mangled corpse, the broken gun, the shattered wall, the well-trodden earth where columns stood, the cut-up ground where cavalry had charged—these are the sad relics of all the chivalry of yesterday.

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The morning which followed the battle of the Douro was one of the most beautiful I ever remember. There was that kind of freshness and elasticity in the air which certain days possess, and communicate by some magic their properties to ourselves. The thrush was singing gayly out from every grove and wooded dell; the very river had a sound of gladness, as it rippled on against its sedgy banks; the foliage, too, sparkled in the fresh dew, as in its robes of holiday, and all looked bright and happy.

We were picketed near the river, upon a gently rising ground, from which the view extended for miles in every direction. Above us, the stream came winding down amid broad and fertile fields of tall grass and waving corn, backed by deep and mellow woods, which were lost to the view upon

the distant hills; below, the river, widening as it went, pursued a straighter course, or turned with bolder curves, till passing beneath the town, it spread into a large sheet of glassy water, as it opened to the sea. The sun was just rising as I looked upon this glorious scene; and already the tall spires of Oporto were tipped with a bright rosy hue, while the massive towers and dark walls threw their lengthened shadows far across the plain.

The fires of the bivouac still burned, but all slept around them. Not a sound was heard, save the tramp of a patrol, or the short, quick cry of the sentry. I sat lost in meditation, or rather in that state of dreamy thoughtfulness in which the past and present are combined, and the absent are alike before us as are the things we look upon.

One moment I felt as though I were describing to my uncle the battle of the day before, pointing out where we stood, and how we charged; then again I was at home, beside the broad, bleak Shannon, and the brown hills of Scariff. I watched with beating heart the tall Sierra, where our path lay for the future; and then turned my thoughts to him whose name was so soon to be received in England with a nation's pride and gratitude, and panted for a soldier's glory.

As thus I followed every rising fancy, I heard a step approach; it was a figure muffled in a cavalry cloak, which I soon perceived to be Power.

"Charley!" said he, in a half-whisper, "get up and come with me. You are aware of the general order, that, while in pursuit of an enemy, all military honors to the dead are forbidden; but we wish to place our poor comrade in the earth before we leave."

I followed down a little path, through a grove of tall beech-trees, that opened upon a little grassy terrace beside the river. A stunted olive-tree stood by itself in the midst, and there I found five of our brother officers standing, wrapped in their wide cloaks. As we pressed each other's hands not a word was spoken. Each heart was full; and hard features that never quailed before the foe were now shaken with the convulsive spasm of agony, or compressed with stern determination to seem calm.

A cavalry helmet and a large blue cloak lay upon the grass. The narrow grave was already dug beside it; and in the deathlike stillness around the service for the dead was read. The last words were over. We stooped and placed the corpse, wrapped up in the broad mantle, in the earth; we replaced the mold, and stood silently around the spot. The trumpet of our regiment at this moment sounded the call: its clear notes rang sharply through the thin air; it was the soldier's requiem! and we turned away without speaking, and returned to our quarters.

I had never known poor Hixley till a day or two before; but, somehow, my grief for him was deep and heartfelt. It was not that his frank and manly bearing, his bold and military air, had gained upon me. No; these were indeed qualities to attract and delight me, but he had obtained a stronger and faster hold upon my affections—he spoke to me of home.

Of all the ties that bind us to the chance acquaintances we meet with in life, what can equal this one? What a claim upon your love has he who can, by some passing word, some fast-flitting thought, bring back the days of your youth! What interest can he not excite, by some anecdote of your boyish days, some well-remembered trait of youthful daring, or early enterprise! Many a year of sunshine and of storm have passed above my head. I have not been without my moments of gratified pride and rewarded ambition; but my heart has never responded so fully, so thankfully, so proudly to these, such as they were, as to the simple, touching words of one who knew my early home, and loved its inmates.

"Well, Fitzroy, what news?" inquired I, roused from my musing, as an aide-de-camp galloped up at full speed.

"Tell Merivale to get the regiment under arms at once. Sir Arthur Wellesley will be here in less than half an hour. You may look for the route immediately. Where are the Germans quartered?"

"Lower down; beside that grove of beech-trees, next the river."

Scarcely was my reply spoken, when he dashed spurs into his horse, and was soon out of sight. Meanwhile, the plain beneath me presented an animated and splendid spectacle. The different corps were falling into position to the enlivening sounds of their quick-step, the trumpets of the cavalry rang loudly through the valley, and the clatter of sabres and sabretasches, joined with the hollow tramp of the horses, as the squadron came up.

I had not a moment to lose; so, hastening back to my quarters, I found Mike waiting with my horse.

"Captain Power's before you, sir," said he, "and you'll have to make haste. The regiments are under arms already."

From the little mound where I stood, I could see the long line of cavalry as they deployed into the plain, followed by the horse artillery, which brought up the rear.

"This looks like a march," thought I, as I pressed forward to join my companions.

I had not advanced above a hundred yards through a narrow ravine when the measured tread of infantry fell upon my ears. I pulled up to slacken my pace, just as the head of a column turned round the angle of the road, and came in view. The tall caps of a grenadier company was the first thing I beheld, as they came on without roll of drum and sound of fife. I watched with a soldier's pride the manly bearing and gallant step of the dense mass as they defiled before me. I was struck no less by them than by a certain look of a steady but somber cast which each man wore.

"What can this mean?" thought I.

My first impression was, that a military execution was about to take place; the next moment solved my doubt; for, as the last files of the grenadiers wheeled round, a dense mass behind came in sight, whose unarmed hands, and downcast air, at once bespoke them prisoners of war.

What a sad sight it was! There was the old and weather-beaten grenadier, erect in frame and firm in step, his gray moustache scarcely concealing the scowl that curled his lip, side by side with the young and daring conscript, even yet a mere boy: their march was regular, their gaze steadfast; no look of flinching courage there. On they came, a long unbroken line. They looked not less proudly than their captors around them. As I looked with heavy heart upon them, my attention was attracted to one who marched alone behind the rest. He was a middle-sized but handsome youth of some eighteen years at most; his light helmet and waving plume bespoke him a *chasseur à cheval*, and I could plainly perceive, in his careless, half saucy air, how indignantly he felt the position to which the fate of war had reduced him. He caught my eyes fixed upon him, and, for an instant, turned upon me a gaze of open and palpable defiance, drawing himself up to his full height, and crossing his arms upon his breast; but, probably, perceiving in my look more of interest than of triumph, his countenance suddenly changed, a deep blush suffused his cheek, his eye beamed with a softened and kindly expression, and, carrying his hand to his helmet, he saluted me, saying, in a voice of singular sweetness,

"*Je vous souhaite un meilleur sort, camarade.*"

I bowed, and, muttering something in return, was about to make some inquiry concerning him, when the loud call of the trumpet rang through the valley, and apprised me that, in my interest for the prisoners, I had forgotten all else, and was probably incurring censure for my absence.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE REVIEW.

When I joined the group of my brother officers, who stood gayly chatting and laughing together before our lines, I was much surprised—nay, almost shocked—to find how little seeming impression had been made upon them by the sad duty we had performed that morning.

When last we met, each eye was downcast, each heart was full: sorrow for him we had lost from amongst us forever, mingling with the awful sense of our own uncertain tenure here, had laid its impress on each brow; but now, scarcely an hour elapsed, and all were cheerful and elated. The last shovelful of earth upon the grave seemed to have buried both the dead and the mourning. And such is war! and such the temperament it forms! Events so strikingly opposite in their character and influences succeed so rapidly one upon another, that the mind is kept in one whirl of excitement, and at length accustoms itself to change with every phase of circumstances; and between joy and grief, hope and despondency, enthusiasm and depression, there is neither breadth nor interval; they follow each other as naturally as morning succeeds to night.

I had not much time for such reflections: scarcely had I saluted the officers about me, when the loud prolonged roll of the drums along the line of infantry in the valley, followed by the sharp clatter of muskets as they were raised to the shoulder, announced the troops were under arms, and the review begun.

"Have you seen the general order this morning, Power?" inquired an old officer beside me.

"No; they say, however, that ours are mentioned."

"Harvey is going on favorably," cried a young cornet, as he galloped up to our party.

"Take ground to the left!" sung out the clear voice of the colonel, as he rode

along in front. "Fourteenth! I am happy to inform you that your conduct has met approval in the highest quarter. I have just received the general orders, in which this occurs:

"'THE TIMELY PASSAGE OF THE DOURO, AND SUBSEQUENT MOVEMENTS UPON THE ENEMY'S FLANK, BY LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SHERBROKE WITH THE GUARDS AND 29TH REGIMENT, AND THE BRAVERY OF THE TWO SQUADRONS OF THE 14TH LIGHT DRAGOONS UNDER THE COMMAND OF MAJOR HARVEY, AND LED BY THE HONORABLE BRIGADIER-GENERAL CHARLES STEWART, OBTAINED THE VICTORY'—Mark that, my lads!—obtained the victory—'WHICH HAS CONTRIBUTED SO MUCH TO THE HONOR OF THE TROOPS ON THIS DAY.'"

The words were hardly spoken, when a tremendous cheer burst from the whole line at once.

"Steady, Fourteenth! steady, lads!" said the gallant old Colonel, as he raised his hand gently; "the staff is approaching."

At the same moment, the white plumes appeared rising above the brow of the hill. On they came, glittering in all the splendor of aiguillettes and orders; all, save one. He rode foremost, upon a small compact black horse; his dress, a plain gray frock, fastened at the waist by a red sash: his cocked-hat alone bespoke, in its plume, the general officer. He galloped rapidly on till he came to the center of the line: then, turning short round, he scanned the ranks from end to end with an eagle glance.

"Colonel Merivale, you have made known to your regiment my opinion of them, as expressed in general orders?"

The Colonel bowed low in acquiescence.

"Fitzroy, you have got the memorandum, I hope?"

The aide-de-camp here presented to Sir Arthur a slip of paper, which he continued to regard attentively for some minutes.

"Captain Powel—Power, I mean. Captain Power!"

Power rode out from the line.

"Your very distinguished conduct yesterday has been reported to me. I shall have sincere pleasure in forwarding your name for the vacant majority.

"You have forgotten, Colonel Merivale, to send in the name of the officer who saved General Laborde's life."

"I believe I have mentioned it, Sir Arthur. Mr. O'Malley."

"True, I beg pardon; so you have—Mr. O'Malley; a very young officer indeed—ha, an Irishman! the south of Ireland, eh?"

"No, sir, the west."

"Oh, yes. Well, Mr. O'Malley, you are promoted. You have the lieutenancy in your own regiment. By-the-by, Merivale,"—here his voice changed into a half-laughing tone,—"ere I forget it, pray let me beg of you to look into this honest fellow's claim; he has given me no peace the entire morning."

As he spoke, I turned my eyes in the direction he pointed, and, to my utter consternation, beheld my man Mickey Freer standing among the staff, the position he occupied, and the presence he stood in, having no more perceptible effect upon his nerves, than if he were assisting at an Irish wake; but so completely was I overwhelmed with shame at the moment, that the staff were already far down the lines ere I recovered my self-possession, to which, certainly, I was in some degree recalled by Master Mike's addressing me in a somewhat imploring voice:

"Arrah, spake for me, Master Charles, alanah; sure they might do something for me now, av it was only to make me a gauger."

Mickey's ideas of promotion, thus insinuatingly put forward, threw the whole party around into one burst of laughter.

"I have him down there," said he, pointing as he spoke to a thick grove of cork-trees at a little distance.

"Who have you got there, Mike?" inquired Power.

"Devil a one o' me knows his name," replied he; "maybe it's Bony himself."

"And how do you know he's there still?"

"How do I know, is it? Didn't I tie him last night?"

Curiosity to find out what Mickey could possibly allude to, induced Power and myself to follow him down the slope to the clump of trees I have mentioned. As we came near, the very distinct denunciations that issued fron the thicket, proved pretty clearly the nature of the affair. It was nothing less than a French officer of cavalry, that Mike had unhorsed in the *mêlée*, and wishing, probably, to preserve some testimony of his prowess, had made prisoner, and tied fast to a cork-tree, the preceding evening.

"*Sacrebleu!*" said the poor Frenchman, as we approached, "*ce sont des sauvages!*"

"Av it's making your sowl, ye are," said Mike, "you're right; for, maybe, they won't let me keep you alive."

Mike's idea of a tame prisoner threw me into a fit of laughing, while Power asked,

"And what do you want to do with him, Mickey?"

"The sorra one o' me knows, for he spakes no decent tongue. Thighum thu," said he, addressing the prisoner, with a poke in the ribs at the same moment; "but sure, Master Charles, he might tache me French."

There was something so irresistibly ludicrous in his tone and look as he said these words, that both Power and myself absolutely roared with laughter. We began, however, to feel not a little ashamed of our position in the business, and explained to the Frenchman, that our worthy countryman had but little experience in the usages of war, while we proceeded to unbind him, and liberate him from his miserable bondage.

"It's letting him loose, you are, captain? Master Charles, take care be-gorra, av you had as much trouble in catching him as I had, you'd think twice about letting him out. Listen to me, now,"—here he placed his closed fist within an inch of the poor prisoner's nose,—"listen to me; av you say peas, by the morteal, I'll not lave a whole bone in your skin."

With some difficulty we persuaded Mike that his conduct, so far from leading to his promotion, might, if known in another quarter, procure him an acquaintance with the Provost-Marshal,—a fact which, it was plain to perceive, gave him but a very poor impression of military gratitude.

"Oh, then, if they were in swarms fornent me, devil receave the prisoner I'll take again."

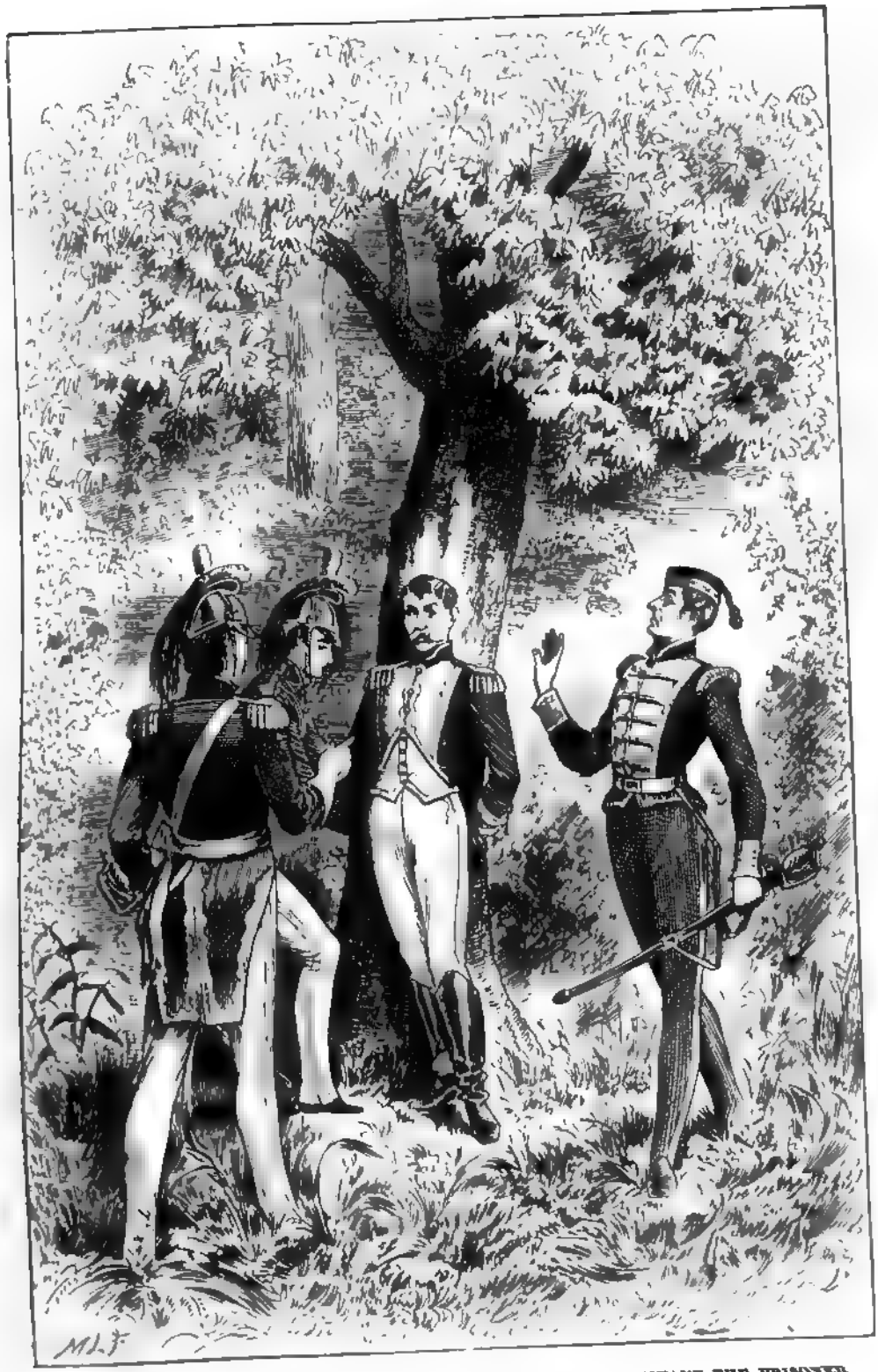
So saying, he slowly returned to the regiment, while Power and I, having conducted the Frenchman to the rear, cantered toward the town to learn the news of the day.

The city on that day presented a most singular aspect—the streets, filled with the town's-people and the soldiery, were decorated with flags and garlands—the cafés were crowded with merry groups, and the sounds of music and laughter resounded on all sides. The houses seemed to be quite inadequate to afford accommodation to the numerous guests, and, in consequence, bullock cars and forage wagons were converted into temporary hotels, and many a jovial party were collected in both. Military music, church bells, drinking choruses, were all commingled in the din and turmoil; processions in honor of "Our Lady of Succor" were jammed up among bacchanalian orgies, and their very chant half-drowned in the cries of the wounded, as they passed on to the hospitals. With difficulty we pushed our way through the dense mob, as we turned our steps toward the seminary. We both felt naturally curious to see the place where our first detachment landed, and to examine the opportunities of defense it presented. The building itself was a large and irregular one, of an oblong form, surrounded by a high wall of solid masonry, the only entrance being by a heavy iron gate.

At this spot the battle appeared to have raged with violence; one side of the massive gate was torn from its hinges, and lay flat upon the ground; the walls were breached in many places; and pieces of torn uniforms, broken bayonets, and bruised shakos, attested that the conflict was a close one. The seminary itself was in a falling state; the roof, from which Paget had given his orders, and where he was wounded, had fallen in. The French cannon had fissured the building from top to bottom, and it seemed only awaiting the slightest impulse to crumble into ruin. When we regarded the spot, and examined the narrow doorway which, opening upon a flight of a few steps to the river, admitted our first party, we could not help feeling struck anew with the gallantry of that mere handful of brave fellows, who thus threw themselves amid the overwhelming legions of the enemy, and at once, without waiting for a single reinforcement, opened a fire upon their ranks. Bold as the enterprised unquestionably was, we still felt with what consummate judgment it had been planned;—a bend of the river concealed entirely the passage the troops, the guns of the Sierra covered their landing, and completely swept one approach to the seminary. The French, being thus obliged to attack by the gate, were compelled to make a considerable *détour* before they reached it, all of which gave time for our divisions to cross; while the brigade of Guards under General Sherbroke, profiting by the confusion, passed the river below the town, and took the enemy unexpectedly in rear.

Brief as was the struggle within the town, it must have been a terrific one: the artillery were firing at musket-range; cavalry and infantry were fighting hand to hand in narrow streets, a destructive musketry pouring all the while from windows and house-tops.

At the Amarante gate, where the French defiled, the carnage was also great; their light artillery unlimbered some guns here, to cover the columns as they deployed;



"OH! THEM, IF THEY WERE IN SWARMS TORMENT ME, DEVIL RECEIVE THE PRISONER I'LL TAKE AGAIN." (P. 700.)

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but Murray's cavalry having carried these, the flank of the infantry became entirely exposed to the galling fire of small-arms from the seminary, and the far more destructive shower of grape that poured unceasingly from the Sierra.

Our brigade did the rest; and, in less than one hour from the landing of the first man, the French were in full retreat from Vallonga.

"A glorious thing, Charley," said Power, after a pause, "and a proud souvenir for hereafter."

A truth I felt deeply at the time, and one my heart responds to not less fully as I am writing.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE QUARREL.

On the evening of the 12th, orders were received for the German brigade, and three squadrons of our regiment, to pursue the French upon the Terracinthe road by daybreak on the following morning.

I was busily occupied in my preparations for a hurried march, when Mike came up to say that an officer desired to speak with me; and the moment after Captain Hammersley appeared. A sudden flush colored his pale and sickly features, as he held out his hand, and said:

"I've come to wish you joy, O'Malley. I just this instant heard of your promotion. I am sincerely glad of it; pray tell me the whole affair."

"That is the very thing I am unable to do. I have some very vague, indistinct remembrance of warding off a sabre-cut from the head of a wounded and unhorsed officer in the *mêlée* of yesterday; but more I know not. In fact, it was my first day under fire; I've a tolerably clear recollection of all the events of the morning, but the word 'Charge!' once given, I remember very little more. But you, where have you been? How have we not met before?"

"I've exchanged into a heavy dragoon regiment, and am now employed upon the staff."

"You are aware that I have letters for you?"

"Power hinted, I think, something of the kind. I saw him very hurriedly."

These words were spoken with an effort at *nonchalance* that evidently cost him much.

As for me, my agitation was scarcely less, as, fumbling for some seconds in my portmanteau, I drew forth the long destined packet. As I placed it in his hands he grew deadly pale, and a slight spasmodic twitch in his upper lip bespoke some unnatural struggle. He broke the seal suddenly, and, as he did so, the morocco case of a miniature fell upon the ground; his eyes ran rapidly across the letter; the livid color of his lips, as the blood forced itself to them, added to the corpse-like hue of his countenance.

"You, probably, are aware of the contents of this letter, Mr. O'Malley?" said he, in an altered voice, whose tones, half in anger, half in suppressed irony, cut to my very heart.

"I am in complete ignorance of them," said I, calmly.

"Indeed, sir!" replied he, with a sarcastic curl of his mouth as he spoke. "Then, perhaps, you will tell me, too, that your very success is a secret to you?"

"I'm really not aware—"

"You think, probably, sir, that the pastime is an amusing one, to interfere where the affections of others are concerned. I've heard of you, sir. Your conduct at Lisbon is known to me; and, though Captain Trevyllian may bear—"

"Stop, Captain Hammersley!" said I, with a tremendous effort to be calm; "stop! you have said enough, quite enough, to convince me of what your object was in seeking me here to-day. You shall not be disappointed. I trust that assurance will save you from any further display of temper."

"I thank you; most humbly I thank you for the quickness of your apprehension; and I shall now take my leave. Good-evening, Mr. O'Malley. I wish you much joy; you have my very fullest congratulations upon *all* your good fortune."

The sneering emphasis the last words were spoken with remained fixed in my mind long after he took his departure; and, indeed, so completely did the whole seem like a dream to me, that were it not for the fragments of the miniature that lay upon the ground, where he had crushed them with his heel, I could scarcely credit myself that I was awake.

My first impulse was to seek Power, upon whose judgment and discretion I could with confidence rely.

I had not long to wait; for, scarcely had I thrown my cloak around me, when he rode up. He had just seen Hammersley, and learned something of our interview.

"Why, Charley, my dear fellow! what

is this? How have you treated poor Hammersley?"

"Treated *him!* say, rather, how has he treated *me?*"

I here entered into a short but accurate account of our meeting; during which Power listened with great composure; while I could perceive, from the questions he asked, that some very different impression had been previously made upon his mind.

"And this was all that passed?"

"All."

"But what of the business at Lisbon?"

"I don't understand."

"Why, he speaks—he has heard some foolish account of your having made some ridiculous speech there about your successful rivalry of him in Ireland—Lucy Dashwood, I suppose, is referred to. Some one has been good-natured enough to repeat the thing to him."

"But it never occurred. I never did."

"Are you sure, Charley?"

"I am sure; I know I never did."

"The poor fellow, he has been duped! Come, Charley, you must not take it ill. Poor Hammersley has never recovered a sabre-wound he received some months since upon the head; his intellects are really affected by it. Leave it all to me. Promise not to leave your quarters till I return; and I'll put everything right again."

I gave the required pledge; while Power, springing into the saddle, left me to my own reflections.

My frame of mind, as Power left me, was by no means an enviable one. A quarrel is rarely a happy incident in a man's life, still less is it so when the difference arises with one we are disposed to like and respect. Such was Hammersley; his manly, straightforward character had won my esteem and regard, and it was with no common scrutiny I taxed my memory to think what could have given rise to the impression he labored under of my having injured him. His chance mention of Trevyllian suggested to me some suspicion that his dislike of me, wherefore arising I knew not, might have its share in the matter; and in this state of doubt and uncertainty I paced impatiently up and down, anxiously watching for Power's return, in the hope of at length getting some real insight into the difficulty.

My patience was fast ebbing, Power had been absent above an hour, and no appearance of him could I detect, when suddenly the tramp of a horse came rapidly up the *hill.* I looked out, and saw a rider coming forward at a very fast pace. Before I ha time for even a guess as to who it was, I drew up, and I recognized Captain Trevy lian. There was a certain look of easy in pertinence and half-smiling satisfactio about his features I had never seen befor as he touched his cap in salute, and said,

"May I have the honor of a few word conversation with you?"

I bowed silently, while he dismounted and passing his bridle beneath his arm walked on beside me.

"My friend, Captain Hammersley, ha commissioned me to wait upon you about this unpleasant affair—"

"I beg pardon for the interruption, Captain Trevyllian, but as I have yet to learn to what you or your friend alludes, perhaps it may facilitate matters if you will explicitly state your meaning."

He grew crimson on the cheek as I said this, while, with a voice perfectly unmoved, he continued,

"I am not sufficiently in my friend's confidence to know the whole of the affair in question, nor have I his permission to enter into any of it, he probably presuming, as I certainly did myself, that your sense of honor would have deemed further parley and discussion both unnecessary and unseasonable."

"In fact, then, if I understand, it is expected that I should meet Captain Hammersley for some reason unknown—"

"He certainly desires a meeting with you," was the dry reply.

"And as certainly I shall not give it, before understanding upon what grounds."

"And such I am to report as your answer?" said he, looking at me at the moment with an expression of ill-repressed triumph as he spoke.

There was something in these few words, as well as in the tone in which they were spoken, that sunk deeply in my heart. Was it that by some trick of diplomacy he was endeavoring to compromise my honor and character? was it possible that my refusal might be construed into any other than the real cause? I was too young, too inexperienced in the world to decide the question for myself, and no time was allowed me to seek another's counsel. What a trying moment was that for me! my temples throbbed, my heart beat almost audibly, and I stood afraid to speak; dreading, on the one hand, lest my compliance might involve me in an act to embitter my life forever, and fearful, on the other, that my refusal might be reported as a trait of cowardice.

He saw, he read my difficulty at a glance,

and, with a smile of most supercilious expression, repeated coolly his former question. In an instant all thought of Hammersley was forgotten. I remembered no more. I saw him before me, he who had, since my first meeting, continually contrived to pass some inappreciable slight upon me. My eyes flashed, my hands tingled with ill-repressed rage, as I said,

"With Captain Hammersley I am conscious of no quarrel, nor have I ever shown by any act or look an intention to provoke one. Indeed, such demonstrations are not always successful; there are persons most rigidly scrupulous for a friend's honor, little disposed to guard their own."

"You mistake," said he, interrupting me, as I spoke these words with a look as insulting as I could make it; "you mistake. I have sworn a solemn oath never to *send* a challenge."

The emphasis upon the word "send," explained fully his meaning, when I said,

"But you will not decline—"

"Most certainly not," said he, again interrupting, while with sparkling eye and elated look he drew himself up to his full height. "Your friend is—"

"Captain Power: and yours—"

"Sir Harry Beaufort. I may observe that, as the troops are in marching order, the matter had better not be delayed."

"There shall be none on my part."

"Nor mine!" said he, as with a low bow, and a look of most ineffable triumph, he sprang into his saddle; then, "*Au revoir*, Mr. O'Malley," said he, gathering up his reins. "Beaufort is on the staff, and quartered at Oporto." So saying, he cantered easily down the slope, and once more I was alone.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE ROUTE.

I WAS leisurely examining my pistols—poor Considine's last present to me on leaving home—when an orderly sergeant rode rapidly up, and delivered into my hands the following order:

"Lieutenant O'Malley will hold himself in immediate readiness to proceed on a particular service. By order of his Excellency the Commander of the Forces.

(Signed)

"S. GORDON, Military Secretary."

"What can this mean?" thought I. "It is not possible that any rumor of my intended meeting could have got abroad, and that my present destination could be intended as a punishment?"

I walked hurriedly to the door of the little hut which formed my quarters; below me, in the plain, all was activity and preparation; the infantry were drawn up in marching order; baggage wagons, ordnance stores and artillery seemed all in active preparation; and some cavalry squadrons might be already seen, with forage allowances behind the saddle, as if only waiting the order to set out. I strained my eyes to see if Power was coming, but no horseman approached in the direction. I stood, and I hesitated whether I should not rather seek him at once, than continue to wait on in my present uncertainty; but then, what if I should miss him? and I had pledged myself to remain till he returned.

While I deliberated thus with myself, weighing the various chances for and against each plan, I saw two mounted officers coming toward me at a brisk trot. As they came nearer, I recognized one as my Colonel; the other was an officer of the staff.

Supposing that their mission had some relation to the order I had so lately received, and which until now I had forgotten, I hastily returned, and ordered Mike to my presence.

"How are the horses, Mike?" said I.

"Never better, sir. Badger was wounded slightly by a spent shot in the counter, but he's never the worse this morning, and the black horse is capering like a filly."

"Get ready my pack, feed the cattle, and be prepared to set out at a moment's warning."

"Good advice, O'Malley," said the Colonel, as he overheard the last direction to my servant. "I hope the nags are in condition?"

"Why yes, sir, I believe they are."

"All the better; you've a sharp ride before you. Meanwhile, let me introduce my friend; Captain Beaumont—Mr. O'Malley. I think we had better be seated."

"These are your instructions, Mr. O'Malley," said Captain Beaumont, unfolding a map as he spoke. "You will proceed from this, with half a troop of your regiment, by forced marches, toward the frontier, passing through the town of Calenco, and Guarda, and the Estrella pass. On arriving at the head-quarters of the Lusitanian Legion, which you will find there, you are to put yourself under the orders

of Major Monsoon, commanding that force. Any Portuguese cavalry he may have with him will be attached to yours, and under your command; your rank, for the time, being that of captain. You will, as far as possible, acquaint yourself with the habits and capabilities of the native cavalry, and make such report as you judge necessary thereupon to his Excellency the Commander of the Forces. I think it only fair to add, that you are indebted to my friend, Colonel Merivale, for the very flattering position thus opened to your skill and enterprise."

"My dear Colonel, let me assure you—"

"Not a word, my boy. I knew the thing would suit you, and I am sure I can count upon your not disappointing my expectations of you. Sir Arthur perfectly remembers your name. He only asked two questions—

"'Is he well mounted?'

"'Admirably,' was my answer.

"'Can you depend upon his promptitude?'

"'He'll leave in half an hour.'

"So you see, O'Malley, I have already pledged myself for you. And now I must say adieu; the regiments are about to take up a more advanced position, so good-by. I hope you will have a pleasant time of it till we meet again."

"It is now twelve o'clock, Mr. O'Malley," said Beaumont; "we may rely upon your immediate departure. Your written instructions and dispatches will be here within a quarter of an hour."

I muttered something—what, I cannot remember; I bowed my thanks to my worthy Colonel, shook his hand warmly, and saw him ride down the hill, and disappear in the crowd of soldiery beneath, before I could recall my faculties and think over my situation.

Then all at once did the full difficulty of my position break upon me. If I accepted my present employment, I must certainly fail in my engagement with Trevyllian. But I had already pledged myself to its acceptance. What was to be done? No time was left for deliberation. The very minutes I should have spent in preparation were fast passing. Would that Power might appear. Alas! he came not. My state of doubt and uncertainty increased every moment; I saw nothing but ruin before me, even at a moment when fortune promised most fairly for the future, and opened a field of enterprise my heart had so often and so ardently desired. Nothing was left me but to hasten to Colonel Merivale and decline my appointment; to do so was to prejudice my character in his estimation forever, for I dared not allege my reasons, and in all probability my conduct might require my leaving the army.

"Be it so, then," said I, in an accent of despair; "the die is cast."

I ordered my horse round; I wrote a few words to Power, to explain my absence, should he come while I was away, and leaped into the saddle. As I reached the plain my pace became a gallop, and I pressed my horse with all the impatience my heart was burning with. I dashed along the lines toward Oporto, neither hearing nor seeing aught around me, when suddenly the clank of cavalry accoutrements behind induced me to turn my head, and I perceived an orderly dragoon at full gallop in pursuit. I pulled up till he came alongside.

"Lieutenant O'Malley, sir," said the man, saluting, "these dispatches are for you."

I took them hurriedly, and was about to continue my route, when the attitude of the dragoon arrested my attention. He had reined in his horse to the side of the narrow causeway, and, holding him still and steadily, sat motionless as a statue. I looked behind, and saw the whole staff approaching at a brisk trot. Before I had a moment for thought they were beside me.

"Ah! O'Malley," cried Merivale, "you have your orders; don't wait; his Excellency is coming up."

"Get along, I advise you," said another, "or you'll catch it, as some of us have done this morning."

"All is right, Charley; you can go in safety," said a whispering voice, as Power passed in a sharp canter.

That one sentence was enough; my heart bounded like a deer, my cheek beamed with the glow of delighted pleasure, I closed my spurs upon my gallant gray, and dashed across the plain.

When I arrived at my quarters the men were drawn up in waiting, and provided with rations for three days' march; Mike was also prepared for the road, and nothing more remained to delay me.

"Captain Power has been here, sir, and left a note."

I took it and thrust it hastily into my sabretasche. I knew from the few words he had spoken, that my present step involved me in no ill consequences; so, giving the word to wheel into column, I rode to the front, and set out upon my march to Alcantara.

CHAPTER L.

THE WATCH-FIRE.

THERE are few things so inspiriting to a young soldier as the being employed with a separate command; the picket and out-post duty have a charm for him no other portion of his career possesses. The field seems open for individual boldness and heroism: success, if obtained, must redound to his own credit; and what can equal, in its spirit-stirring enthusiasm, that first moment when we become in any way the arbiter of our own fortunes?

Such were my happy thoughts, as, with a proud and elated heart, I set forth upon my march. The notice the Commander-in-Chief had bestowed upon me had already done much: it had raised me in my own estimation, and implanted within me a longing desire for further distinction. I thought, too, of those far, far away, who were yet to hear of my successes.

I fancied to myself how they would severally receive the news. My poor uncle, with tearful eye and quivering lip, was before me, as I saw him read the dispatch, then wipe his glasses, and read on, till at last, with one long-drawn breath, his manly voice, tremulous with emotion, would break forth,—"My boy! my own Charley!" Then I pictured Considine, with port erect and stern features, listening silently; not a syllable, not a motion betraying that he felt interested in my fate, till, as if impatient, at length he would break in,—"I knew it—I said so; and yet you thought to make him a lawyer!" And then old Sir Harry: his warm heart glowing with pleasure, and his good-humored face beaming with happiness. How many a blunder he would make in retailing the news, and how many a hearty laugh his version of it would give rise to!

I passed in review before me the old servants, as they lingered in the room to hear the story. Poor old Matthew, the butler, fumbling with his corkscrew to gain a little time; then looking in my uncle's face, half entreatingly, as he asked,—"Any news of Master Charles, sir, from the wars?"

While thus my mind wandered back to the scenes and faces of my early home, I feared to ask myself how *she* would feel to whom my heart was now turning? Too deeply did I know how poor my chances were in that quarter to nourish hope, and yet I could not bring myself to abandon it altogether. Hammersley's strange conduct suggested to me that he, at least, could not be *my* rival, while I plainly perceived that he regarded me as *his*. There was a mystery in all this I could not fathom, and I ardently longed for my next meeting with Power, to learn the nature of his interview, and also in what manner the affair had been arranged.

Such were my passing thoughts as I pressed forward. My men, picked no less for themselves than their horses, came rapidly along; and, ere evening, we had accomplished twelve leagues of our journey.

The country through which we journeyed, though wild and romantic in its character, was singularly rich and fertile,—cultivation reaching to the very summits of the rugged mountains, and patches of wheat and Indian corn peeping amid masses of granite rock and tangled brushwood. The vine and the olive grew wild on every side; while the orange and the arbutus, loading the air with perfume, were mingled with prickly pear-trees and variegated hollies. We followed no regular track, but cantered along over hill and valley, through forest and prairie; now in long file through some tall field of waving corn, now in open order upon some level plain; our Portuguese guide riding a little in advance of us, upon a jet-black mule, caroling merrily some wild Galician melody as he went.

As the sun was setting, we arrived beside a little stream, that, flowing along a rocky bed, skirted a vast forest of tall cork-trees. Here we called a halt; and, picketing our horses, proceeded to make our arrangements for a bivouac.

Never do I remember a more lovely night. The watch-fires sent up a delicious odor from the perfumed shrubs; while the glassy water reflected on its still surface the starry sky that, unshadowed and unclouded, stretched above us. I wrapped myself in my trooper's mantle, and lay down beneath a tree,—but not to sleep. There was a something so exciting, and withal so tranquilizing, that I had no thought of slumber, but fell into a musing revery. There was a character of adventure in my position that charmed me much. My men were gathered in little groups beside the fires; some sunk in slumber, others sat smoking silently, or chatting, in a low and under tone, of some bygone scene of battle or bivouac; here and there were picketed the horses; the heavy panoply and piled carbines flickering in the red glare of the watch-fires, which ever and anon threw a flitting glow upon the stern and swarthy faces of my bold

troopers. Upon the trees around, sabres and helmets, holsters and cross-belts, were hung like armorial bearings in some antique hall, the dark foliage spreading its heavy shadow around us. Farther off, upon a little rocky ledge, the erect figure of the sentry, with his short carbine resting in the hollow of his arm, was seen slowly pacing in measured tread, or standing for a moment silently, as he looked upon the fair and tranquil sky,—his thoughts doubtless far, far away, beyond the sea, to some humble home, where—

"The hum of the spreading sycamore,
That grew beside his cottage door,"

was again in his ears, while the merry laugh of his children stirred his bold heart. It was a Salvator-Rosa scene, and brought me back in fancy to the bandit legends I had read in boyhood. By the uncertain light of the wood embers I endeavored to sketch the group that lay before me.

The night wore on. One by one the soldiers stretched themselves to sleep, and all was still. As the hours rolled by, a drowsy feeling crept gradually over me. I placed my pistols by my side, and, having replenished the fire by some fresh logs, disposed myself comfortably before it.

It was during that half-dreamy state that intervenes between waking and sleep, that a rustling sound of the branches behind attracted my attention. The air was too calm to attribute this to the wind, so I listened for some minutes; but sleep, too long deferred, was over-powerful, and my head sank upon my grassy pillow, and I was soon sound asleep. How long I remained thus, I know not; but I awoke suddenly. I fancied some one had shaken me rudely by the shoulder; but yet all was tranquil. My men were sleeping soundly, as I saw them last. The fires were becoming low, and a gray streak in the sky, as well as a sharp cold feeling of the air, betokened the approach of day. Once more I heaped some dry branches together, and was about again to stretch myself to rest, when I felt a hand upon my shoulder. I turned quickly round, and, by the imperfect light of the fire, saw the figure of a man standing motionless beside me; his head was bare, and his hair fell in long curls upon his shoulders; one hand was pressed upon his bosom, and with the other he motioned me to silence. My first impression was that our party was surprised by some French patrol; but, as I looked *again*, I recognized, to my amazement, that *the individual* before me was the young French officer I had seen that morning prisoner beside the Douro.

"How came you here?" said I, in a low voice, to him in French.

"Escaped; one of my own men threw himself between me and the sentry; I swam the Douro, received a musket-ball through my arm, lost my shako,—and here I am!"

"You are aware you are again a prisoner?"

"If you desire it, of course I am," said he, in a voice full of feeling, that made my very heart creep. "I thought you were a party of Lorge's Dragoons, scouring the country for forage; tracked you the entire day, and have only now come up with you."

The poor fellow, who had neither eaten nor drank since daybreak, wounded and footsore, had accomplished twelve leagues of a march, only once more to fall into the hands of his enemies. His years could scarcely have numbered nineteen; his countenance was singularly prepossessing; and, though bleeding and torn, with tattered uniform, and without a covering to his head, there was no mistaking for a moment that he was of gentle blood. Noiselessly and cautiously I made him sit down beside the fire, while I spread before him the sparing remnant of my last night's supper, and shared my solitary bottle of sherry with him.

From the moment he spoke, I never entertained a thought of making him a prisoner; but, as I knew not how far I was culpable in permitting, if not actually facilitating, his escape, I resolved to keep the circumstance a secret from my party, and, if possible, get him away before daybreak.

No sooner did he learn my intentions regarding him, than in an instant all memory of his past misfortune, all thoughts of his present destitute condition, seemed to have fled; and, while I dressed his wound and bound up his shattered arm, he chattered away as unconcernedly about the past and the future as though seated beside the fire of his own bivouac, and surrounded by his own brother officers.

"You took us by surprise the other day," said he. "Our Marshal looked for the attack from the mouth of the river; we received information that your ships were expected there. In any case, our retreat was an orderly one, and must have been effected with slight loss."

I smiled at the self-complacency of this reasoning, but did not contradict him.

"Your loss must indeed have been

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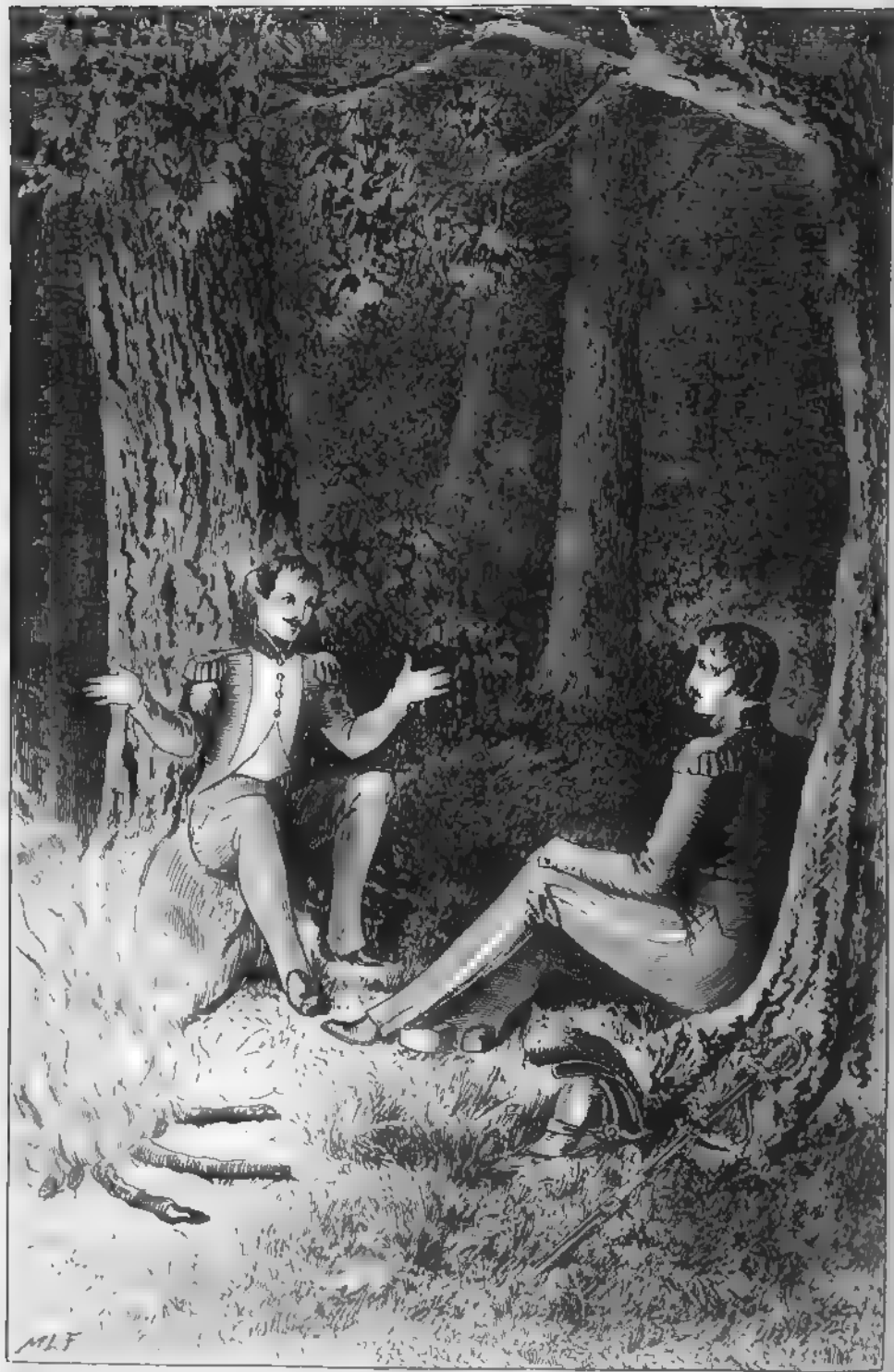

"IT WAS MY FIRST BATTLE; MY EPAULETTES WERE VERY SMART THINGS YESTERDAY, THOUGH THEY DO LOOK A LITTLE PASSÉES TO-DAY" (P. 797)

reat; your men crossed under the fire of
whole battery."

"Not exactly," said I; "our first party
ere quietly stationed in Oporto before
ou knew anything about it."

"*Ah! sacré Dieu!* Treachery!" cried
e, striking his forehead with his clenched
st.

"Not so; mere daring—nothing more.
But come, tell me something of your own
dventures. How were you taken?"

"Simply thus: I was sent to the rear
ith orders to the artillery to cut their
races, and leave the guns; and when
oming back, my horse grew tired in the
eavy ground, and I was spurring him to
he utmost, when one of your heavy dra-
goons—an officer, too—dashed at me, and
ctually rode me down, horse and all. I
ay for some time bruised by the fall, when
n infantry soldier passing by, seized me
y the collar, and brought me to the rear.
No matter, however, here I am now. You
will not give me up; and, perhaps, I may
ne day live to repay the kindness."

"You have not long joined?"

"It was my first battle; my epaulettes
ere very smart things yesterday, though
hey do look a little *passées* to-day. You
re advancing, I suppose?"

I smiled, without answering this ques-
ion.

"Ah, I see you don't wish to speak;
ever mind, your discretion is thrown away
pon me; for, if I rejoined my regiment to-
norrow, I should have forgotten all you
old me—all but your great kindness."
hese last words he spoke, bowing slightly
is head, and coloring as he said them.

"You are a dragoon, I think?" said I,
ndeavoring to change the topic.

"I was, two days ago, *chasseur à cheval*,
sous-lieutenant in the regiment of my
ather, the General St. Croix."

"The name is familiar to me," I replied;
and I am sincerely happy to be in a posi-
ion to serve the son of so distinguished an
fficer."

"The son of so distinguished an officer
s most deeply obliged; but wishes with
ll his heart and soul he had never sought
lory under such very excellent auspices.

"You look surprised, *mon cher;* but,
et me tell you, my military ardor is con-
iderably abated in the last three days;
unger, thirst, imprisonment, and this"—
ifting his wounded limb as he spoke—
are sharp lessons in so short a campaign,
nd for one, too, whose life hitherto had
uch more of ease than adventure to boast
f. Shall I tell you how I became a sol-
ier?"

"By all means; give me your glass first;
and now, with a fresh log to the fire, I'm
your man."

"But stay; before I begin, look to this."

The blood was flowing rapidly from his
wound, which, with some difficulty, I suc-
ceeded in stanching. He drank off his
wine hastily, held out his glass to be re-
filled, and then began his story.

"You have never seen the Emperor?"

"Never."

"*Sacrebleu!* What a man he is! I'd
rather stand under the fire of your grena-
diers, than meet his eye. When in a pas-
sion, he does not say much, it is true; but
what he does, comes with a kind of hissing,
rushing sound, while the very fire seems to
kindle in his look. I have him before me
this instant, and, though you will confess
that my present condition has nothing very
pleasing in it, I should be sorry, indeed, to
change it for the last time I stood in his
presence.

"Two months ago, I sported the gay
light blue and silver of a page to the Em-
peror, and certainly, what with balls, *bon-
bons*, flirtation, gossip, and champagne
suppers, led a very gay, reckless, and indo-
lent life of it. Somehow—I may tell you
more accurately at another period, if we
ever meet—I got myself into disgrace, and,
as a punishment, was ordered to absent
myself from the Tuileries, and retire, for
some weeks, to Fontainebleau. Siberia, to
a Russian, would scarcely be a heavier in-
fliction than was this banishment to me.
There was no court, no levee, no military
parade, no ball, no opera. A small house-
hold of the Emperor's chosen servants
quietly kept house there. The gloomy
walls re-echoed to no music; the dark al-
leys of the dreary garden seemed the very
impersonation of solitude and decay. Noth-
ing broke the dull monotony of the tire-
some day, except when occasionally, near
sunset, the clash of the guard would be
heard turning out, and the clank of pre-
senting arms, followed by the roll of a
heavy carriage into the gloomy court-
yard. One lamp, shining like a star, in a
small chamber on the second floor, would
remain till near four, sometimes five o'clock
in the morning. The same sounds of the
guard and the same dull roll of the carriage
would break the stillness of the early morn-
ing; and the Emperor—for it was he—
would be on his road back to Paris.

"We never saw him—I say we, for, like
myself, some half-dozen others were also
there, expiating their follies by a life of
cheerless *ennui*.

"It was upon a calm evening in April,

we sat together chatting over the various misdeeds which had consigned us to exile, when some one proposed, by way of passing the time, that we should visit the small flower garden that was parted off from the rest, and reserved for the Emperor alone. It was already beyond the hour he usually came; besides that, even should he arrive, there was abundant time to get back before he could possibly reach it. The garden we had often seen, but there was something in the fact that our going there was a transgression that so pleased us all, that we agreed at once, and set forth. For above an hour we loitered about the lonely and deserted walks, where already the Emperor's foot-tracks had worn a marked pathway, when we grew weary, and were about to return, just as one of the party suggested, half in ridicule of the sanctity of the spot, that we should have a game of leap-frog ere we left it. The idea pleased us, and was at once adopted. Our plan was this: each person stationed himself in some by-walk or alley, and waited till the other, whose turn it was, came and leaped over him; so that, besides the activity displayed, there was a knowledge of the *locale* necessary; for, to any one passed over a forfeit was to be paid. Our game began at once, and certainly I doubt if ever those green alleys and shady groves rang to such hearty laughter. Here would be seen a couple rolling over together on the grass; there some luckless wight counting out his pocket money, to pay his penalty. The hours passed quickly over, and the moon rose, and at last it came to my turn to make the tour of the garden. As I was supposed to know all its intricacies better than the rest, a longer time was given for them to conceal themselves; at length the word was given, and I started.

Anxious to acquit myself well, I hurried along at top speed, but guess my surprise to discover that nowhere could I find one of my companions; down one walk I scampered, up another, across a third, but all was still and silent; not a sound, not a breath, could I detect. There was still one part of the garden unexplored; it was a small open space before a little pond, which usually contained the gold fish the Emperor was so fond of. Thither I bent my steps, and had not gone far when, in the pale moonlight, I saw, at length, one of my companions waiting patiently for my coming, his head bent forward and his shoulders rounded. Anxious to repay *him for* my own disappointment, I crept *silently forward* on tiptoe till quite near him, when, rushing madly on, I sprang upon his back; just, however, as I rose to leap over, he raised his head, and, staggered by the impulse of my spring, he was thrown forward, and, after an ineffectual effort to keep his legs, fell flat upon his face in the grass. Bursting with laughter, I fell over him on the ground, and was turning to assist him, when suddenly he sprang upon his feet, and—horror of horrors!—it was Napoleon himself; his usually pale features were purple with rage, but not a word, not a syllable escaped him.

"'*Qui êtes vous?*' said he at length.

"'St. Croix, sire,' said I, still kneeling before him, while my very heart leaped into my mouth.

"'St. Croix! *toujours* St. Croix! Come here; approach me,' cried he, in a voice of stifled passion.

"I rose; but before I could take a step forward he sprang at me, and, tearing off my epaulettes, trampled them beneath his feet, and then he shouted out, rather than spoke, the word '*Allez!*'

"I did not wait for a second intimation, but clearing the paling at a spring, was many a mile from Fontainebleau before daybreak."

CHAPTER LI.

THE MARCH.

TWICE the *réveil* sounded; the horses champed impatiently their heavy bits; my men stood waiting for the order to mount, ere I could arouse myself from the deep sleep I had fallen into. The young Frenchman and his story were in my dreams, and, when I awoke, his figure, as he lay sleeping beside the wood embers, was the first object I perceived. There he lay, to all seeming as forgetful of his fate as though he still inhabited the gorgeous halls and gilded saloons of the Tuileries; his pale and handsome features wore even a placid smile as, doubtless, some dream of other days flitted across him; his long hair waved in luxurious curls upon his neck, and his light brown moustache, slightly curled at the top, gave to his mild and youthful features an air of saucy *fierté* that heightened their effect. A narrow blue ribbon, which he wore round his throat, gently peeped from his open bosom. I could not resist the curiosity I felt to see what it meant, and, drawing it softly forth, I perceived that a small miniature was attached to it. It was beautifully painted, and surrounded with brilliants of some

value. One glance showed me—for I had seen more than one engraving before of her—that it was the portrait of the Empress Josephine. Poor boy! he doubtless was a favorite at court; indeed, everything in his air and manner bespoke him such. I gently replaced the precious locket, and turned from the spot, to think over what was best to be done for him. Knowing the vindictive feeling of the Portuguese toward their invaders, I feared to take Pietro, our guide, into my confidence. I accordingly summoned my man Mike to my aid, who, with all his country's readiness, soon found out an expedient. It was to pretend to Pietro that the prisoner was merely an English officer, who had made his escape from the French army, in which, against his will, he had been serving for some time.

This plan succeeded perfectly; and, when St. Croix, mounted upon one of my led horses, set out upon his march beside me, none was more profuse of his attentions than the dark-brown guide, whose hatred of a Frenchman was beyond belief.

By thus giving him safe-conduct through Portugal, I knew that when we reached the frontier he could easily manage to come up with some part of Marshal Victor's force, the advanced guard of which lay on the left bank of the Tagus.

To me the companionship was the greatest boon; the gay and buoyant spirit that no reverse of fortune, no untoward event, could subdue, lightened many an hour of the journey; and though, at times, the gasconading tone of the Frenchman would peep through, there was still such a fund of good-tempered raillery in all he said, that it was impossible to feel angry with him. His implicit faith in the Emperor's invincibility also amused me. Of the unbounded confidence of the nation in general, and the army particularly, in Napoleon, I had till then no conception. It was not that in the profound skill and immense resources of the general they trusted, but they actually regarded him as one placed above all the common accidents of fortune, and revered him as something more than human.

"*Il viendra, et puis*—" was the continued exclamation of the young Frenchman. Any notion of our successfully resisting the overwhelming might of the Emperor, he would have laughed to scorn, and so I let him go on prophesying our future misfortunes till the time when, driven back upon Lisbon, we should be compelled to evacuate the Peninsula, and, under favor of a convention, be permitted to return to England. All this was sufficiently ridiculous, coming from a youth of nineteen, wounded, in misery, a prisoner; but further experience of his nation has shown me, that St. Croix was not the exception, but the rule. The conviction in the ultimate success of their army, whatever be the merely momentary mishap, is the one present thought of a Frenchman; a victory with them is a conquest; a defeat—if they are by any chance driven to acknowledge one—a *fatalité*.

I was too young a man, and, still more, too young a soldier, to bear with this absurd affectation of superiority as I ought, and consequently was glad to wander, whenever I could, from the contested point of our national superiority to other topics. St. Croix, although young, had seen much of the world, as a page in the splendid court of the Tuileries; the scenes passing before his eyes were calculated to make a strong impression; and, by many an anecdote of his former life, he lightened the road as we passed along.

"You promised, by-the-by, to tell me of your banishment. How did that occur, St. Croix?"

"*Ah! par Dieu!* that was an unfortunate affair for me: then began all my mishaps; but for that, I should never have been sent to Fontainebleau; never have played leap-frog with the Emperor; never have been sent a soldier into Spain. True," said he, laughing, "I should never have had the happiness of your acquaintance. But still, I'd much rather have met you first in the Place des Victoires than in the Estrella Mountains."

"Who knows?" said I; "perhaps, your good genius prevailed in all this?"

"Perhaps," said he, interrupting me; "that's exactly what the Empress said—she was my godmother—'Jules will be a *Maréchal de France* yet.' But, certainly, it must be confessed, I have made a bad beginning. However, you wish to hear of my disgrace at court. *Allons, donc.* But had we not better wait for a halt?"

"Agreed," said I; "and so let us now press forward."

CHAPTER LII.

THE PAGE.

UNDER the deep shade of some tall trees, sheltered from the noonday sun, we lay down to rest ourselves, and enjoy a most patriarchal dinner—some dry biscuits, a few bunches of grapes, and a little weak

wine, savoring more of the boraccio-skin than the vine-juice, were all we boasted; yet they were not ungrateful at such a time and place.

"Whose health did you pledge, then?" inquired St. Croix, with a half malicious smile, as I raised the glass silently to my lips.

I blushed deeply and looked confused.

"*A ses beaux yeux!* whoever she be," said he, gayly tossing off his wine; "and now, if you feel disposed, I'll tell you my story. In good truth, it is not worth relating, but it may serve to set you asleep, at all events.

"I have already told you I was a page. Alas! the impressions you may feel of that functionary, from having seen Cherubino, give but a faint notion of him when pertaining to the household of the Emperor Napoleon.

"The *farfallone amoroso* basked in the soft smiles and sunny looks of the Countess Almaviva; we met but the cold, impassive look of Talleyrand—the piercing and penetrating stare of Savary—or the ambiguous smile, half menace, half mockery, of Monsieur Fouché. While on service, our days were passed in the ante-chamber, beside the *salle d'audience* of the Emperor—reclining against the closed door, watching attentively for the gentle tinkle of the little bell which summoned us to open for the exit of some haughty diplomate, or the *entrée* of some redoubted general. Thus passed we the weary hours; the illustrious visitors by whom we were surrounded had no novelty, consequently no attraction for us, and the names already historical were but household words with us.

"We often remarked, too, the proud and distant bearing the Emperor assumed toward those of his generals who had been his former companions in arms. Whatever familiarity or freedom may have existed in the campaign or in the battle-field, the air of the Tuileries certainly chilled it. I have often heard that the ceremonious observances and rigid etiquette of the old Bourbon court were far preferable to the stern reserve and unbending stiffness of the Imperial one.

"The ante-chamber is but the reflection of the reception-room; and, whatever be the whims, the caprices, the littleness of the Great Man, they are speedily assumed by his inferiors, and the dark temper of one casts a lowering shadow on every menial by whom he is surrounded.

"*As for* us, we were certainly not long *in catching* somewhat of the spirit of the Emperor; and I doubt much if the impertinence of the waiting-room was not more dreaded and detested than the abrupt speech and searching look of Napoleon himself.

"What a malicious pleasure have I not felt in arresting the step of M. de Talleyrand, as he approached the Emperor's closet! with what easy insolence have I lisped out, 'Pardon, monsieur, but his Majesty cannot receive you'—or, 'Monsieur le Duc, his Majesty has given no orders for your admission.'—How amusing it was to watch the baffled look of each, as he retired once more to his place among the crowd; the wily diplomate covering his chagrin with a practiced smile, while the stern marshal would blush to his very eyes with his indignation. This was the great pleasure our position afforded us; and with a boyish spirit of mischief, we cultivated it to perfection, and became at last the very horror and detestation of all who frequented the levees; and the ambassador, whose fearless voice was heard among the councils of kings, became soft and conciliating in his approaches to us; and the hardy general, who would have charged upon a brigade of artillery, was timid as a girl in addressing us a mere question.

"Among the amiable class thus characterized I was most conspicuous, preserving cautiously a tone of civility that left nothing openly to complain of. I assumed an indifference and impartiality of manner that no exigency of affairs, no pressing haste, could discompose or disturb; and my bow of recognition to Soult or Massena was as coolly measured, as my monosyllabic answer was accurately conned over.

"Upon ordinary occasions, the Emperor, at the close of each person's audience, rang his little bell for the admission of the next in order as they arrived in the waiting-room; yet, when anything important was under consideration, a list was given us in the morning of the names to be presented in rotation, which no casual circumstance was ever suffered to interfere with.

"It is now about four months since, one fine morning, such a list was placed within my hands. His Majesty was just then occupied with an inquiry into the naval force of the kingdom; and, as I cast my eyes carelessly over the names, I read little else than Vice-Admiral so-and-so, Commander such-a-one, and Chef d'Escadron such another, and the levee presented accordingly, instead of its usual brilliant array of gorgeous uniform and aiguiletted marshals, the simple blue-and-gold of the naval service.

"The marine was not in high favor with the Emperor, and truly, my reception of these unfrequent visitors was anything but flattering. The early part of the morning was, as usual, occupied by the audience of the Minister of Police and the Duc de Bassano, who, evidently, from the length of time they remained, had matter of importance to communicate. Meanwhile, the ante-chamber filled rapidly, and, before noon, was actually crowded. It was just at this moment that the folding-door slowly opened, and a figure entered, such as I had never before seen in our brilliant saloon: he was a man of five or six-and-fifty, short, thickset, and strongly built, with a bronzed and weather-beaten face, and a broad open forehead, deeply scarred with a sabre-cut; a shaggy gray moustache curled over and concealed his mouth, while eyebrows of the same color shaded his dark and piercing eyes. His dress was a coarse coat of blue cloth, such as the fishermen wear in Bretagne, fastened at the waist by a broad belt of black leather, from which hung a short broad-bladed cutlass; his loose trowsers, of the same material, were turned up at the ankles, to show a pair of strong legs coarsely cased in blue stockings and thick-soled shoes—a broad-leaved oil-skin hat was held in one hand, and the other stuck carelessly in his pocket, as he entered; he came in with a careless air, and, familiarly saluting one or two officers in the room, he sat himself down near the door, appearing lost in his own reflections.

"'Who can you be, my worthy friend?' was my question to myself, as I surveyed this singular apparition. At the same time, casting my eyes down the list, I perceived that several pilots of the coast of Havre, Calais, and Boulogne had been summoned to Paris, to give some information upon the soundings and depth of water along the shore.

"'Ha,' thought I, 'I have it—the good man has mistaken his place, and instead of remaining without, has walked boldly forward to the antechamber.' There was something so strange and so original in the grim look of the old fellow, as he sat there alone, that I suffered him to remain quietly in his delusion, rather than order him back to the waiting-room without; besides, I perceived that a kind of sensation was created among the others by his appearance there, which amused me greatly.

"As day wore on, the the officers formed into little groups of three or four, chatting together in an undertone of voice; all, save the old pilot; he had taken a huge tobacco-box from his capacious breast-pocket, and inserting an immense piece of the bitter weed in his mouth, began to chew it as leisurely as though he were walking the quarter-deck. The cool insouciance of such a proceeding amused me much, and I resolved to draw him out a little.

"His strong, broad Breton features, his deep voice, his dry, blunt manner, were all in admirable keeping with his exterior, and amused me highly.

"'*Par Dieu!* my lad,' said he, after chatting some time, 'had you not better tell the Emperor that I am waiting?—It's now past noon, and I must eat something.'

"'Have a little patience,' said I; 'his Majesty is going to invite you to dinner.'

"'Be it so,' said he, gravely; 'provided the hour be an early one, I'm his man.'

"With difficulty did I keep down my laughter as he said this, and continued.

"'So you know the Emperor already, it seems?'

"'Yes, that I do! I remember him when he was no higher than yourself.'

"'How delighted he'll be to find you here—I hope you have brought up some of your family with you, as the Emperor would be so flattered by it?'

"'No, I've left them at home; this place don't suit us over well. We have plenty to do, besides spending our time and money among all you fine folks here.'

"'And not a bad life of it, either,' added I, 'fishing for cod and herrings—stripping a wreck now and then.'

"He stared at me, as I said this, like a tiger on the spring, but spoke not a word.

"'And how many young sea-wolves may you have in your den at home?'

"'Six; and all o' them able to carry you with one hand, at arm's length!'

"'I have no doubt; I shall certainly not test their ability. But you yourself, how do you like the capital?'

"'Not over well, and I'll you why—'

"As he said this, the door of the audience-chamber opened, and the Emperor appeared. His eyes flashed fire, as he looked hurriedly around the room.

"'Who is in waiting here?'

"'I am, please your majesty,' said I, bowing deeply, as I started from my seat.

"'And where is the Admiral Truguet? Why was he not admitted?'

"'Not present, your Majesty,' said I, trembling with fear.

"'Hold there, young fellow. Not so fast; here he is.'

"'Ah, Truguet, *mon ami!*' cried the Emperor, placing both hands on the old

fellow's shoulders; 'how long have you been in waiting?'

"'Two hours and a half,' said he; producing in evidence a watch like a saucer.

"'What! two hours and a half, and I not know it?'

"'No matter; I am always happy to serve your Majesty. But if that fine fellow had not told me that you were going to ask me to dinner—"

"'He! he said so, did he?' said Napoleon, turning on me a glance like a wild beast. 'Yes, Truguet, so I am; you shall dine with me to-day. And you, sir,' said he, dropping his voice to a whisper, as he came closer toward me, 'and you have dared to speak thus? Call in a guard there; Capitaine, put this person under arrest; he is disgraced; he is no longer page of the palace. Out of my presence! away, sir!'

"The room wheeled round; my legs tottered, my senses reeled; and I saw no more.

"Three weeks' bread and water in St. Pélagie, however, brought me to my recollection; and at last my kind, my more than kind friend, the Empress, obtained my pardon, and sent me to Fontainebleau, till the Emperor should forget all about it. How I contrived again to refresh his memory I have already told you; and certainly you will acknowledge that I have not been fortunate in my interviews with Napoleon."

I am conscious how much St. Croix's story loses in my telling, The simple expressions, the grace of the narrative, were its charms; and these, alas! I can neither translate nor imitate, no more than I can convey the strange mixture of deep feeling and levity, shrewdness and simplicity, that constituted the manner of the narrator.

With many a story of his courtly career he amused me as we trotted along; when, toward nightfall of the third day, a peasant informed us that a body of French cavalry occupied the convent of San Cristoval, about three leagues off. The opportunity of his return to his own army pleased him far less than I expected; he heard, without any show of satisfaction, that the time of his liberation had arrived, and when the moment of leave-taking drew near, he became deeply affected.

"*Eh bien*, Charles," said he, smiling sadly through his dimmed and tearful eyes. "You've been a kind friend to me. Is the time never to come when I can repay you?"

"Yes, yes; we'll meet again, be assured of it. Meanwhile, there is one way you can more than repay anything I have done for you."

"Oh! name it at once."

"Many a brave fellow of ours is now, and, doubtless, many more will be, prisoners with your army in this war. Whenever, therefore, your lot brings you in contact with such—"

"They shall be my brothers," said he, springing toward me, and throwing his arms round my neck. "Adieu, adieu!" With that he rushed from the spot, and, before I could speak again, was mounted upon the peasant's horse, and waving his hand to me in farewell.

I looked after him as he rode at a fast gallop down the slope of the green mountain, the noise of the horse's feet echoing along the silent plain. I turned at length to leave the spot, and then perceived, for the first time, that, when taking his farewell of me, he had hung around my neck his miniature of the Empress. Poor boy! how sorrowful I felt thus to rob him of what he held so dear! How gladly would I have overtaken him to restore it. It was the only keepsake he possessed; and, knowing that I would not accept it, if offered, he took this way of compelling me to keep it.

Through the long hours of the summer's night I thought of him; and, when at last I slept, toward morning, my first thought on waking was of the solitary day before me. The miles no longer slipped imperceptibly along; no longer did the noon and night seem fast to follow. Alas! that one should grow old! The very sorrows of our early years have something soft and touching in them. Arising less from deep wrong than slight mischances, the grief they cause comes ever with an alloy of pleasant thoughts, telling of the tender past; and, 'mid the tears called up, forming some bright rainbow of future hope.

Poor St. Croix had already won greatly upon me; and I felt lonely and desolate when he departed.

CHAPTER LIII.

ALVAS.

NOTHING of incident marked our further progress toward the frontier of Spain, and at length we reached the small town of Alvas. It was past sunset as we arrived, and, instead of the usual quiet and repose of a little village, we found the streets crowded with people, on horseback and on foot;

mules, bullocks, carts, and wagons blocked up the way, and the oaths of the drivers and the screaming of women and children resounded on all sides.

With what little Spanish I possessed I questioned some of those near me, and learned, in reply, that a dreadful engagement had taken place that day between the advanced guard of the French, under Victor, and the Lusitanian legion; that the Portuguese troops had been beaten and completely routed, losing all their artillery and baggage; that the French were rapidly advancing, and expected hourly to arrive at Alvas, in consequence of which the terror-stricken inhabitants were packing up their possessions and hurrying away.

Here, then, was a point of considerable difficulty for me at once. My instructions had never provided for such a conjuncture, and I was totally unable to determine what was best to be done; both my men and their horses were completely tired by a march of fourteen leagues, and had a pressing need of some rest; on every side of me the preparations for flight were proceeding with all the speed that fear inspires; and to my urgent request for some information as to food and shelter, I could obtain no other reply than muttered menaces of the fate before me if I remained, and exaggerated accounts of French cruelty.

Amid all this bustle and confusion a tremendous fall of heavy rain set in, which at once determined me, come what might, to house my party, and provide forage for our horses.

As we pushed our way slowly through the encumbered streets, looking on every side for some appearance of a village inn, a tremendous shout rose in our rear, and a rush of the people toward us induced us to suppose that the French were upon us. For some minutes the din and uproar were terrific—the clatter of horses' feet, the braying of trumpets, the yelling of the mob, all mingling in one frightful concert.

I formed my men in close column, and waited steadily for the attack, resolving, if possible, to charge through the advancing files; any retreat through the crowded and blocked-up thoroughfares being totally out of the question. The rain was falling in such torrents that nothing could be seen a few yards off, when suddenly a pause of a few seconds occurred, and, from the clash of accoutrements and the hoarse tones of a loud voice, I judged that the body of men before us were forming for attack.

Resolving, therefore, to take them by surprise, I gave the word to charge, and, spurring our jaded cattle, onward we dashed. The mob fled right and left from us as we came on; and through the dense mist we could just perceive a body of cavalry before us.

In an instant we were among them; down they went on every side, men and horses rolling pell-mell over each other—not a blow, not a shot striking us as we pressed on. Never did I witness such total consternation; some threw themselves from their horses, and fled toward the houses: others turned and tried to fall back, but the increasing pressure from behind held them, and finally succeeded in blocking us up amongst them.

It was just at this critical moment that a sudden gleam of light from a window fell upon the disordered mass, and to my astonishment—I need not say, to my delight—I perceived that they were Portuguese troops. Before I had well time to halt my party, my convictions were pretty well strengthened by hearing a well-known voice in the rear of the mass call out:

"Charge, ye devils! charge, will ye? illustrious Hidalgos! cut them down; *los infidelos, sacrificados los*—scatter them like chaff!"

One roar of laughter was my only answer to this energetic appeal for my destruction, and the moment after, the dry features and pleasant face of old Monsoon beamed on me by the light of a pine-torch he carried in his right hand.

"Are they prisoners?—have they surrendered?" inquired he, riding up. "It is well for them; we'd have made mincemeat of them otherwise; now they shall be well treated, and ransomed if they prefer."

"*Gracias excellenze!*" said I, in a feigned voice.

"Give up your sword," said the Major, in an undertone. "You behaved gallantly, but you fought against invincibles. Lord love them! but they are the most terrified invincibles."

I nearly burst aloud at this.

"It was a close thing which of us ran first," muttered the Major, as he turned to give some directions to an aide-de-camp. "Ask them who they are," said he, in Spanish.

By this time I came close alongside of him, and placing my mouth close to his ear, hallooed out:

"Monsoon, old fellow, how goes the King of Spain's sherry?"

"Eh!—what—why—upon my life, and so it is—Charley, my boy, so it's you, is it—egad, how good; and we were so near being the death of you! My poor fellow, how came you here?"

A few words of explanation sufficed to inform the Major why we were there, and still more to comfort him with the assurance that he had not been charging the General's staff, and the Commander-in-Chief himself.

"Upon my life, you gave me a great start; though, as long as I thought you were French, it was very well."

"True, Major, but certainly the invincibles were merciful as they were strong."

"They were tired, Charley, nothing more; why, lad, we've been fighting since daybreak—beat Victor at six o'clock—drove him back behind the Tagus—took a cold dinner, and had at him again in the afternoon. Lord love you! we've immortalized ourselves; but you must never speak of this little business here; it tells devilish ill for the discipline of your fellows, upon my life it does."

This was rather an original turn to give the transaction, but I did not oppose; and, thus chatting, we entered the little inn, where, confidence once restored, some semblance of comfort already appeared.

"And so you're come to reinforce us?" said Monsoon; "there was never anything more opportune; though we surprised ourselves to-day with valor, I don't think we could persevere."

"Yes, Major, the appointment gave me sincere pleasure; I greatly desired to see a little service under your orders. Shall I present you with my dispatches?"

"Not now, Charley—not now, my lad. Supper is the first thing at this moment; besides, now that you remind me, I must send off a dispatch myself. Upon my life, it's a great piece of fortune that you're here; you shall be Secretary at War, and write it for me; here now—how lucky that I thought of it, to be sure! and it was just a mere chance; one has so many things—" Muttering such broken, disjointed sentences, the Major opened a large portfolio with writing materials, which he displayed before me as he rubbed his hands with satisfaction, and said, "Write away, lad."

"But, my dear Major, you forget; I was not in the action. You must describe; I can only follow you."

"Begin then thus:

"'Headquarters, Alvas, June 26.

"'YOUR EXCELLENCY,

"'Having learned from Don Alphonso Xaviero da Minto, an officer upon my personal staff—'

"Luckily sober at that moment—

"'That the advanced guard of the *eighth* corps of the French army—'

"Stay, though, was it the eighth?—Upon my life, I'm not quite clear as to that; blot the word a little and go on—

"'That the —— corps, under Marshal Victor, had commenced a forward movement toward Alcantara, I immediately ordered a flank movement of the light infantry regiment to cover the bridge over the Tagus. After breakfast—"

"I'm afraid, Major, that is not precise enough."

"Well, 'About eleven o'clock, the French skirmishers attacked, and drove in our pickets that were posted in front of our position, and following rapidly up with cavalry, they took a few prisoners, and killed old Alphonzo; he ran like a man, they say, but they caught him in the rear.'

"You needn't put that in, if you don't like.

"'I now directed a charge of the cavalry brigade under Don Asturias Y'Hajos, that cut them up in fine style. Our artillery, posted on the heights, mowing away at their columns like fun.

"'Victor didn't like this, and got into a wood, when we all went to dinner: it was about two o'clock then.

"'After dinner, the Portuguese light corps, under Silva da Onorha, having made an attack upon the enemy's left, without my orders, got devilishly well trounced, and served them right; but, coming up to their assistance, with the heavy brigade of guns, and the cavalry, we drove back the French, and took several prisoners, none of whom we put to death.'

"Dash that—Sir Arthur likes respect for the usages of war.—Lord, how dry I'm getting!

"'The French were soon seen to retire their heavy guns, and speedily afterward retreated. We pursued them for some time, but they showed fight; and, as it was getting dark, I drew off my forces, and came here to supper. Your Excellency will perceive, by the inclosed return, that our loss has been considerable.

"'I send this dispatch by Don Emanuel Forgales, whose services—'

"I back him for mutton hash with onions against the whole regiment—

"'Have been of the most distinguished nature, and beg to recommend him to your Excellency's favor.

"'I have the honor, etc.'

"Is it finished, Charley? Egad, I'm glad of it, for here comes supper."

The door opened as he spoke, and displaying a tempting tray of smoking viands, flanked by several bottles—an officer of the

Major's staff accompanied it, and showed, by his attentions to the etiquette of the table, and the proper arrangement of the meal, that his functions in his superior's household were more than military.

We were speedily joined by two others in rich uniform, whose names I now forget, but to whom the Major presented me in all form; introducing me, as well as I could interpret his Spanish, as his most illustrious ally and friend Don Carlos O'Malley.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE SUPPER.

I HAVE often partaken of more luxurious cookery and rarer wines; but never do I remember enjoying a more welcome supper than on this occasion.

Our Portuguese guests left us soon, and the Major and myself were once more *tête-à-tête* beside a cheerful fire; a well-chosen array of bottles guaranteeing that for some time at least, no necessity of leave-taking should arise from any deficiency of wine.

"That sherry is very near the thing, Charley; a little, a very little sharp, but the after-taste perfect: and, now, my boy, how have you been doing since we parted?"

"Not so badly, Major. I have already got a step in promotion. The affair at the Douro gave me a lieutenancy."

"I wish you joy with all my heart. I'll call you Captain always while you're with me. Upon my life I will. Why, man, they style me your Excellency here. Bless your heart! we are great folk among the Portuguese, and no bad service after all."

"I should think not, Major. You seem to have always made a good thing of it."

"No, Charley; no, my boy. They overlook us greatly in general orders and dispatches. Had the brilliant action of to-day been fought by the British—but no matter; they may behave well in England, after all; and, when I'm called to the Upper House as Baron Monsoon of the Tagus —is that better than Lord Alcantara?"

"I prefer the latter."

"Well, then, I'll have it. Lord! what treaty I'll move for with Portugal, to let us have wine cheap. Wine, you know, as David says, gives us a pleasant countenance; and oil, I forget what oil does,—mess over the decanter. And how is Sir Arthur, Charley? A fine fellow, but sadly deficient in the knowledge of supplies.—Never would have made any character in the commissariat.—Bless your heart, he pays for everything here, as if he were in Cheapside."

"How absurd, to be sure!"

"Isn't it, though? that was not my way, when I was commissary-general about a year or two ago. To be sure, how I did puzzle them! They tried to audit my accounts; and what do you think I did? I brought them in three thousand pounds in my debt. They never tried on that game any more. 'No! no!' said the Junta; 'Beresford and Monsoon are great men, and must be treated with respect.' Do you think we'd let them search our pockets? But the rogues doubled on us, after all; they sent us to the northward,—a poor country—"

"So that, except a little common-place pillage of the convents and nunneries, you had little or nothing?"

"Exactly so; and then I got a great shock about that time, that affected my spirits for a considerable while."

"Indeed, Major! some illness?"

"No, I was quite well; but—Lord! how thirsty it makes me to think of it! my throat is absolutely parched,—I was near being hanged!"

"Hanged!"

"Yes. Upon my life it's true—very horrible, ain't it? It had a great effect upon my nervous system; and they never thought of any little pension to me, as a recompense for my sufferings."

"And who was barbarous enough to think of such a thing, Major?"

"Sir Arthur Wellesley himself; none other, Charley."

"Oh, it was a mistake, Major, or a joke."

"It was devilish near being a practical one, though. I'll tell you how it occurred. After the battle of Vimeira, the brigade to which I was attached had their head-quarters at San Pietro, a large convent where all the church plate for miles around was stored up for safety. A sergeant's guard was accordingly stationed over the refectory, and every precaution taken to prevent pillage, Sir Arthur himself having given particular orders on the subject. Well, somehow,—I never could find out how,—but, in leaving the place, all the wagons of our brigade had got some trifling articles of small value scattered, as it might be, among their stores—gold cups, silver candlesticks, Virgin Marys, ivory crucifixes, saints' eyes set in topazes, and martyrs' toes in silver filagree, and a hundred other similar things.

"One of these confounded bullock-cars broke down just at the angle of the road

where the Commander-in-Chief was standing with his staff to watch the troops defile, and out rolled, among bread rations and salt beef, a whole avalanche of precious relics and church ornaments. Every one stood aghast: Never was there such a misfortune. No one endeavored to repair the mishap, but all looked on in terrified amazement as to what was to follow.

"'Who has the command of this detachment?' shouted out Sir Arthur, in a voice that made more than one of us tremble.

"'Monsoon, your Excellency—Major Monsoon, of the Portuguese brigade.'

"'The d—d old rogue!—I know him.' Upon my life that's what he said. 'Hang him up on the spot,' pointing with his finger as he spoke; 'we shall see if this practice cannot be put a stop to.' And with these words he rode leisurely away, as if he had been merely ordering dinner for a small party.

"When I came up to the place, the halberts were fixed, and Gronow, with a company of the Fusiliers, under arms beside them.

"'Devilish sorry for it, Major,' said he. 'It's confoundedly unpleasant, but can't be helped. We've got orders to see you hanged!'

"Faith, it was just so he said it, tapping his snuff-box as he spoke, and looking carelessly about him. Now had it not been for the fixed halberts and the Provost-Marshal, I'd not have believed him; but one glance at them, and another at the bullock-cart with all the holy images, told me at once what had happened.

"'He only means to frighten me a little? Isn't that all, Gronow?' cried I, in a supplicating voice.

"'Very possibly, Major,' said he; 'but I must execute my orders.'

"'You'll surely not—' Before I could finish, up came Dan Mackinnon, cantering smartly. 'Going to hang old Monsoon, eh, Gronow? What fun!'

"'Ain't it, though!' said I, half blubbering.

"'Well, if you're a good Catholic, you may have your choice of a saint, for, by Jupiter! there's a strong muster of them here.' This cruel allusion was made in reference to the gold and silver effigies that lay scattered about the highway.

"'Dan,' said I, in a whisper, 'intercede for me—do, like a good, kind fellow. You have influence with Sir Arthur.'

"'You old sinner,' said he, 'it's useless.'

"'Dan, I'll forgive you the fifteen pounds.'

"'That you owe *me*,' said Dan, laughing.

"'Who'll ever be the father to you I have been? Who'll mix your punch with burnt Madeira, when I'm gone?' said I.

"'Well, really, I am sorry for you, Monsoon. I say, Gronow, don't tuck him up for a few minutes; I'll speak for the old villain, and, if I succeed, I'll wave my handkerchief.'

"Well, away went Dan at a full gallop. Gronow sat down on a bank, and I fidgeted about in no very enviable frame of mind, the confounded Provost-Marshal eyeing me all the while.

"'I can only give you five minutes more, Major,' said Gronow, placing his watch beside him on the grass. I tried to pray a little, and said three or four of Solomon's proverbs, when he again called out, —'There, you see it won't do! Sir Arthur is shaking his head.'

"'What's that waving yonder?'

"'The colors of the 6th Foot.—Come, Major, off with your stock.'

"'Where is Dan now—what is he doing?'—for I could see nothing myself.

"'He's riding beside Sir Arthur. They all seem laughing.'

"'God forgive them! what an awful retrospect this will prove to some of them.'

"'Time's up!' said Gronow, jumping up and replacing his watch in his pocket.

"'Provost-Marshal, be quick now—'

"'Eh! what's that?—there I see it waving!—there's a shout, too!'

"'Ay, by Jove! so it is; well, you're saved this time, Major—that's the signal.'

"So saying, Gronow formed his fellows in line and resumed his march quite coolly, leaving me alone on the roadside to meditate over martial law and my pernicious taste for relics.

"Well, Charley, this gave me a great shock, and I think, too, it must have had a great effect upon Sir Arthur himself; but, upon my life, he has wonderful nerves. I met him one day afterward at dinner in Lisbon; he looked at me very hard for a few seconds—'Eh, Monsoon! Major Monsoon, I think?'

"'Yes, your Excellency,' said I, briefly; thinking how painful it must be for him to meet me.

"'Thought I had hanged you—know I intended it—no matter—a glass of wine with you?'

"Upon my life, that was all; how easily some people can forgive themselves! But, Charley, my hearty, we are getting on slowly with the tipple; are they all empty? so they are! let us make a sortie on the

cellar; bring a candle with you, and come along."

We had scarcely proceeded a few steps from the door, when a most vociferous sound of mirth, arising from a neighboring apartment, arrested our progress.

"Are the Dons so convivial, Major?" said I, as a hearty burst of laughter broke forth at the moment.

"Upon my life, they surprise me; I begin to fear they have taken some of our wine."

We now perceived that the sounds of merriment came from the kitchen, which opened upon a little court-yard. Into this we crept stealthily, and approaching noiselessly to the window, obtained a peep at the scene within.

Around a blazing fire, over which hung by a chain a massive iron pot, sat a goodly party of some half-dozen people. One group lay in dark shadow, but the others were brilliantly lighted up by the cheerful blaze, and showed us a portly Dominican friar, with a beard down to his waist; a buxom, dark-eyed girl of some eighteen years; and between the two, most comfortably leaning back, with an arm round each, no less a person than my trusty man, Mickey Free.

It was evident, from the alternate motion of his head, that his attentions were evenly divided between the church and the fair sex—although, to confess the truth, they seemed much more favorably received by the latter than the former—a brown earthen flagon appearing to absorb all the worthy monk's thoughts that he could spare from the contemplation of heavenly objects.

"Mary, my darlin', don't be looking at me that way, through the corner of your eye;—I know you're fond of me—but the girls always was. You think I'm joking, but troth I wouldn't say a lie before the holy man beside me; sure I wouldn't, father?"

The friar grunted out something in reply, not very unlike, in sound at least, a hearty anathema.

"Ah, then, isn't it yourself has the illigant time of it, father dear!" said he, tapping him familiarly upon his ample paunch, "and nothing to trouble you; the best of divarsion wherever you go, and whether its Badahos or Ballykilruddery, it's all one; the women is fond of ye. Father Murphy, the coadjutor in Scariff, was just such another as yourself, and he'd coax the birds off the trees with the tongue of him. Give us a pull at the pipkin before it's all gone, and I'll give you a chant."

With this he seized the jar, and drained it to the bottom; the smack of his lips as he concluded, and the disappointed look of the friar, as he peered into the vessel, throwing the others, once more, into a loud burst of laughter.

"And now, your rev'rance, a good chorus is all I'll ask, and you'll not refuse it for the honor of the church."

So saying, he turned a look of most droll expression upon the monk, and began the following ditty, to the air of

"St. Patrick was a Gentleman."

"What an illegant life a friar leads,
With a fat round paunch before him;
He mutters a prayer and counts his beads,
And all the women adore him.
It's little he's troubled to work or think,
Wherever devotion leads him:
A 'pater' pays for his dinner and drink,
For the church—good luck to her!—feeds him.

"From the cow in the field to the pig in the sty,
From the maid to the lady in satin,
They tremble, wherever he turns an eye;
He can talk to the devil in Latin!
He's mighty severe to the ugly and ould,
And curses like mad when he's near 'em;
But one beautiful trait of him I've been tould,
The innocent craytures don't fear him.

"It's little for spirits or ghosts he cares;
For 'tis true as the world supposes,
With an *ave* he'd make them march down-stairs,
Av they dared to show their noses.
The devil himself's afraid, 'tis said,
And dares not to deride him:
For 'angels make each night his bed,
And then—lie down beside him.'"

A perfect burst of laughter from Monsoon prevented my hearing how Mike's minstrelsy succeeded within doors; but, when I looked again, I found that the friar had decamped, leaving the field open to his rival—a circumstance, I could plainly perceive, not disliked by either party.

"Come back, Charley—that villain of yours has given me the cramp, standing here on the cold pavement. We'll have a little warm posset—very small and thin, as they say in Tom Jones—and then to bed."

Notwithstanding the abstemious intentions of the Major, it was daybreak ere we separated, and neither party in a condition for performing upon the tight-rope.

CHAPTER LV.

THE LEGION.

My services, while with the Legion, were of no very distinguished character, and re-

quire no lengthened chronicle. Their great feat of arms, the repulse of an advanced guard of Victor's corps, had taken place the very morning I had joined them, and the ensuing month was passed in soft repose upon their laurels.

For the first few days, indeed, a multiplicity of cares beset the worthy Major. There was a dispatch to be written to Beresford—another to the Supreme Junta—a letter to Wilson, at that time with a corps of observation to the eastward. There were some wounded to be looked after—a speech to be made to the conquering heroes themselves—and, lastly, a few prisoners were taken, whose fate seemed certainly to partake of the most uncertain of war's proverbial chances.

The dispatches gave little trouble: with some very slight alterations, the great original, already sent forward to Sir Arthur, served as a basis for the rest. The wounded were forwarded to Alcantara, with a medical staff; to whom Monsoon, at parting, pleasantly hinted, that he expected to see all the sick at their duty by an early day, or he would be compelled to report the doctors. The speech, which was intended as a kind of general order, he deferred for some favorable afternoon, when he could get up his Portuguese; and, lastly, came the prisoners, by far the most difficult of all his cares. As for the few common soldiers taken, they gave him little uneasiness; as Sir John has it, they were "mortal men, and food for powder:" but there was a staff-officer among them, aiguilletted and epauletted. The very decorations he wore were no common temptation. Now the Major deliberated a long time with himself, whether the usages of modern war might not admit of the ancient, time-honored practice of ransom. The battle, save in glory, had been singularly unproductive—plunder there was none—the few ammunition-wagons and gun-carriages were worth little or nothing; so that, save the prisoners, nothing remained. It was late in the evening—the mellow hour of the Major's meditations—when he ventured to open his heart to me upon the matter.

"I was just thinking, Charley, how very superior they were in olden time to us moderns, in many matters, and nothing more than in their treatment of prisoners. They never took them away from their friends and country; they always ransomed them—if they had wherewithal to pay their way. So good-natured—upon my life it was a most excellent custom. They took any little valuables they found about them, and then put them up at auction. Moses and Eleazar, a priest, we are told, took every piece of gold, and their wrought jewels—meaning their watches and earrings. You needn't laugh, they all wore earrings, those fellows did. Now, why shouldn't I profit by their good example? I have taken Agag the King of the Amalekites—no, but, upon my life, I have got a French Major, and I'd let him go for fifty doubloons."

It was not without much laughing and some eloquence that I could persuade Monsoon that Sir Arthur's military notions might not accept of even the authority of Moses; and, as our head-quarters were at no great distance, the danger of such a step as he meditated was too considerable at such a moment.

As for ourselves, no fatiguing drills, no harassing field-days, and no provoking inspections interfered with the easy current of our lives. Foraging parties there were, it is true, and some occasional outpost duty was performed; but the officers for both were selected with a tact that proved the Major's appreciation of character; for while the gay joyous fellow that sung a jovial song and loved his *liquor* was certain of being entertained at head-quarters, the less-gifted and less-congenial spirit had the happiness of scouring the country for forage, and presenting himself as a target to a French rifle.

My own endeavors to fulfill my instructions met with but little encouragement or support; and, although I labored hard at my task, I must confess that the soil was a most ungrateful one. The cavalry were, it is true, composed mostly of young fellows well appointed, and in most cases well mounted; but a more disorderly, careless, undisciplined set of good-humored fellows never formed a corps in the world.

Monsoon's opinions were felt in every branch of the service, from the adjutant to the drumboy—the same reckless, indolent, plunder-loving spirit prevailed everywhere. And although, under fire, they showed no lack of gallantry or courage, the moment of danger passed, discipline departed with it, and their only conception of benefiting by a victory consisted in the amount of pillage that resulted from it.

From time to time the rumors of great events reached us. We heard that Soult, having succeeded in reorganizing his beaten army, was, in conjunction with Ney's corps, returning from the north; that the Marshals were consolidating their forces in the neighborhood of Talavera, and that King Joseph himself, at the head of a large army, had marched for Madrid.

Menacing as such an aspect of affairs

was, it had little disturbed the Major's equanimity; and when our advanced posts reported daily the intelligence that the French were in retreat, he cared little with what object of concentrating they retired, provided the interval between us grew gradually wider. His speculations upon the future were singularly prophetic. "You'll see, Charley, what will happen; old Cuesta will pursue them, and get thrashed. The English will come up, and, perhaps get thrashed too; but we—God bless us!—are only a small force, partially organized and ill to depend on; we'll go up the mountains till all is over!" Thus did the Major's discretion not only extend to the avoidance of danger, but he actually disqualified himself from even making its acquaintance.

Meanwhile our operations consisted in making easy marches to Almarez, halting wherever the commissariat reported a well-stocked cellar or well-furnished hen-roost; taking the primrose path in life, and being, in the words of the Major, "contented and grateful, even amid great perils!"

CHAPTER LVI.

THE DEPARTURE.

On the morning of the 10th of July, a dispatch reached us announcing that Sir Arthur Wellesley had taken up his head-quarters at Placentia, for the purpose of communicating with Cuesta, then at Casa del Puerto, and ordering me immediately to repair to the Spanish head-quarters, and await Sir Arthur's arrival, to make my report upon the effective state of our corps. As for me, I was heartily tired of the inaction of my present life, and, much as I relished the eccentricities of my friend the Major, longed ardently for a different sphere of action.

Not so Monsoon; the prospect of active employment, and the thoughts of being left once more alone—for his Portuguese staff afforded him little society—depressed him greatly, and, as the hour of my departure drew near, he appeared lower in spirits than I had ever seen him.

"I shall be very lonely without you, Charley," said he, with a sigh, as we sat the last evening together beside our cheerful wood fire. "I have little intercourse with the Dons; for my Portuguese is none of the best, and only comes when the evening is far advanced; and, besides, the villains, I fear, may remember the sherry affair. Two of my present staff were with me then."

"Is that the story Power so often alluded to, Major, the King of Spain's—?"

"There, Charley, hush—be cautious, my boy. I'd rather not speak about that till we get amongst our own fellows."

"Just as you like, Major; but, do you know, I have a strong curiosity to hear the narrative."

"If I'm not mistaken, there is some one listening at the door—gently—that's it, eh?"

"No, we are perfectly alone; the night's early—who knows when we shall have as quiet an hour again together? Let me hear it, by all means."

"Well, I don't care; the thing, Heaven knows! is tolerably well known; so, if you'll amuse yourself making a devil of the turkey's legs there, I'll tell you the story. It's very short, Charley, and there's no moral; so you're not likely to repeat it."

So saying, the Major filled up his glass, drew a little closer to the fire, and began:

"When the French troops under Laborde were marching upon Alcobaca, in concert with Loison's corps, I was ordered to convey a very valuable present of sherry the Duc d'Albuquerque was making to the Supreme Junta—no less than ten hogsheads of the best sherry the royal cellars of Madrid had formerly contained.

"It was stored in the San Vincente convent; and the Junta, knowing a little about monkish tastes and the wants of the church, prudently thought it would be quite as well at Lisbon. I was accordingly ordered with a sufficient force to provide for its safe-conduct and secure arrival, and set out upon my march one lovely morning in April with my precious convoy.

"I don't know, I never could understand, why temptations are thrown in our way in this life, except for the pleasure of yielding to them. As for me, I'm a stoic when there's nothing to be had; but, let me get a scent of a well-kept haunch, the odor of a wine-bin once in my nose, I forget everything except appropriation.—That bone smells deliciously, Charley; a little garlic would improve it vastly.

"Our road lay through cross paths and mountain tracts—for the French were scouring the country on every side—and my fellows, only twenty altogether, trembled at the very name of them; so that our only chance was to avoid falling in with any forage parties. We journeyed along for several days, rarely making more than a few leagues between sunrise and

sunset, a scout always in advance to assure us that all was safe. The road was a lonesome one, and the way weary—for I had no one to speak to or converse with—so I fell into a kind of musing fit about the old wine in the great brown casks. I thought on its luscious flavor, its rich straw tint, its oily look as it flowed into the glass, the mellow after-taste, warming the heart as it went down, and I absolutely thought I could smell it through the wood.

"How I longed to broach one of them, if it were only to see if my dreams about it were correct. 'Maybe it's brown sherry,' thought I, 'and I am all wrong.' This was a very distressing reflection. I mentioned it to the Portuguese Intendant, who traveled with us as a kind of supercargo; but the villain only grinned, and said something about the Junta and the galleys for life; so I did not recur to it afterward. Well, it was upon the third evening of our march that the scout reported that at Merida, about a league distant, he had fallen in with an English cavalry regiment, who were on their march to the northern provinces, and remaining that night in the village. As soon, therefore, as I had made all my arrangements for the night, I took a fresh horse, and cantered over to have a look at my countrymen, and hear the news. When I arrived it was dark night; but I was not long in finding out our fellows. They were the 11th Light Dragoons, commanded by my old friend Bows, and with as jolly a mess as any in the service.

"Before half an hour's time I was in the midst of them, hearing all about the campaign, and telling them in return about my convoy—dilating upon the qualities of the wine, as if I had been drinking it every day at dinner.

"We had a very mellow night of it, and before four o'clock the senior major and four captains were under the table, and all the subs. in a state unprovided for by the articles of war. So I thought I'd be going, and, wishing the sober ones a good-by, set out on my road to join my own party.

"I had not gone above a hundred yards when I heard some one running after, and calling out my name.

"'I say, Monsoon; Major, confound you, pull up.'

"'Well, what's the matter? has any more lush turned up?' inquired I, for we had drank the tap dry when I left.

"'Not a drop, old fellow!' said he; 'but I was thinking of what you've been *saying* about that sherry.'

"'*Well!* What then?'

"'Why, I want to know how we could get a taste of it?'

"'You'd better get elected one of the Cortes,' said I, laughing; 'for it does not seem likely you'll do so in any other way.'

"'I'm not so sure of that,' said he, smiling. 'What road do you travel tomorrow?'

"'By Cavalhos and Reina.'

"'Whereabouts may you happen to be toward sunset?'

"'I fear we shall be in the mountains,' said I, with a knowing look, 'where ambuscades and surprise parties would be highly dangerous.'

"'And your party consists of—?'

"'About twenty Portuguese, all ready to run at the first shot.'

"'I'll do it, Monsoon! I'll be hanged if I don't.'

"'But, Tom,' said I, 'don't make any blunder; only blank cartridge, my boy.'

"'Honor bright!' cried he; 'your fellows are armed, of course?'

"'Never think of that; they may shoot each other in the confusion; but, if you only make plenty of noise coming on, they'll never wait for you.'

"'What capital fellows they must be!'

"'Crack troops, Tom; so don't hurt them: and now, good-night.'

"As I cantered off, I began to think over O'Flaherty's idea, and, upon my life, I didn't half like it: he was a reckless devil-may-care fellow, and it was just as likely he would really put his scheme into practice.

"When morning broke, however, we got under way again, and I amused myself all the forenoon in detailing stories of French cruelty; so that, before we had marched ten miles, there was not a man amongst us not ready to run at the slightest sound of attack on any side. As evening was falling we reached Morento, a little mountain pass which follows the course of a small river, and where, in many places, the mule-carts had barely space enough to pass between the cliffs and the stream. 'What a place for Tom O'Flaherty and his foragers!' thought I, as we entered the little mountain gorge; but all was silent as the grave; except the tramp of our party, not a sound was heard. There was something solemn and still in the great brown mountain, rising like vast walls on either side, with a narrow streak of gray sky at top, and in the dark sluggish stream, that seemed to awe us, and no one spoke; the muleteer ceased his merry song, and did not crack or flourish his long whip as before, but chid his beasts in a half-muttered voice,

and urged them faster, to reach the village before nightfall.

"Egad, somehow, I felt uncommonly uncomfortable; I could not divest my mind of the impression that some disaster was impending, and I wished O'Flaherty and his project in a very warm climate. 'He'll attack us,' thought I, 'where we can't run; fair play forever; but, if they are not able to get away, even the militia will fight.' However, the evening crept on, and no sign of his coming appeared on any side, and, to my sincere satisfaction, I could see, about half a league distant, the twinkling light of the little village where we were to halt for the night. It was just at this time that a scout I had sent out some few hundred yards in advance came galloping up, almost breathless.

"'The French, captain; the French are upon us!' said he, with a face like a ghost.

"'Whew! Which way? how many?' said I, not at all sure that he might not be telling the truth.

"'Coming in force!' said the fellow: 'dragoons! by this road.'

"'Dragoons? By this road?' repeated every man of the party, looking at each other like men sentenced to be hanged.

"Scarcely had they spoken, when we heard the distant noise of cavalry advancing at a brisk trot. Lord, what a scene ensued! the soldiers ran hither and thither like frightened sheep; some pulled out crucifixes and began to say their prayers; others fired off their muskets in a panic; the mule-drivers cut their traces, and endeavored to get away by riding; and the Intendant took to his heels, screaming out to us, as he went, to fight manfully to the last, and that he'd report us favorably to the Junta.

"Just at this moment, the dragoons came in sight; they came galloping up, shouting like madmen. One look was enough for my fellows; they sprang to their legs from their devotions; fired a volley straight at the new moon, and ran like men.

"I was knocked down in the rush. As I regained my legs, Tom O'Flaherty was standing beside me, laughing like mad.

"'Eh, Monsoon! I've kept my word, old fellow! What legs they have! we shall make no prisoners, that's certain.—Now, lads, here it is! put the horses to, here. We shall take but one, Monsoon, so that your gallant defense of the rest will please the Junta. Good-night; good-night! I will drink your health every night these two months.'

"So saying, Tom sprang to his saddle, and in less time than I've been telling it the whole was over, and I sitting by myself in the gray moonlight, meditating on all I saw, and now and then shouting for my Portuguese friends to come back again. They came in time, by twos and threes, and at last the whole party reassembled, and we set forth again,—every man, from the Intendant to the drummer, lauding my valor, and saying that Don Monsoon was a match for the Cid."

"And how did the Junta behave?"

"Like trumps, Charley. Made me a Knight of Battalha, and kissed me on both cheeks, having sent twelve dozen of the rescued wine to my quarters, as a small testimony of their esteem. I have laughed very often at it since. But, hush! Charley. What's that I hear without there?"

"Oh, it's my fellow Mike. He asked my leave to entertain his friends before parting, and I perceive he is delighting them with a song."

"But, what a confounded air it is! Are the words Hebrew?"

"Irish, Major; most classical Irish, too, I'll be bound."

"Irish! I've heard most tongues; but that certainly surprises me. Call him in, Charley, and let us have the canticle."

In a few minutes more, Mr. Free appeared in a state of very satisfactory elevation, his eyebrows alternately rising and falling, his mouth a little drawn to one side, and a side motion in his knee-joints that might puzzle a physiologist to account for.

"A sweet little song of yours, Mike," said the Major; "a very sweet thing indeed. Wet your lips, Mickey."

"Long life to your honor, and Master Charles there too, and them that belongs to both of yez. May a gooseberry skin make a nightcap for the man would harm either of ye."

"Thank you, Mike. And now about that song."

"It's the ouldest tune ever was sung," said Mike, with a hiccup, "barring Adam had a taste for music; but the words—the poethry is not so ould."

"And how comes that?"

"The poethry, ye see, was put to it by one of my ancesthors—he was a great inventhor in times past, and made beautiful songs—and ye'd never guess what it's all about."

"Love, mayhap?" quoth Monsoon.

"Sorra taste of kissing from beginning to end."

"A drinking song?" said I.

"Whisky is never mentioned."

"Fighting is the only other national pastime. It must be in praise of sudden death?"

"You're out again; but sure you'd never guess it," said Mike. "Well, ye see, here's what it is. It's the praise and glory of ould Ireland in the great days that's gone, when we were all Phenayceans and Armenians, and when we worked all manner of beautiful contrivances in goold and silver; bracelets, and collars, and teapots, illigant to look at; and read Roosian and Latin, and played the harp and the barrel-organ; and ate and drank of the best, for nothing but asking."

"Blessed times, upon my life!" quoth the Major; "I wish we had them back again."

"There's more of your mind," said Mike, steadying himself. "My ancesthors was great people in them days; and sure it isn't in my present situation I'd be av we had them back again—sorra bit, faith! It isn't, 'Come here, Mickey, bad luck to you, Mike!' or, 'That blackguard, Mickey Free!' people'd be calling me. But no matter; here's your health again, Major Monsoon—"

"Never mind vain regrets, Mike. Let us hear your song; the Major has taken a great fancy to it."

"Ah, then, it's joking you are, Mister Charles," said Mike, affecting an air of most bashful coyness.

"By no means; we want to hear you sing it."

"To be sure we do. Sing it by all means; never be ashamed. King David was very fond of singing—upon my life he was."

"But you'd never understand a word of it, sir."

"No mattter; we know what it's about. That's the way with the Legion; they don't know much English, but they generally guess what I'm at."

This argument seemed to satisfy all Mike's remaining scruples, so, placing himself in an attitude of considerable pretension as to grace, he began, with a voice of no very measured compass, an air of which, neither by name nor otherwise, can I give any conception; my principal amusement being derived from a tol-de-rol chorus of the Major, which concluded each verse, and, indeed, in a lower key, accompanied the singer throughout.

Since that I have succeeded in obtaining a free-and-easy translation of the lyric; but *in my anxiety* to preserve the meter and *something of* the spirit of the original, I have made several blunders and many anachronisms. Mr. Free, however, pronounces my version a good one; and the world must take his word till some more worthy translator shall have consigned it to immortal verse.

With this apology, therefore, I present Mr. Free's song:

Air—"*Na Guilloch y' Goulen.*"

"Oh! once we were illigint people,
Though we now live in cabins of mud;
And the land that ye see from the steeple
Belonged to us all from the Flood.
My father was then King of Connaught,
My grand-aunt Viceroy of Tralee;
But the Sassenach came, and, signs on it,
The devil an acre have we.

"The least of us then were all earls,
And jewels we wore without name;
We drank punch out of rubies and pearls—
Mr. Petrie can tell you the same.
But, except some turf mold and potatoes,
There's nothing our own we can call;
And the English—bad luck to them!—hate us,
Because we've more fun than them all!

"My grand-aunt was niece to St. Kevin,
That's the reason my name's Mickey Free!
Priest's nieces—but sure he's in heaven,
And his failin's is nothin' to me.
And we still might get on without doctors,
If they'd let the ould Island alone;
And if purple men, priests, and tithe-proctors,
Were crammed down the great gun of Athlone."

As Mike's melody proceeded, the Major's thorough bass waxed beautifully less—now and then, it's true, roused by some momentary strain, it swelled upward in full chorus, but gradually these passing flights grew rarer, and finally all ceased, save a long, low, droning sound, like the expiring sigh of a wearied bagpipe. His fingers still continued mechanically to beat time upon the table, and still his head nodded sympathetically to the music; his eyelids closed in sleep, and, as the last verse concluded, a full-drawn snore announced that Monsoon, if not in the land of dreams, was, at least, in a happy oblivion of all terrestrial concerns, and caring as little for the woes of green Erin and the altered fortunes of the Free family as any Saxon that ever oppressed them.

There he sat, the finished decanter and empty goblet testifying that his labors had only ceased from the pressure of necessity; but the broken, half-uttered words that fell from his lips evinced that he reposed on the last bottle of the series.

"Oh, thin! he's a fine old gentleman," said Mike, after a pause of some minutes,

during which he had been contemplating the Major with all the critical acumen Chantrey or Canova would have bestowed upon an antique statue—"a fine ould gentleman, every inch of him; and it's the master would like to have him up at the castle."

"Quite true, Mike: but let us not forget the road. Look to the cattle, and be ready to start within an hour."

When he left the room for this purpose, I endeavored to shake the Major into momentary consciousness ere we parted.

"Major, Major," said I, "time is up. I must start."

"Yes, it's all true, your Excellency; they pillaged a little; and, if they did change their facings, there was a great temptation. All the red velvet they found in the churches—"

"Good-by, old fellow, good-by!"

"Stand at ease!"

"Can't, unfortunately, yet awhile: so farewell. I'll make a capital report of the Legion to Sir Arthur; shall I add anything particularly from yourself?"

This, and the shake that accompanied it, aroused him: he started up, and looked about him for a few seconds.

"Eh, Charley! You didn't say Sir Arthur was here, did you?"

"No, Major; don't be frightened; he's many a league off. I asked if you had anything to say when I met him?"

"Oh yes, Charley. Tell him we're capital troops in our own little way in the mountains; would never do in pitched battles; skirmishing's our forte; and, for cutting off stragglers or sacking a town, back them at any odds."

"Yes, yes, I know all that: you've nothing more?"

"Nothing," said he, once more closing his eyes and crossing his hands before him, while his lips continued to mutter on, "Nothing more—except you may say from me,—he knows me, Sir Arthur does. Tell him to guard himself from intemperance: a fine fellow if he wouldn't drink."

"You horrid old humbug, what nonsense are you muttering there?"

"Yes, yes; Solomon says, 'Who hath red eyes and carbuncles?'—they that mix their lush. Pure *Sneyd* never injured any one. Tell him so from me: it's an old man's advice, and I have drunk some hogsheads of it."

With these words he ceased to speak, while his head, falling gently forward upon his chest, proclaimed him sound asleep.

"Adieu! then, for the last time," said I, slapping him gently on the shoulder; "and now for the road."

CHAPTER LVII.

CUESTA.

THE second day of our journey was drawing to a close as we came in view of the Spanish army.

The position they occupied was an undulating plain beside the Teitar river: the country presented no striking feature of picturesque beauty; but the scene before us needed no such aid to make it one of the most interesting kind. From the little mountain path we traveled, we beheld beneath a force of thirty thousand men drawn up in battle array; dense columns of infantry alternating with squadrons of horse or dark masses of artillery dotted the wide plain, the bright steel glittering in the rich sunset of a July evening, when not a breath of air was stirring: the very banners hung down listlessly, and not a sound broke the solemn stillness of the hour. All was silent: so impressive and so strange was the spectacle of a vast army thus resting mutely under arms, that I reined in my horse and almost doubted the reality of the scene as I gazed upon it. The dark shadows of the tall mountain were falling across the valley, and a starry sky was already replacing the ruddy glow of sunset as we reached the plain; but still no change took place in the position of the Spanish army.

"Who goes there?" cried a hoarse voice as we issued from the mountain gorge, and in a moment we found ourselves surrounded by an outpost party. Having explained, as well as I was able, who I was and for what reason I was there, I proceeded to accompany the officer toward the camp.

On my way thither I learned the reason of the singular display of troops which had been so puzzling to me. From an early hour of that day Sir Arthur Wellesley's arrival had been expected, and old Cuesta had drawn up his men for inspection, and remained thus for several hours patiently awaiting his coming; he himself overwhelmed with years and infirmity, sitting upon his horse the entire time.

As it was not necessary that I should be presented to the general, my report being for the ear of Sir Arthur himself, I willingly availed myself of the hospitality proffered by a Spanish officer of cavalry; and, having provided for the comforts of my tired cattle and taken a hasty supper, issued forth to look at the troops, which, although it was now growing late, were still in the same attitude.

Scarcely had I been half an hour thus

occupied, when the stillness of the scene was suddenly interrupted by the loud report of a large gun, immediately followed by a long roll of musketry, while, at the same moment, the bands of the different regiments struck up, and, as if by magic, a blaze of red light streamed across the dark ranks: this was effected by pine-torches held aloft at intervals, throwing a lurid glow upon the grim and swarthy features of the Spaniards, whose brown uniforms and slouching hats presented a most picturesque effect as the red light fell upon them.

The swell of the thundering cannon grew louder and nearer; the shouldering of muskets, the clash of sabres, and the hoarse roll of the drum mingling in one common din. I at once guessed that Sir Arthur had arrived, and, as I turned the flank of a battalion, I saw the staff approaching.

Nothing can be conceived more striking than their advance. In the front rode old Cuesta himself, clad in the costume of a past century, his slashed doublet and trunk hose reminding one of a more chivalrous period; his heavy, unwieldy figure, looming from side to side, and threatening at each moment to fall from his saddle. On each side of him walked two figures gorgeously dressed, whose duty appeared to be to sustain the chief in his seat. At his side rode a far different figure. Mounted upon a slight-made, active thorough-bred, whose drawn flanks bespoke a long and weary journey, sat Sir Arthur Wellesley, a plain blue frock and gray trowsers being his unpretending costume; but the eagle glance which he threw around on every side, the quick motion of his hand as he pointed hither and thither among the dense battalions, bespoke him every inch a soldier. Behind them came a brilliant staff, glittering in aiguillettes and golden trappings, among whom I recognized some well-remembered faces; our gallant leader at the Douro, Sir Charles Stewart, among the number.

As they passed the spot where I was standing, the torch of a foot-soldier behind me flared suddenly up, and threw a strong flash upon the party. Cuesta's horse grew frightened, and plunged so fearfully for a minute, that the poor old man could scarcely keep his seat. A smile shot across Sir Arthur's features at the moment, but the next instant he was grave and steadfast as before.

A wretched hovel, thatched and in ruins, formed the head-quarters of the Spanish army, and thither the staff now bent their steps; a supper being provided there for our Commander-in-Chief and the officers of his suite. Although not of the privileged party, I lingered round the spot for some time, anxiously expecting to find some friend or acquaintance, who might tell me the news of our people, and what events had occurred in my absence.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE LETTER.

THE hours passed slowly over, and I at length grew weary of waiting. For some time I had amused myself with observing the slouching gait and unsoldier-like air of the Spaniards as they lounged carelessly about; looking in dress, gesture, and appointment, far more like a guerilla than a regular force. Then, again, the strange contrast of the miserable hut, with falling chimney and ruined walls, to the glitter of the mounted guard of honor who sat motionless beside it, served to pass the time; but, as the night was already far advanced, I turned toward my quarters, hoping that the next morning might gratify my curiosity about my friends.

Beside the tent where I was billeted, I found Mike in waiting, who, the moment he saw me, came hastily forward with a letter in his hand. An officer of Sir Arthur's staff had left it while I was absent, desiring Mike on no account to omit its delivery the first instant he met me. The hand—not a very legible one—was perfectly unknown to me, and the appearance of the billet such as betrayed no over-scrupulous care in the writer.

I trimmed my lamp leisurely, threw a fresh log upon the fire, disposed myself completely at full length beside it, and then proceeded to form acquaintance with my unknown correspondent. I will not attempt any description of the feelings which gradually filled me as I read on; the letter itself will suggest them to those who know my story. It ran thus:

"Placentia, July 8, 1809.

"DEAR O'MALLEY,—Although I'd rather march to Lisbon barefoot than write three lines, Fred Power insists upon my turning scribe, as he has a notion you'll be up at Cuesta's head-quarters about this time. You're in a nice scrape, devil a lie in it! Here has Fred been fighting that fellow Trevyllian for you—all because you would not have patience and fight him yourself the morning you left the Douro—

so much for haste! Let it be a lesson to you for life.

"Poor Fred got the ball in his hip, and the devil a one of the doctors can find it. But he's getting better anyway, and going to Lisbon for change of air. Meanwhile, since Power's been wounded, Trevyllian's speaking very hardly of you, and they all say here you must come back—no matter how—and put matters to rights. Fred has placed the thing in my hands, and I'm thinking we'd better call out the 'heavies' by turns; for most of them stand by Trevyllian. Maurice Quill and myself sat up considering it last night; but, somehow, we don't clearly remember to-day a beautiful plan we hit upon. However, we'll have at it again this evening. Meanwhile, come over here, and let us be doing something. We hear that old Monsoon has blown up a town, a bridge, and a big convent. They must have been hiding the plunder very closely, or he'd never have been reduced to such extremities. We'll have a brush with the French soon.

"Yours most eagerly,

"D. O'SHAUGHNESSY."

My first thought, as I ran my eye over these lines, was to seek for Power's note, written on the morning we parted. I opened it, and to my horror found that it only related to my quarrel with Hammersley. My meeting with Trevyllian had been during Fred's absence, and—when he assured me that all was satisfactorily arranged and a full explanation tendered; that nothing interfered with my departure—I utterly forgot that he was only aware of one half my troubles; and, in the haste and bustle of my departure, had not a moment left me to collect myself and think calmly on the matter. The two letters lay before me, and, as I thought over the stain upon my character thus unwittingly incurred,—the blast I had thrown upon my reputation, the wound of my poor friend, who exposed himself for my sake,—I grew sick at heart, and the bitter tears of agony burst from my eyes.

That weary night passed slowly over; the blight of all my prospects, when they seemed fairest and brightest, presented itself to me in a hundred shapes; and when, overcome by fatigue and exhaustion, I closed my eyes to sleep, it was only to follow up in my dreams my waking thoughts. Morning came at length; but its bright sunshine and balmy air brought no comfort to me: I absolutely dreaded to meet my brother officers; I felt that, in such a position as I stood, no half or partial explanation could suffice to set me right in their estimation; and yet, what opportunity had I for aught else? Irresolute how to act, I sat leaning my head upon my hands, when I heard a footstep approach; I looked up and saw before me no other than my poor friend Sparks, from whom I had been separated so long. Any other adviser at such a moment would, I acknowledge, have been as welcome; for the poor fellow knew but little of the world, and still less of the service. However, one glance convinced me that his heart at least was true, and I shook his outstretched hand with delight. In a few words he informed me that Merivale had secretly commissioned him to come over, in the hope of meeting me; that although all the 14th men were persuaded that I was not to blame in what had occurred, yet that reports so injurious had gone abroad, so many partial and imperfect statements were circulated, that nothing but my return to head-quarters would avail, and that I must not lose a moment in having Trevyllian out, with whom all the misrepresentation had originated.

"This, of course," said Sparks, "is to be a secret; Merivale, being our Colonel—"

"Of course," said I, "he cannot countenance, much less counsel, such a proceeding. Now, then, for the road."

"Yes; but you cannot leave before making your report. Gordon expects to see you at eleven; he told me so last night."

"I cannot help it; I shall not wait; my mind is made up. My career here matters but little in comparison with this horrid charge. I shall be broke, but I shall be avenged."

"Come, come, O'Malley; you are in our hands now, and you must be guided. You *shall* wait; you shall see Gordon: half an hour will make your report, and I have relays of horses along the road, and we shall reach Placentia by nightfall."

There was a tone of firmness in this, so unlike anything I ever looked for in the speaker, and withal so much of foresight and precaution, that I could scarcely credit my senses as he spoke. Having, at length, agreed to his proposals, Sparks left me to think over my return of the Legion, promising that, immediately after my interview with the Military Secretary, we should start together for head-quarters.

CHAPTER LIX.

MAJOR O'SHAUGHNESSY.

"THIS is Major O'Shaughnessy's quarters, sir," said a sergeant, as he stopped short

at the door of a small low house in the midst of an olive plantation; an Irish wolf-dog—the well-known companion of the Major—lay stretched across the entrance, watching with eager and bloodshot eyes the process of cutting up a bullock, which two soldiers in undress jackets were performing within a few yards of the spot.

Stepping cautiously across the savage-looking sentinel, I entered the little hall, and, finding no one near, passed into a small room, the door of which lay half open.

A very palpable odor of cigars and brandy proclaimed, even without his presence, that this was O'Shaughnessy's sitting-room; so I sat myself down upon an old-fashioned sofa to wait patiently for his return, which I heard would be immediately after the evening parade. Sparks had become knocked up during our ride, so that for the last three leagues I was alone; and, like most men in such circumstances, pressed on only the harder. Completely worn out for want of rest, I had scarcely placed myself on the sofa when I fell sound asleep. When I awoke, all was dark around me, save the faint flickerings of the wood embers on the hearth, and for some moments I could not remember where I was; but by degrees recollection came, and as I thought over my position and its possible consequences, I was again nearly dropping to sleep, when the door suddenly opened, and a heavy step sounded on the floor.

I lay still and spoke not, as a large figure in a cloak approached the fireplace, and stooping down endeavored to light a candle at the fast expiring fire.

I had little difficulty in detecting the Major even by the half-light; a muttered execration upon the candle, given with an energy that only an Irishman ever bestows upon slight matters, soon satisfied me on this head.

"May the devil fly away with the commissary and the chandler to the forces! Ah! you've lit at last."

With these words he stood up, and his eyes falling on me at the moment, he sprang a yard or two backward, exclaiming, as he did so, "The blessed Virgin be near us, what's this?" a most energetic crossing of himself accompanying his words. My pale and haggard face, thus suddenly presented, having suggested to the worthy Major the impression of a supernatural visitor, a hearty burst of laughter, which I could not resist, was my only answer; and the next moment O'Shaughnessy was wrenching my hand in *a grasp like* a steel vice.

"*Upon* my conscience, I thought it was your ghost; and, if you kept quiet a little longer, I was going to promise you Christian burial, and as many masses for your soul as my uncle the bishop could say between this and Easter. How are you, my boy? a little thin and something paler, I think, than when you left us."

Having assured him that fatigue and hunger were in a great measure the cause of my sickly looks, the Major proceeded to place before me the *débris* of his day's dinner, with a sufficiency of bottles to satisfy a mess-table, keeping up as he went a running fire of conversation.

"I'm as glad as if the Lord took the senior Major to see you here this night. With the blessing of Providence we'll shoot Trevyllian in the morning, and any more of the heavies that like it. You are an ill-treated man, that's what it is, and Dan O'Shaughnessy says it. Help yourself, my boy: crusty old port in that bottle as ever you touched your lips to. Power's getting all right; it was contract powder, warranted not to kill. Bad luck to the commissaries once more! With such ammunition Sir Arthur does right to trust most to the bayonet. And how is Monsoon, the old rogue?"

"Gloriously; living in the midst of wine and olives."

"No fear of him, the old sinner; but he is a fine fellow, after all. Charley, you are eating nothing, boy."

"To tell you the truth, I'm far more anxious to talk with you at this moment than aught else."

"So you shall: the night's young. Meanwhile, I had better not delay matters. You want to have Trevyllian out—is not that so?"

"Of course; you are aware how it happened?"

"I know everything. Go on with your supper, and don't mind me; I'll be back in twenty minutes or less."

Without waiting for any reply, he threw his cloak around him, and strode out of the room. Once more I was alone; but already my frame of mind was altered—the cheering tone of my reckless, gallant countryman had raised my spirits, and I felt animated by his very manner.

An hour elapsed before the Major returned, and, when he did come, his appearance and gestures bespoke anger and disappointment. He threw himself hurriedly into a seat, and for some minutes never spoke.

"The world's beautifully changed, anyhow, since I began it, O'Malley—when you thanked a man civilly that asked you to

fight him. The devil take the cowards! say I."

"What has happened? Tell me, I beseech you!"

"He won't fight," said the Major, blurting out the words as if they would choke him.

"He'll not fight! And why?"

The Major was silent: he seemed confused and embarrassed; he turned from the fire to the table, from the table to the fire, filled out a glass of wine, drank it hastily off, and, springing from his chair, paced the room with long, impatient strides.

"My dear O'Shaughnessy, explain, I beg of you. Does he refuse to meet me for any reason—"

"He does," said the Major, turning on me a look of deep feeling as he spoke; "and he does it to ruin you, my boy; but, as sure as my name is Dan, he'll fail this time. He was sitting with his friend Beaufort when I reached his quarters, and received me with all the ceremonious politeness he well knows how to assume. I told him in a few words the object of my visit; upon which Trevyllian, standing up, referred me to his friend for a reply, and left the room. I thought that all was right, and sat down to discuss, as I believed, preliminaries, when the cool puppy, with his back to the fire, carelessly lisped out, 'It can't be, Major; your friend is too late.'

"'Too late! too late?' said I.

"'Yes, precisely so. Not up to time; the affair should have come off some weeks since. We won't meet him now.'

"'This is really your answer?'

"'This is really my answer; and not only so, but the decision of our mess.'

"What I said after this *he* may remember. Devil take me if *I* can; but I have a vague recollection of saying something that the aforesaid mess will never petition the Horse Guards to put on their regimental colors: and here I am—"

With these words the Major gulped down a full goblet of wine, and once more resumed his walk through the room. I shall not attempt to record the feelings which agitated me during the Major's recital. In one rapid glance I saw the aim of my vindictive enemy. My honor, not my life, was the object he sought for; and ten thousand times more than ever did I pant for the opportunity to confront him in a deadly combat.

"Charley," said O'Shaughnessy, at length, placing his hand upon my shoulder, "you must get to bed now—nothing more can be done to-night in any way. Be assured of one thing, my boy—I'll not desert you; and if that assurance can give you a sound sleep, you'll not need a lullaby."

CHAPTER LX.

PRELIMINARIES.

I AWOKE refreshed on the following morning, and came down to breakfast with a lighter heart than I had even hoped for; a secret feeling that all would go well had somehow taken possession of me, and I longed for O'Shaughnessy's coming, trusting that he might be able to confirm my hopes. His servant informed me that the Major had been absent since daybreak, and left orders that he was not to be waited for at breakfast.

I was not destined, however, to pass a solitary time in his absence, for every moment brought some new arrival to visit me, and during the morning the Colonel and every officer of the regiment not on actual duty came over. I soon learned that the feeling respecting Trevyllian's conduct was one of unmixed condemnation among my own corps; but that a kind of party spirit, which had subsisted for some months between the regiment he belonged to and the 14th, had given a graver character to the affair, and induced many men to take up his views of the transaction; and, although I heard of none who attributed my absence to any dislike to a meeting, yet there were several who conceived that, by my going at the time, I had forfeited all claim to satisfaction at his hands.

"Now that Merivale is gone," said an officer to me, as the Colonel left the room, "I may confess to you that he sees nothing to blame in your conduct throughout; and, even had you been aware of how matters were circumstanced, your duty was too imperative to have preferred your personal considerations to it!"

"Does any one know where Conyers is?" said Baker.

"The story goes that Conyers can assist us here. Conyers is at Zarza la Mayor, with the 28th—but what can he do?"

"That I'm not able to tell you; but I know O'Shaughnessy heard something at parade this morning, and has set off in search of him on every side."

"Was Conyers ever out with Trevyllian?"

"Not as a principal, I believe. The report is, however, that he knows more about

him than other people, as Tom certainly does of everybody."

"It is rather a new thing for Trevyllian to refuse a meeting. They say, O'Malley, he has heard of your shooting!"

"No, no," said another, "he cares very little for any man's pistol. If the story be true, he fires a second or two before his adversary; at least, it was in that way he killed Carysfort."

"Here comes the great O'Shaughnessy!" cried some one at the window; and the next moment the heavy gallop of a horse was heard along the causeway.

In an instant we all rushed to the door to receive him.

"It's all right, lads," cried he, as he came up: "we have him this time."

"How? when? why? in what way have you managed?" fell from a dozen voices, as the Major elbowed his way through the crowd to the sitting-room.

"In the first place," said O'Shaughnessy, drawing a long breath, "I have promised secrecy as to the steps of this transaction; secondly, if I hadn't, it would puzzle me to break it, for I'll be hanged if I know more than yourselves. Tom Conyers wrote me a few lines for Trevyllian; and Trevyllian pledges himself to meet our friend; and that's all we need know or care for."

"Then you have seen Trevyllian this this morning?"

"No, Beaufort met me at the village: but even now it seems this affair is never to come off. Trevyllian has been sent with a forage party toward Lesco; however, that can't be a long absence. But, for Heaven's sake! let me have some breakfast."

While O'Shaughnessy proceeded to the attack of the viands before him, the others chatted about in little groups; but all wore the pleased and happy looks of men who had rescued their friend from a menaced danger. As for myself, my heart swelled with gratitude to the kind fellows around me.

"How has Conyers assisted us at this juncture?" was my first question to O'Shaughnessy, when we were once more alone.

"I am not at liberty to speak on that subject, Charley. But be satisfied the reasons for which Trevyllian meets you are fair and honorable."

"I am content."

"The only thing now to be done is, to have the meeting as soon as possible."

"We are all agreed upon that point," said I; "and the more so as the matter had better be decided before Sir Arthur's return."

"Quite true; and now, O'Malley, you had better join your people as soon as may be, and it will put a stop to all talking about the matter."

The advice was good, and I lost no time in complying with it, and, when I joined the regiment that day at mess, it was with a light heart and a cheerful spirit; for, come what might of the affair, one thing I was certain—my character was now put above any reach of aspersion, and my reputation beyond attack.

CHAPTER LXI.

ALL RIGHT.

Some days after coming back to headquarters, I was returning from a visit I had been making to a friend at one of the outposts, when an officer, whom I knew slightly, overtook me and informed me that Major O'Shaughnessy had been to my quarters in search of me, and had sent persons in different directions to find me.

Suspecting the object of the Major's haste, I hurried on at once, and, as I rode up to the spot, found him in the midst of a group of officers engaged, to all appearance, in most eager conversation. "Oh, here he comes!" cried he, as I cantered up. "Come, my boy, doff the blue frock, as soon as you can, and turn out in your best fitting black. Everything has been settled for this evening at seven o'clock, and we have no time to lose."

"I understand you," said I, "and shall not keep you waiting." So saying, I sprang from my saddle and hastened to my quarters; as I entered the room I was followed by O'Shaughnessy, who closed the door after him as he came in, and having turned the key in it, sat down beside the table, and, folding his arms, seemed buried in reflection. As I proceeded with my toilet he returned no answers to the numerous questions I put to him, either as to the time of Trevyllian's return, the place of the meeting, or any other part of the transaction.

His attention seemed to wander far from all around and about him; and, as he muttered indistinctly to himself, the few words I could catch bore not in the remotest degree upon the matter before us.

"I have written a letter or two, here, Major," said I, opening my writing-desk; "in case anything happens, you will look to a few things I have mentioned here. Somehow, I could not write to poor Fred

'ower ; but you must tell him from me hat his noble conduct toward me was the ast thing I spoke of."

"What confounded nonsense you are talking!" said O'Shaughnessy, springing from his seat and crossing the room with tremendous strides ; "croaking away there as if the bullet was in your thorax. Hang it, man, bear up!"

"But, Major, my dear friend, what the deuce are you thinking of? The few things I mentioned—"

"The devil! you are not going over it all again, are you?" said he, in a voice of no measured tone.

I now began to feel irritated in turn, and really looked at him for some seconds in considerable amazement. That he should have mistaken the directions I was giving him and attributed them to any cowardice, was too insulting a thought to bear ; and yet how otherwise was I to understand the very coarse style of his interruption?

At length my temper got the victory, and, with a voice of most measured calmness, I said, "Major O'Shaughnessy, I am grateful, most deeply grateful, for the part you have acted toward me in this difficult business ; at the same time, as you now appear to disapprove of my conduct and bearing, when I am most firmly determined to alter nothing, I shall beg to relieve you of the unpleasant office of my friend."

"Heaven grant that you could do so!" said he, interrupting me, while his clasped hands and eager look attested the vehemence of the wish. He paused for a moment ; then, springing from his chair, rushed toward me, and threw his arms around me. "No, my boy, I can't do it —I can't do it. I have tried to bully myself into insensibility for this evening's work—I have endeavored to be rude to you, that you might insult me, and steel my heart against what might happen : but it won't do, Charley ; it won't do."

With these words the big tears rolled down his stern cheeks, and his voice became thick with emotion.

"But for me, all this need not have happened. I know it—I feel it. I hurried on this meeting ; your character stood fair and unblemished without that—at least they tell me so now ; and I still have to assure you—"

"Come, my dear, kind friend, don't give way in this fashion. You have stood manfully by me through every step of the road ; don't desert me on the threshold of—"

"The grave, O'Malley?"

"I don't think so, Major ; but see, half-past six! Look to these pistols for me. Are they likely to object to hair-triggers?"

A knocking at the door turned off our attention, and the next moment Baker's voice was heard.

"O'Malley, you'll be close run for time ; the meeting-place is full three miles from this."

I seized the key and opened the door. At the same instant, O'Shaughnessy rose and turned toward the window, holding one of the pistols in his hand.

"Look at that, Baker—what a sweet tool it is!" said he, in a voice that actually made me start. Not a trace of his late excitement remained ; his usually dry, half-humorous manner had returned, and his droll features were as full of their own easy devil-may-care fun as ever.

"Here comes the drag," said Baker. "We can drive nearly all the way, unless you prefer riding."

"Of course not. Keep your hand steady, Charley, and if you don't bring him down with that saw-handle, you're not your uncle's nephew."

With these words we mounted into the tax-cart, and set off for the meeting-place.

CHAPTER LXII

THE DUEL.

A SMALL and narrow ravine between two furze-covered dells led to the open space where the meeting had been arranged for. As we reached this, therefore, we were obliged to descend from the drag, and proceed the remainder of the way afoot. We had not gone many yards when a step was heard approaching, and the next moment Beaufort appeared. His usually easy and *dégagé* air was certainly tinged with somewhat of constraint ; and, though his soft voice and half smile were as perfect as ever, a slightly flurried expression about the lip, and a quick and nervous motion of his eyebrow, bespoke a heart not completely at ease. He lifted his foraging cap most ceremoniously to salute us as we came up, and, casting an anxious look to see if any others were following, stood quite still.

"I think it right to mention, Major O'Shaughnessy," said he, in a voice of most dulcet sweetness, "that I am the only friend of Captain Trevyllian on the ground ; and, though I have not the slightest objection to Captain Baker being present, I hope you

will see the propriety of limiting the witnesses to the three persons now here."

"Upon my conscience, as far as I am concerned, or my friend either, we are perfectly indifferent if we fight before three or three thousand. In Ireland we rather like a crowd."

"Of course, then, as you see no objection to my proposition, I may count upon your co-operation in the event of any intrusion; I mean, that while we, upon our sides, will not permit any of our friends to come forward, you will equally exert yourself with yours."

"Here we are—Baker and myself—neither more nor less: we expect no one, and want no one; so that I humbly conceive all the preliminaries you are talking of will never be required."

Beaufort tried to smile and bit his lips, while a small red spot upon his cheek spoke that some deeper feeling of irritation than the mere careless manner of the Major could account for, still rankled in his bosom. We now walked on without speaking, except when occasionally some passing observation of Beaufort upon the fineness of the evening, or the rugged nature of the road, broke the silence. As we emerged from the little mountain pass into the open meadow land, the tall and soldier-like figure of Trevyllian was the first object that presented itself. He was standing beside a little stone cross that stood above a holy well, and seemed occupied in deciphering the inscription. He turned at the noise of our approach, and calmly waited our coming. His eye glanced quickly from the features of O'Shaughnessy to those of Baker; but, seeming rapidly reassured as he walked forward, his face at once recovered its usual severity and its cold, impassive look of sternness.

"All right!" said Beaufort in a whisper, the tones of which I overheard as he drew near to his friend. Trevyllian smiled in return, but did not speak. During the few moments which passed in conversation between the seconds, I turned from the spot with Baker, and had scarcely time to address a question to him, when O'Shaughnessy called out, "Holla, Baker!—come here a moment!" The three seemed now in eager discussion for some minutes, when Baker walked toward Trevyllian, and saying something, appeared to wait for his reply. This being obtained, he joined the others, and the moment afterward came to where I was standing. "You are to toss for first shot, O'Malley. O'Shaughnessy has made that proposition, and the others agree that with two crack marksmen, it is perhaps the fairest way. I suppose you have no objection?"

"Of course, I shall make none. Whatever O'Shaughnessy decides for me I am ready to abide by."

"Well, then, as to the distance?" said Beaufort, loud enough to be heard by me where I was standing. O'Shaughnessy's reply I could not catch, but it was evident from the tone of both parties, that some difference existed on the point.

"Captain Baker shall decide between us," said Beaufort, at length, and they all walked away to some distance. During all the while I could perceive that Trevyllian's uneasiness and impatience seemed extreme—he looked from the speakers to the little mountain pass, and strained his eyes in every direction. It was clear that he dreaded some interruption. At last, unable any longer to control his feelings, he called out, "Beaufort, I say, what the devil are we waiting for now?"

"Nothing at present," said Beaufort, as he came forward with a dollar in his hand. "Come, Major O'Shaughnessy, you shall call for your friend."

He pitched the piece of money as he spoke high into the air, and watched it as it fell on the soft grass beneath.

"Head! for a thousand," cried O'Shaughnessy, running over and stooping down; "and head it is!"

"You've won the first shot," whispered Baker; "for Heaven's sake be cool!"

Beaufort grew deadly pale as he bent over the crown piece, and seemed scarcely to have courage to look his friend in the face. Not so Trevyllian; he pulled off his gloves without the slightest semblance of emotion, buttoned up his well-fitting black frock to the throat, and throwing a rapid glance around, seemed only eager to begin the combat.

"Fifteen paces, and the words 'One—two!'"

"Exactly. My cane shall mark that spot."

"Devilish long paces you make them," said O'Shaughnessy, who did not seem to approve of the distance. "They have some confounded advantage in this, depend upon it," said the Major, in a whisper to Baker.

"Are you ready?" inquired Beaufort.

"Ready—quite ready!"

"Take your ground, then!"

As Trevyllian moved forward to his place, he muttered something to his friend. I did not hear the first part, but the latter words which met me were ominous enough, —"for as I intend to shoot him, 'tis just as well as it is."

Whether this was meant to be overheard and intimidate me I knew not; but its effect proved directly opposite. My firm resolution to hit my antagonist was now confirmed, and no compunctious visitings unnerved my arm. As we took our places some little delay again took place, the flint of my pistol having fallen; and thus we remained full ten or twelve seconds steadily regarding each other. At length, O'Shaughnessy came forward, and, putting my weapon in my hand, whispered low, "Remember, you have but one chance."

"You are both ready?" cried Beaufort.

"Ready!"

"Then, One—two—"

The last word was lost in the report of my pistol, which went off at the instant.

For a second, the flash and smoke obstructed my view; but the moment after I saw Trevyllian stretched upon the ground, with his friend kneeling beside him. My first impulse was to rush over, for now all feeling of enmity was buried in most heartfelt anxiety for his fate; but as I was stepping forward, O'Shaughnessy called out, "Stand fast, boy, he's only wounded!" and the same moment he rose slowly from the ground, with the assistance of his friend, and looked with the same wild gaze around him. Such a look! I shall never forget it; there was that intense expression of searching anxiety, as if he sought to trace the outlines of some visionary spirit as it receded before him: quickly reassured, as it seemed by the glance he threw on all sides, his countenance lighted up, not with pleasure, but with a fiendish expression of revengeful triumph, which even his voice evinced as he called out,—"It's my turn now."

I felt the words in their full force, as I stood silently awaiting my death wound. The pause was a long one. Twice did he interrupt his friend, as he was about to give the word, by an expression of suffering, pressing his hand upon his side, and seeming to writhe with torture; and yet this was mere counterfeit.

O'Shaughnessy was now coming forward to interfere and prevent these interruptions, when Trevyllian called out in a firm tone, "I'm ready!" The words "One—two!" the pistol slowly rose, his dark eye measured me coolly, steadily; his lip curled, and just as I felt that my last moment of life had arrived, a heavy sound of a horse galloping along the rocky causeway seemed to take off his attention. His frame trembled, his hand shook, and jerking upward his weapon, the ball passed high above my head.

"You bear me witness I fired in the air," said Trevyllian, while the large drops of perspiration rolled from his forehead, and his features worked as if in a fit.

"You saw it, sir; and you, Beaufort, my friend,—you also. Speak! Why will you not speak?"

"Be calm, Trevyllian; be calm, for Heaven's sake! What's the matter with you?"

"The affair is then ended," said Baker, "and most happily so. You are, I hope, not dangerously wounded."

As he spoke, Trevyllian's features grew deadly livid; his half-open mouth quivered slightly; his eyes became fixed, and his arm dropped heavily beside him, and with a low moan he fell fainting to the ground.

As we bent over him I now perceived that another person had joined our party; he was a short, determined-looking man of about forty, with black eyes and aquiline features. Before I had time to guess who it might be, I heard O'Shaughnessy address him as Colonel Conyers.

"He is dying!" said Beaufort, still stooping over his friend, whose cold hand he grasped within his own. "Poor, poor fellow!"

"He fired in the air," said Baker, as he spoke in reply to a question from Conyers.

What he answered I heard not, but Baker rejoined,

"Yes, I am certain of it. We all saw it."

"Had you not better examine his wounds?" said Conyers, in a tone of sarcastic irony I could almost have struck him for. "Is your friend not hit? Perhaps he is bleeding."

"Yes," said O'Shaughnessy, "let us look to the poor fellow now." So saying, with Beaufort's aid he unbuttoned his frock and succeeded in opening the waistcoat. There was no trace of blood anywhere, and the idea of internal hemorrhage at once occurred to us; when Conyers, stooping down, pushed me aside, saying at the same time, "Your fears for his safety need not distress you much—look here!" As he spoke, he tore open his shirt, and disclosed to our almost doubting senses a vest of chain mail armor fitting close next the skin and completely pistol-proof.

I cannot describe the effect this sight produced upon us. Beaufort sprang to his feet with a bound as he screamed out, rather than spoke, "No man believes me to have been aware—"

"No, no, Beaufort; your reputation is very far removed from such a stain," said Conyers.

O'Shaughnessy was perfectly speechless. He looked from one to the other, as though some unexplained mystery still remained, and only seemed restored to any sense of consciousness as Baker said, "I can feel no pulse at his wrist—his heart, too, does not beat." Conyers placed his hand upon his bosom, then felt along his throat, lifted up an arm, and, letting it fall heavily upon the ground, he muttered, "He is dead!"

It was true. No wound had pierced him—the pistol bullet was found within his clothes. Some tremendous conflict of the spirit within had snapped the chords of life, and the strong man had perished in his agony.

CHAPTER LXIII.

NEWS FROM GALWAY.

I HAVE but a vague and most imperfect recollection of the events which followed this dreadful scene; for some days my faculties seemed stunned and paralyzed, and my thoughts clung to the minute detail of the ground—the persons about—the mountain path—and, most of all, the half-stifled cry that spoke the broken heart, with a tenacity that verged upon madness.

A court-martial was appointed to inquire into the affair: and although I have been since told that my deportment was calm, and my answers were firm and collected, yet I remember nothing of the proceedings.

The inquiry, through a feeling of delicacy for the friends of him who was no more, was made as brief and as private as possible. Beaufort proved the facts which exonerated me from any imputation in the matter; and upon the same day the court delivered the decision, "that Lieutenant O'Malley was not guilty of the charges preferred against him, and that he should be released from arrest, and join his regiment."

Nothing could be more kind and considerate than the conduct of my brother officers; a hundred little plans and devices for making me forget the late unhappy event were suggested and practiced; and I look back to that melancholy period, marked, as it was, by the saddest circumstance of my life, as one in which I received more of truly friendly companionship than even my palmiest days of prosperity boasted. While, therefore, I deeply felt the good part my friends were performing toward me, I was still totally unsuited to join in the happy current of their daily pleasures and amusements. The gay and unreflecting character of O'Shaughnessy—the careless merriment of my brother officers—jarred upon my nerves, and rendered me irritable and excited: and I sought, in lonely rides and unfrequented walks, the peace of spirit that calm reflection, and a firm purpose for the future, rarely fail to lead to.

There is in deep sorrow a touch of the prophetic. It is at seasons when the heart is bowed down with grief, and the spirit wasted with suffering, that the vail which conceals the future seems to be removed, and a glance, short and fleeting as the lightning flash, is permitted us into the gloomy valley before us.

Misfortunes, too, come not singly—the seared heart is not suffered to heal from one affliction, ere another succeeds it; and this anticipation of the coming evil is, perhaps, one of the most poignant features of grief—the ever watchful apprehension—the ever rising question, "What next?" is a torture that never sleeps.

This was the frame of my mind for several days after I returned to my duty,—a morbid sense of some threatened danger being my last thought at night, and my first on awakening. I had not heard from home since my arrival in the Peninsula: a thousand vague fancies haunted me now that some brooding misfortune awaited me. My poor uncle never left my thoughts. Was he well,—was he happy? Was he, as he ever used to be, surrounded by the friends he loved,—the old familiar faces, around the hospitable hearth his kindness had hallowed in my memory as something sacred? Oh! could I but see his manly smile, or hear his voice! Could I but feel his hand upon my head, as he was wont to press it, while words of comfort fell from his lips, and sunk into my heart!

Such were my thoughts one morning as I sauntered, unaccompanied, from my quarters. I had not gone far, when my attention was aroused by the noise of a mule-cart, whose jingling bells and clattering timbers announced its approach by the road I was walking. Another turn of the way brought it into view; and I saw from the gay costume of the driver, as well as a small orange flag which decorated the conveyance, that it was the mail-cart, with letters from Lisbon.

Full as my mind was with thoughts of home, I turned hastily back, and retraced my steps toward the camp. When I reached the Adjutant-General's quarters, I found a considerable number of officers assembled; the report that the post had come was a rumor of interest to all, and,

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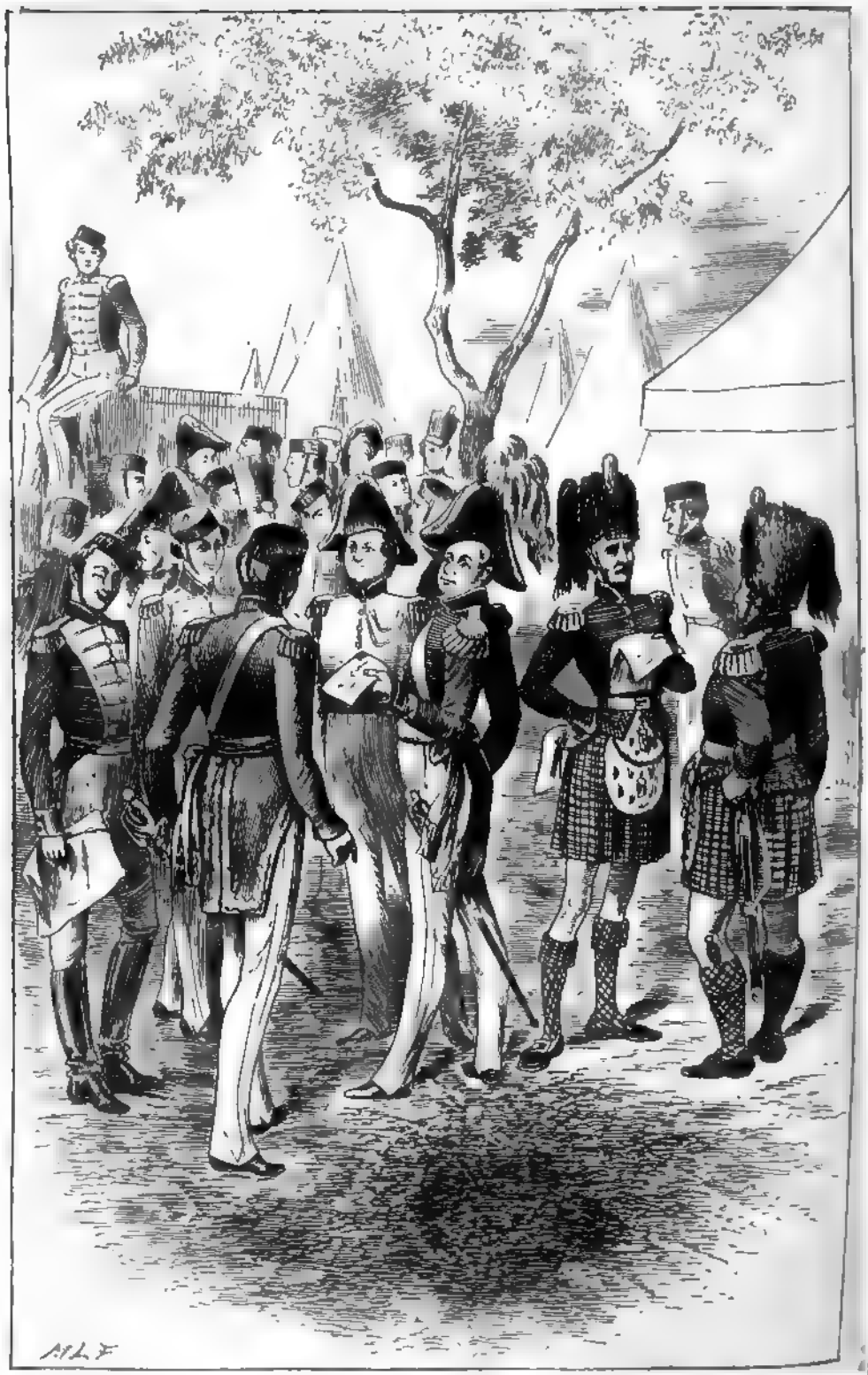

"MASTER CHARLES O'MALLEY, IN FOREIGN PARTS!" (P. 822.)

accordingly, every moment brought fresh arrivals, pouring in from all sides, and eagerly inquiring "if the bags had been opened?" The scene of riot, confusion, and excitement, when that event did take place, exceeded all belief, each man reading his letter half aloud, as if his private affairs and domestic concerns must interest his neighbors, amid a volley of exclamations of surprise, pleasure, or occasionally anger, as the intelligence severally suggested,—the disappointed expectants cursing their idle correspondents, bemoaning their fate about remittances that never arrived, or drafts never honored; while here and there some public benefactor, with an outspread *Times* or *Chronicle*, was retailing the narrative of our own exploits in the Peninsula, or the more novel changes in the world of politics, since we left England. A cross-fire of news and London gossip ringing on every side, made up a perfect Babel, most difficult to form an idea of. The jargon partook of every accent and intonation the empire boasts of, and, from the sharp precision of the North Tweeder to the broad doric of Kerry, every portion, almost every county of Great Britain, had its representative. Here was a Scotch Paymaster, in a lugubrious tone, detailing to his friend the apparently not over-welcome news, that Mistress M'Elwain had just been safely delivered of twins, which, with their mother, were doing as well as possible. Here an eager Irishman, turning over the pages rather than reading his letter, while he exclaimed to his friend,

"Oh, the devil a rap she's sent me. The old story about runaway tenants and distress notices—sorrow else tenants seem to do in Ireland than run away every half year."

A little apart some sentimental-looking cockney was devouring a very crossed epistle, which he pressed to his lips whenever any one looked at him; while a host of others satisfied themselves by reading in a kind of buzzing undertone, every now and then interrupting themselves with some broken exclamation as commentary—such as "Of course she will!"—"Never knew him better!"—"That's the girl for my money!"—"Fifty per cent.—the devil!"—and so on. At last I was beginning to weary of the scene, and finding that there appeared to be nothing for me, was turning to leave the place, when I saw a group of two or three endeavoring to spell out the address of a letter.

"That's an Irish post-mark, I'll swear," said one; "but who can make anything of the name? It's devilish like Otaheite—isn't it?"

"I wish my tailor wrote as illegibly," said another; "I'd keep up a most animated correspondence with him."

"Here, O'Shaughnessy, you know something of savage life—spell us this word here."

"Show it here—what nonsense—it's as plain as the nose on my face!—'Master Charles O'Malley, in foreign parts!'"

A roar of laughter followed this announcement, which, at any other time, perhaps, I should have joined in, but which now grated sadly on my ruffled feelings.

"Here, Charley, this is for you," said the Major; and added, in a whisper—"and upon my conscience, between ourselves, your friend, whoever he is, has a strong action against his writing-master—devil such a fist ever I looked at!"

One glance satisfied me as to my correspondent. It was from Father Rush, my old Tutor. I hurried eagerly from the spot,—and, regaining my quarters, locked the door, and with a beating heart broke the seal and began, as well as I was able, to decipher his letter. The hand was cramped and stiffened with age, and the bold upright letters were gnarled and twisted like a rustic fence, and demanded great patience and much time in unraveling. It ran thus:

"The Priory, Lady-day, 1809.

"My dear Master Charles,—Your uncle's feet are so big and so uneasy that he can't write, and I am obliged to take up the pen myself, to tell you how we are doing here since you left us. And, first of all, the master lost the law-suit in Dublin, all for the want of a Galway jury; but they don't go up to town for strong reasons they had; and the Curranolick property is gone to Ned M'Manus, and may the devil do him good with it! Peggy Maher left this on Tuesday; she was complaining of a weakness; shes gone to consult the doctors. I'm sorry for poor Peggy.

"Owen M'Neil beat the Slatterys out of Portumna on Saturday, and Jem, they say, is fractured. I trust it's true, for he never was good, root nor branch, and we've strong reasons to suspect him for drawing the river with a net at night. Sir Harry Boyle sprained his wrist, breaking open his bedroom, that he locked when he was inside. The Count and the master were laughing all the evening at him. Matters are going very hard in the country; the people paying their rents regularly, and not caring half as much as they used about the real gentry and the old families.

"We kept your birthday at the Castle in

great style, had the militia band from the town, and all the tenants. Mr. James Daly danced with your old friend Mary Green, and sang a beautiful song, and was going to raise the devil, but I interfered; he burnt down half the blue drawing-room the last night with his tricks; not that your uncle cares. God preserve him to us!—it's little anything like that would fret him. The Count quarreled with a young gentleman in the course of the evening, but found out he was only an attorney from Dublin, so he didn't shoot him, but he was ducked in the pond by the people, and your uncle says he hopes they have a true copy of him at home, as they'll never know the original.

"Peter died soon after you went away, but Tim hunts the dogs just as well; they had a beautiful run last Wednesday, and the Lord* sent for him and gave him a five-pound note; but he says he'd rather see yourself back again than twice as much. They killed near the big turnip field, and all went down to see where you leaped Badger over the sunk fence; they call it 'Hammersley's Nose' ever since. Bodkin was at Ballinasloe the last fair, limping about with a stick; he's twice as quiet as he used to be, and never beat any one since that morning.

"Nelly Guire at the cross-roads, wants to send you four pair of stockings she knitted for you; and I have a keg of potteen of Barney's own making this two months, not knowing how to send it; maybe Sir Arthur himself would like a taste; he's an Irishman himself, and one we're proud of too! The Maynooth chaps are flying all about the country, and making us all uncomfortable—God's will be done, but we used to think ourselves good enough! Your foster-sister, Kitty Doolan, had a fine boy; it's to be called after you, and your uncle's to give a christening. He bids me tell you to draw on him when you want money, and that there's 400*l.* ready for you now somewhere in Dublin, I forget the name, and as he's asleep I don't like asking him. There was a droll devil down here in the summer that knew you well—a Mr. Webber. The master treated him like the Lord Lieutenant; had dinner parties for him, and gave him Oliver Cromwell to ride over to Meelish. He is expected again for the cock-shooting, for the master likes him greatly. I'm done at last, for my paper is finished and the candle just out; so with every good wish and every good thought, remember your own old friend, PETER RUSH.

"P.S.—It's Smart and Sykes, Fleet street, has the money. Father O'Shaughnessy, of Ennis, bids me ask if you ever met his nephew. If you do, make him sing 'Larry M'Hale.' I hear it's a treat.

"How is Mickey Free going on? There are three decent young women in the parish he promised to marry, and I suppose he's pursuing the same game with the Portuguese. But he was never remarkable for minding his duties. Tell him I am keeping my eye on him. P. R."

Here concluded this long epistle, and, though there were many parts I could not help smiling at, yet upon the whole, I felt sad and dispirited. What I had long foreseen and anticipated was gradually accomplishing—the wreck of an old and honored house—the fall of a name once the watchword for all that was benevolent and hospitable in the land. The termination of the lawsuit I knew must have been a heavy blow to my poor uncle, who, every consideration of money apart, felt in a legal combat all the enthusiasm and excitement of a personal conflict. With him, there was less a question of to whom the broad acres reverted, so much as whether that "scoundrel Tom Basset, the attorney at Athlone, should triumph over us;" or, "M'Manus live in the house as master, where his father had officiated as butler." It was at this his Irish pride took offense; and straitened circumstances and narrowed fortunes bore little upon him in comparison with this feeling.

I could see, too, that with breaking fortunes, bad health was making heavy inroads upon him; and while, with the reckless desperation of ruin, he still kept open house, I could picture to myself his cheerful eye and handsome smile, but ill concealing the slow but certain march of a broken heart.

My position was doubly painful; for any advice, had I been calculated to give it, would have seemed an act of indelicate interference from one who was to benefit by his own counsel; and, although I had been reared and educated as my uncle's heir, I had no title nor pretension to succeed him other than his kind feelings respecting me. I could, therefore, only look on in silence, and watch the painful progress of our downfall, without a power to arrest it.

These were sad thoughts, and came when my heart was already bowed down with its affliction. That my poor uncle might be

* To excuse Father Rush for any apparent impiety, I must add, that, by the "Lord," he means "Lord Clanricarde."

spared the misery which sooner or later seemed inevitable, was now my only wish; that he might go down to the grave without the embittering feelings which a ruined fortune and a fallen house bring home to the heart, was all my prayer. Let him but close his eyes in the old wainscoted bedroom, beneath the old roof where his fathers and grandfathers have done so for centuries. Let the faithful followers he has known since his childhood stand round his bed; while his fast-failing sight recognizes each old and well-remembered object, and the same bell which rang its farewell to the spirit of his ancestors, toll for him, the last of his race—and, as for me, there was the wide world before me, and a narrow resting-place would suffice for a soldier's sepulcher.

As the mail-cart was returning the next day to Lisbon, I immediately sat down and replied to the worthy Father's letter, speaking as encouragingly as I could of my own prospects. I dwelt much upon what was nearest my heart, and begged of the good priest to watch over my uncle's health, to cheer his spirits, and support his courage; and that I trusted the day was not far distant when I should be once more amongst them, with many a story of fray and battle-field to enliven their firesides. Pressing him to write frequently to me, I closed my hurried letter; and, having dispatched it, sat sorrowfully down to muse over my fortunes.

CHAPTER LXIV.

AN ADVENTURE WITH SIR ARTHUR.

THE events of the last few days had impressed me with a weight of years. The awful circumstances of that evening lay heavily at my heart, and though guiltless of Trevyllian's blood, the reproach that conscience ever carries, when one has been involved in a death-scene, never left my thoughts.

For some time previously I had been depressed and dispirited, and the awful shock I had sustained broke my nerve and unmanned me greatly.

There are times when our sorrows tinge all the colorings of our thoughts, and one pervading hue of melancholy spreads like a pall upon what we have of fairest and brightest on earth. So was it now; I had lost hope and ambition—a sad feeling that my career was destined to misfortune and mishap gained hourly upon me; and all the bright aspirations of a soldier's glory, all my enthusiasm for the pomp and circumstance of glorious war, fell coldly upon my heart; and I looked upon the chivalry of a soldier's life as the empty pageant of a dream.

In this sad frame of mind I avoided all intercourse with my brother officers—their gay and joyous spirits only jarred upon my brooding thoughts, and, feigning illness, I kept almost entirely to my quarters.

The inactivity of our present life weighed also heavily upon me. The stirring events of a campaign—the march, the bivouac, the picket—call forth a certain physical exertion that never fails to react upon the torpid mind.

Forgetting all around me, I thought of home; I thought of those whose hearts I felt were now turning toward me, and considered within myself how I could have exchanged the home—the days of peaceful happiness there, for the life of misery and disappointment I now endured.

A brooding melancholy gained daily more and more upon me. A wish to return to Ireland, a vague and indistinct feeling that my career was not destined for aught of great and good, crept upon me, and I longed to sink into oblivion, forgotten and forgot.

I record this painful feeling here, while it is still a painful memory, as one of the dark shadows that cross the bright sky of our happiest days.

Happy, indeed, are they, as we look back to them, and remember the times we have pronounced ourselves "the most miserable of mankind." This somehow is a confession we never make later on in life, when real troubles and true afflictions assail us. Whether we call in more philosophy to our aid, or that our senses become less acute and discerning, I'm sure I know not.

As for me, I confess by far the greater portion of my sorrows seemed to come in that budding period of existence when life is ever fairest and most captivating. Not, perhaps, that the fact was really so, but the spoiled and humored child, whose caprices were a law, felt heavily the threatening difficulties of his first voyage. While, as he continued to sail over the ocean of life, he braved the storm and the squall, and felt only gratitude for the favoring breeze that wafted him upon his course.

What an admirable remedy for misanthropy is the being placed in a subordinate condition in life! Had I, at the period that I write, been Sir Arthur Wellesley—had I even been Marshal Beresford,

to all certainty I'd have played the very devil with his Majesty's forces.—I'd have brought my rascals to where they'd have been well peppered—that's certain.

But as, luckily for the sake of humanity in general and the well-being of the service in particular, I was merely Lieutenant O'Malley, 14th Light Dragoons, the case was very different. With what heavy censure did I condemn the Commander of the Forces in my own mind for his want of daring and enterprise! Whole nights did I pass in endeavoring to account for his inactivity and lethargy. Why he did not *seriatim* fall upon Soult, Ney, and Victor, annihilate the French forces, and sack Madrid, I looked upon as little less than a riddle; and yet there he waited, drilling, exercising, and foraging, as if we were at Hounslow. Now most fortunately here again I was not Sir Arthur.

Something in this frame of mind, I was taking one evening a solitary ride some miles from the camp. Without noticing the circumstance, I had entered a little mountain tract, when the ground being broken and uneven, I dismounted and proceeded a-foot, with the bridle within my arm. I had not gone far when the clatter of a horse's hoofs came rapidly toward me, and, though there was something startling in the pace over such a piece of road, I never lifted my eyes as the horseman came up, but continued my slow progress onward, my head sunk upon my bosom.

"Holloa, sir!" cried a sharp voice, whose tones seemed somehow not heard for the first time. I looked up, saw a slight figure closely buttoned up in a blue horseman's cloak, the collar of which almost entirely hid his features; he wore a plain cocked hat without a feather, and was mounted upon a sharp, wiry-looking hack.

"Holloa, sir! What regiment do you belong to?"

As I had nothing of the soldier about me, save a blue foraging cap, to denote my corps, the tone of the demand was little calculated to elicit a very polished reply; but preferring as most impertinent to make no answer, I passed on without speaking.

"Did you hear, sir?" cried the same voice in a still louder key. "What's your regiment?"

I now turned round, resolved to question the other in turn; when, to my inexpressible shame and confusion, he had lowered the collar of his cloak, and I saw the features of Sir Arthur Wellesley.

"Fourteenth Light Dragoons, sir," said *I, blushing* as I spoke.

"Have you not read the general order, sir? Why have you left the camp?"

Now I had not read a general order nor even heard one for above a fortnight. So I stammered out some bungling answer.

"To your quarters, sir, and report yourself under arrest. What's your name?"

"Lieutenant O'Malley, sir."

"Well, sir, your passion for rambling shall be indulged. You shall be sent to the rear with dispatches; and, as the army is in advance, probably the lesson may be serviceable." So saying he pressed spurs to his horse, and was out of sight in a moment.

CHAPTER LXV.

TALAVERA.

HAVING been dispatched to the rear with orders for General Craufurd, I did not reach Talavera till the morning of the 28th. Two days' hard fighting had left the contending armies still face to face, and without any decided advantage on either side.

When I arrived upon the battle-field the combat of the morning was over. It was then ten o'clock, and the troops were at breakfast, if the few ounces of wheat, sparingly dealt out amongst them, could be dignified by that name. All was, however, life and animation on every side; the merry laugh, the passing jest, the careless look, bespoke the free and daring character of the soldiery, as they sat in groups upon the grass; and, except when a fatigue party passed by, bearing some wounded comrade to the rear, no touch of seriousness rested upon their hardy features. The morning was indeed a glorious one; a sky of unclouded blue stretched above a landscape unsurpassed in loveliness. Far to the right rolled on in placid stream the broad Tagus, bathing in its eddies the very walls of Talavera, the ground from which, to our position, gently undulated across a plain of most fertile richness, and terminated on our extreme left in a bold height, protected in front by a ravine, and flanked by a deep and rugged valley.

The Spaniards occupied the right of the line, connecting with our troops at a rising ground, upon which a strong redoubt had been hastily thrown up. The fourth division and the Guards were stationed here, next to whom came Cameron's brigade and the Germans; Mackenzie and Hill holding the extreme left of all, which might be called the key of our position. In the val-

ley beneath the latter were picketed three cavalry regiments, among which I was not long in detecting my gallant friends of the Twenty-third.

As I rode rapidly past, saluting some old familiar face at each moment, I could not help feeling struck at the evidence of the desperate battle that so lately had raged there. The whole surface of the hill was one mass of dead and dying, the bearskin of the French grenadier lying side by side with the tartan of the Highlander. Deep furrows in the soil showed the track of the furious cannonade, and the terrible evidences of a bayonet charge were written in the mangled corpses around.

The fight had been maintained without any intermission from daybreak till near nine o'clock that morning, and the slaughter on both sides was dreadful; the mounds of fresh earth on every side told of the soldier's sepulcher, and the unceasing tramp of the pioneers struck sadly upon the ear, as the groans of the wounded blended with the funeral sounds around them.

In front were drawn up the dark legions of France; massive columns of infantry, with dense bodies of artillery alternating along the line. They, too, occupied a gently rising ground; the valley between the two armies being crossed half way by a little rivulet, and here, during the sultry heat of the morning, the troops on both sides met and mingled to quench their thirst ere the trumpet again called them to the slaughter.

In a small ravine, near the center of our line, were drawn up Cotton's brigade, of whom the fusiliers formed a part. Directly in front of this were Campbell's brigade, to the left of which, upon a gentle slope, the staff were now assembled. Thither, accordingly, I bent my steps, and, as I came up the little scarp, found myself among the generals of division, hastily summoned by Sir Arthur to deliberate upon a forward movement. The council lasted scarcely a quarter of an hour, and when I presented myself to deliver my report, all the dispositions for the battle had been decided upon, and the Commander of the Forces, seated upon the grass at his breakfast, looked by far the most unconcerned and uninterested man I had seen that morning.

He turned his head rapidly as I came up, and, before the aide-de-camp could announce me, called out:

"Well, sir, what news of the reinforcements?"

"They cannot reach Talavera before tomorrow, sir."

"Then, before that we shall not want them. That will do, sir."

So saying, he resumed his breakfast, and I retired, more than ever struck with the surprising coolness of the man upon whom no disappointment seemed to have the slightest influence.

I had scarcely rejoined my regiment, and was giving an account to my brother officers of my journey, when an aide-de-camp came galloping at full speed down the line, and communicating with the several commanding officers as he passed.

What might be the nature of the orders we could not guess at; for no word to fall in followed, and yet it was evident something of importance was at hand. Upon the hill where the staff were assembled no unusual bustle appeared, and we could see the bay cob of Sir Arthur still being led up and down by the groom, with a dragoon's mantle thrown over him. The soldiers, overcome by the heat and fatigue of the morning, lay stretched around upon the grass, and everything bespoke a period of rest and refreshment.

"We are going to advance, depend upon it!" said a young officer beside me; "the repulse of this morning has been a smart lesson to the French, and Sir Arthur won't leave them without impressing it upon them."

"Hark, what's that?" cried Baker; "listen."

As he spoke, a strain of most delicious music came wafted across the plain. It was from the band of a French regiment, and, mellowed by the distance, it seemed, in the calm stillness of the morning air, like something less of earth than heaven.

As we listened, the notes swelled upward yet fuller; and one by one the different bands seemed to join, till at last the whole air seemed full of the rich flood of melody.

We could now perceive the stragglers were rapidly falling back, while high above all other sounds the clanging notes of the trumpet were heard along the line. The hoarse drum now beat to arms, and soon after a brilliant staff rode slowly from between two dense bodies of infantry, and advancing some distance into the plain, seemed to reconnoiter us. A cloud of Polish cavalry, distinguished by their long lances and floating banners, loitered in their rear.

We had not time for further observation, when the drums on our side beat to arms, and the hoarse cry, "Fall in—fall in there, lads!" resounded along the line.

It was now one o'clock, and before half an hour the troops had resumed the posi-

tion of the morning, and stood silent and anxious spectators of the scene before them.

Upon the table land, to the rear of the French position, we could descry the gorgeous tent of King Joseph, around which a large and splendidly-accoutered staff were seen standing. Here, too, the bustle and excitement seemed considerable, for to this point the dark masses of the infantry seemed converging from the extreme right; and here we could perceive the royal guards and the reserve now forming in column of attack.

From the crest of the hill down to the very valley, the dark, dense ranks extended, the flanks protected by a powerful artillery and deep masses of heavy cavalry. It was evident that the attack was not to commence on our side, and the greatest and most intense anxiety pervaded us as to what part of our line was first to be assailed.

Meanwhile, Sir Arthur Wellesley, who from the height had been patiently observing the field of battle, dispatched an aide-de-camp at full gallop toward Campbell's brigade, posted directly in advance of us. As he passed swiftly along he called out, "You're in for it, Fourteenth; you'll have to open the ball to-day."

Scarcely were the words spoken, when a signal gun from the French boomed heavily through the still air. The last echo was growing fainter, and the heavy smoke breaking into mist, when the most deafening thunder ever my ears heard came pealing around us; eighty pieces of artillery had opened upon us, sending a very tempest of balls upon our line, while midst the smoke and dust we could see the light troops advancing at a run, followed by the broad and massive columns in all the terror and majesty of war.

"What a splendid attack! How gallantly they come on!" cried an old veteran officer beside me, forgetting all rivalry in his noble admiration of our enemy.

The intervening space was soon passed, and the tirailleurs falling back as the columns came on, the towering masses bore down upon Campbell's division with a loud cry of defiance. Silently and steadily the English infantry awaited the attack, and returning the fire with one withering volley, were ordered to charge. Scarcely were the bayonets lowered, when the head of the advancing column broke and fled, while Mackenzie's brigade, overlapping the flank, pushed boldly forward, and a scene of frightful carnage followed; for a moment a hand to hand combat was sustained, but the unbroken files and impregnable bayonets of the English conquered, and the French fled, leaving six guns behind them.

The gallant enemy were troops of tried and proved courage, and scarcely had they retreated when they again formed, but just as they prepared to come forward, a tremendous shower of grape opened upon them from our batteries, while a cloud of Spanish horse assailed them in flank, and nearly cut them in pieces.

While this was passing on the right, a tremendous attack menaced the hill upon which our left was posted. Two powerful columns of French infantry, supported by some regiments of light cavalry, came steadily forward to the attack; Anson's brigade were ordered to charge.

Away they went at top speed, but had not gone above a hundred yards when they were suddenly arrested by a deep chasm; here the German hussars pulled short up, but the Twenty-third dashing impetuously forward, a scene of terrific carnage ensued, men and horses rolling indiscriminately together under a withering fire from the French squares. Even here, however, British valor quailed not, for Major Francis Ponsonby, forming all who came up, rode boldly upon a brigade of French chasseurs in the rear. Victor, who from the first had watched the movement, at once dispatched a lancer regiment against them, and then these brave fellows were absolutely cut to atoms, the few who escaped having passed through the French columns and reached Bassecour's Spanish division on the far right.

During this time the hill was again assailed, and even more desperately than before, while Victor himself led on the fourth corps to an attack upon our right and center.

The Guards waited without flinching the impetuous rush of the advancing columns, and, when at length within a short distance, dashed forward with the bayonet, driving everything before them. The French fell back upon their sustaining masses, and, rallying in an instant, again came forward, supported by a tremendous fire from their batteries. The Guards drew back, and the German Legion, suddenly thrown into confusion, began to retire in disorder. This was the most critical moment of the day, for, although successful upon the extreme right and left of our line, our center was absolutely broken. Just at this moment Gordon rode up to our brigade; his face was pale and his look flurried and excited.

"The Forty-eighth are coming; here they are—support them, Fourteenth."

These few words were all he spoke; and the next moment the measured tread of a column was heard behind us. On they came like one man, their compact and dense formation looking like some massive wall; wheeling by companies, they suffered the Guards and Germans to retire behind them, and then re-forming into line, they rushed forward with the bayonet. Our artillery opened with a deafening thunder behind them, and then we were ordered to charge.

We came on at a trot; the Guards, who had now recovered their formation, cheered us as we proceeded; the smoke of the cannonade obscured everything until we had advanced some distance, but just as we emerged beyond the line of the gallant Forty-eighth, the splendid panorama of the battle-field broke suddenly upon us.

"Charge! forward!" cried the hoarse voice of our Colonel; and we were upon them. The French infantry, already broken by the withering musketry of our people, gave way before us, and, unable to form a square, retired fighting, but in confusion, and with tremendous loss, to their position. One glorious cheer from left to right of our line proclaimed the victory, while a deafening discharge of artillery from the French replied to this defiance, and the battle was over. Had the Spanish army been capable of a forward movement, our successes at this moment would have been much more considerable; but they did not dare to change their position, and the repulse of our enemy was destined to be all our glory. The French, however, suffered much more severely than we did; and, retiring during the night, fell back behind the Alberche, leaving us the victory and the battle-field.

CHAPTER LXVI.

NIGHT AFTER TALAVERA.

The night which followed the battle was a sad one. Through the darkness, and under a fast-falling rain, the hours were spent in searching for our wounded comrades amid the heap of slain upon the field; and the glimmering of the lanterns, as they flickered far and near across the wide plain, bespoke the track of the fatigue parties in their mournful round; while the groans of the wounded rose amid the silence with an accent of heartrending anguish; so true was it, as our great commander said, "there is nothing more sad than a victory, except a defeat."

Around our bivouac fires, the feeling of sorrowful depression was also evident. We had gained a great victory, it was true; we had beaten the farfamed legions of France upon a ground of their own choosing, led by the most celebrated of their Marshals and under the eyes of the Emperor's own brother; but still we felt all the hazardous daring of our position, and had no confidence whatever in the courage or discipline of our allies; and we saw that in the very *mêlée* of the battle the efforts of the enemy were directed almost exclusively against our line, so confidently did they undervalue the efforts of the Spanish troops. Morning broke at length, and scarcely was the heavy mist clearing away before the red sunlight, when the sounds of fife and drum were heard from a distant part of the field. The notes swelled or sank as the breeze rose or fell, and many a conjecture was hazarded as to their meaning, for no object was well visible for more than a few hundred yards off; gradually, however, they grew nearer and nearer, and at length, as the air cleared, and the hazy vapor evaporated, the bright scarlet uniform of a British regiment was seen advancing at a quick step.

As they came nearer, the well-known march of the gallant Forty-third was recognized by some of our people, and immediately the rumor fled like lightning,—"It is Craufurd's brigade!" and so it was; the noble fellow had marched his division the unparalleled distance of sixty English miles in twenty-seven hours. Over a burning sandy soil, exposed to a raging sun, without rations, almost without water, these gallant troops pressed on in the unwearied hope of sharing the glory of the battle-field. One tremendous cheer welcomed the head of the column as they marched past, and continued till the last file had deployed before us.

As these splendid regiments moved by we could not help feeling what signal service they might have rendered us but a few hours before; their soldierlike bearing, their high and effective state of discipline, their well-known reputation, were in every mouth; and I scarcely think that any corps who stood the brunt of the mighty battle were the subject of more encomium than the brave fellows who had just joined us.

The mournful duties of the night were soon forgotten in the gay and buoyant sounds on every side. Congratulations,

shaking of hands, kind inquiries went round; and, as we looked to the hilly ground where so lately were drawn up in battle array the dark columns of our enemy, and where not one sentinel now remained, the proud feeling of our victory came home to our hearts with the ever-thrilling thought, "What will they say at home?"

I was standing amid a group of my brother officers, when I received an order from the Colonel to ride down to Talavera for the return of our wounded, as the arrival of the Commander-in-Chief was momentarily looked for. I threw myself upon my horse, and setting out at a brisk pace, soon reached the gates.

On entering the town, I was obliged to dismount and proceed on foot. The streets were completely filled with people, treading their way among wagons, forage-carts, and sick-litters: here was a booth filled with all imaginable wares for sale; there a temporary gin-shop established beneath a broken baggage-wagon; here, might be seen a merry party throwing dice for a turkey or a kid—there, a wounded man, with bloodless cheek and tottering step, inquiring the road to the hospital; the accents of agony mingled with the drunken chorus, and the sharp crack of the Provost-Marshal's whip was heard above the boisterous reveling of the debauchee. All was confusion, bustle, and excitement. The staff-officer, with his flowing plume and glittering epaulettes, wended his way on foot amid the din and bustle, unnoticed and uncared for; while the little drummer amused an admiring audience of simple country-folk by some wondrous tale of the great victory.

My passage through this dense mass was necessarily a slow one. No one made way for another; discipline for the time was at an end, and with it all respect for rank or position. It was what nothing of mere vicissitude in the fortune of war can equal—the wild orgie of an army the day after a battle.

On turning the corner of a narrow street, my attention was attracted by a crowd which, gathered round a small fountain, seemed, as well as I could perceive, to witness some proceeding with a more than ordinary interest. Exclamations in Portuguese, expressive of surprise and admiration, were mingled with English oaths and Irish ejaculations, while high above all rose other sounds—the cries of some one in pain and suffering; forcing my way through the dense group, I at length reached the interior of the crowd, when, to my astonishment, I perceived a short, fat, punchy-looking man, stripped of his coat and waistcoat, and with his shirt sleeves rolled up to his shoulders, busily employed in operating upon a wounded soldier. Amputation knives, tourniquets, bandages, and all other imaginable instruments for giving or alleviating torture were strewed about him, and, from the arrangement and preparation, it was clear that he had pitched upon this spot as an hospital for his patients. While he continued to perform his functions with a singular speed and dexterity, he never for a moment ceased a running fire of small talk, now addressed to the patient in particular, now to the crowd at large—sometimes a soliloquy to himself, and not unfrequently, abstractedly, upon things in general. These little specimens of oratory, delivered in such a place at such a time, and, not least of all, in the richest imaginable Cork accent, were sufficient to arrest my steps, and I stopped for some time to observe him.

The patient, who was a large, powerfully-built fellow, had been wounded in both legs by the explosion of a shell, but yet not so severely as to require amputation.

"Does that plaze you, then?" said the doctor, as he applied some powerful caustic to a wounded vessel; "there's no satisfying the like of you. Quite warm and comfortable ye'll be this morning after that. I saw that same shell coming, and I called out to Maurice Blake, 'By your leave, Maurice, let that fellow pass, he's in a hurry!' and faith, I said to myself, 'there's more where you came from—you're not an only child, and I never liked the family.' —What are ye grinning for, ye brown thieves?" This was addressed to the Portuguese. "There, now, keep the limb quiet and easy. Upon my conscience, if that shell fell into ould Lundy Foot's shop this morning, there'd be plenty of sneezing in Sackville street. Who's next?" said he, looking round with an expression that seemed to threaten that, if no wounded man was ready, he was quite prepared to carve out a patient for himself. Not exactly relishing the invitation in the searching that accompanied it, I backed my way through the crowd, and continued my path toward the hospital.

Here the scene which presented itself was shocking beyond belief—frightful and ghastly wounds from shells and cannon-shot were seen on all sides, every imaginable species of suffering that man is capable of was presented to view, while, amid the dead and dying, operations the most

painful were proceeding with a haste and bustle that plainly showed how many more waited their turn for similar offices. The stairs were blocked up with fresh arrivals of wounded men, and even upon the corridors and landing-places the sick were strewn on all sides.

I hurried to that part of the building where my own people were, and soon learned that our loss was confined to about fourteen wounded; five of them were officers: but, fortunately, we lost not a man of our gallant fellows, and Talavera brought us no mourning for a comrade to damp the exultation we felt in our victory.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE OUTPOST.

DURING the three days which succeeded the battle, all things remained as they were before. The enemy had gradually withdrawn all his forces, and our most advanced pickets never came in sight of a French detachment. Still, although we had gained a great victory, our situation was anything but flattering. The most strenuous exertions of the commissariat were barely sufficient to provision the troops; and we had even already but too much experience of how little trust or reliance could be reposed in the most lavish promises of our allies. It was true, our spirits failed us not, but it was rather from an implicit and never-failing confidence in the resources of our great leader, than that any amongst us could see his way through the dense cloud of difficulty and danger that seemed to envelop us on every side.

To add to the pressing emergency of our position, we learned on the evening of the 31st that Soult was advancing from the north, and at the head of fourteen thousand chosen troops in full march upon Placentia; thus threatening our rear, at the very moment, too, when any further advance was evidently impossible.

On the morning of the first of August, I was ordered with a small party to push forward in the direction of the Alberche, upon the left bank of which it was reported that the French were again concentrating their forces, and, if possible, to obtain information as to their future movements. Meanwhile, the army was about to fall back upon Oropesa, there to await Soult's advance, and, if necessary, to give him battle —Cuesta engaging with his Spaniards to secure Talavera, with its stores and hospitals, against any present movement from Victor.

After a hearty breakfast, and a kind "Good-by!" from my brother officers, I set out. My road along the Tagus, for several miles of the way, was a narrow path scarped from the rocky ledge of the river, shaded by rich olive plantations that threw a friendly shade over us during the noonday heat.

We traveled along silently, sparing our cattle from time to time, but endeavoring ere nightfall to reach Torrijos, in which village we had heard several French soldiers were in hospital. Our information leading us to believe them very inadequately guarded, we hoped to make some prisoners, from whom the information we sought could in all likelihood be obtained. More than once during the day our road was crossed by parties similar to our own, sent forward to reconnoiter; and toward evening a party of the Twenty-third Light Dragoons, returning toward Talavera, informed us that the French had retired from Torrijos, which was now occupied by an English detachment, under my old friend O'Shaughnessy.

I need not say with what pleasure I heard this piece of news, and eagerly pressed forward, preferring the warm shelter and hospitable board the Major was certain of possessing, to the cold blast and dripping grass of a bivouac. Night, however, fell fast; darkness, without an intervening twilight, set in, and we lost our way. A bleak table-land, with here and there a stunted, leafless tree, was all that we could discern by the pale light of a new moon. An apparently interminable heath, uncrossed by path or foot-track, was before us, and our jaded cattle seemed to feel the dreary uncertainty of the prospect as sensitively as ourselves—stumbling and overreaching at every step.

Cursing my ill-luck for such a misadventure, and once more picturing to my mind the bright blazing hearth and smoking supper I had hoped to partake of, I called a halt, and prepared to pass the night. My decision was hastened by finding myself suddenly in a little grove of pine-trees, whose shelter was not to be despised; besides that, our bivouac fires were now sure of being supplied.

It was fortunate the night was fine, though dark. In a calm, still atmosphere, when not a leaf moved nor a branch stirred, we picketed our tired horses, and, shaking out their forage, heaped up in the midst a blazing fire of the fir-tree. Our

humble supper was produced, and even with the still lingering reverie of the Major and his happier destiny, I began to feel comfortable.

My troopers, who probably had not been flattering their imaginations with such *gourmand* reflections and views, sat happily around their cheerful blaze, chatting over the great battle they had so lately witnessed, and mingling their stories of some comrade's prowess with sorrows for the dead and proud hopes for the future. In the midst, upon his knees beside the flame, was Mike, disputing, detailing, guessing, and occasionally inventing—all his arguments only tending to one view of the late victory—"that it was the Lord's mercy the most of the Forty-eighth was Irish, or we wouldn't be sitting there now!"

Despite Mr. Free's conversational gifts, however, his audience one by one dropped off in sleep, leaving him sole monarch of the watch-fire, and—what he thought more of—a small brass kettle nearly full of brandy-and-water. This latter, I perceived, he produced when all was tranquil, and seemed, as he cast a furtive glance around, to assure himself that he was the only company present.

Lying some yards off, I watched him for about an hour, as he sat rubbing his hands before the blaze, or lifting the little vessel to his lips; his droll features ever and anon seeming acted upon by some passing dream of former devilment, as he smiled and muttered some sentences in an undervoice. Sleep at length overpowered me; but my last waking thoughts were haunted with a singular ditty by which Mike accompanied himself as he kept burnishing the buttons of my jacket before the fire, now and then interrupting the melody by a recourse to the copper.

"Well, well; you're clean enough now, and sure it's little good brightening you up, when you'll be as bad to-morrow. Like his father's son, devil a lie in it! Nothing would serve him but his best blue jacket to fight in, as if the French was particular what they killed us in. Pleasant trade, upon my conscience! Well, never mind. That's beautiful *sperets*, any how. Your health, Mickey Free; it's yourself that stands to me.

"'It's little for glory I care;
Sure ambition is only a fable;
I'd as soon be myself as Lord Mayor,
With lashings of drink on the table.
I like to lie down in the sun
And drame, when my *faytures* is scorchin',
That when I'm too *ould* for more fun,
Why, I'll marry a wife with a fortune.

"'And, in winter, with bacon and eggs,
And a place at the turf-fire basking,
Sip my punch as I roasted my legs,
Oh! the devil a more I'd be asking!
For I haven't a *janius* for work,—
It was never the gift of the Bradies,—
But I'd make a most *illigant* Turk,
For I'm fond of tobacco and ladies.'"

This confounded *refrain* kept ringing through my dream, and "tobacco and ladies" mingled with my thoughts of storm and battle-field, long after their very gifted author had composed himself to slumber.

Sleep, and sound sleep, came at length, and many hours elapsed ere I awoke. When I did so, my fire was reduced to its last embers. Mike, like the others, had sunk in slumber, and mid the gray dawn that precedes the morning, I could just perceive the dark shadows of my troopers as they lay in groups around.

The fatigues of the previous day had so completely overcome me, that it was with difficulty I could arouse myself so far as to heap fresh logs upon the fire. This I did, with my eyes half closed, and in that listless, dreamy state which seems the twilight of sleep.

I managed so much, however, and was returning to my couch beneath a tree, when suddenly an object presented itself to my eyes that absolutely rooted me to the spot. At about twenty or thirty yards distant, where but the moment before the long line of horizon terminated the view, there now stood a huge figure of some ten or twelve feet in height; two heads—which surmounted this colossal personage—moved alternately from side to side, while several arms waved loosely to and fro in the most strange and uncouth manner. My first impression was that a dream had conjured up this distorted image; but when I had assured myself by repeated pinchings and shakings that I was really awake, still it remained there. I was never much given to believe in ghosts; but even had I been so, this strange apparition must have puzzled me as much as ever, for it could not have been the representative of anything I ever heard of before.

A vague suspicion that some French trickery was concerned, induced me to challenge it in French, so without advancing a step, I halloed out, "*Qui va là?*"

My voice aroused a sleeping soldier, who, springing up beside me, had his carbine at the cock; while, equally thunderstruck with myself, he gazed at the monster.

"*Qui va là?*" shouted I again, and no answer was returned, when suddenly the

"*Qui va là?*" SHOUTED I AGAIN, AND NO ANSWER WAS RETURNED, WHEN SUDDENLY THE HUGE OBJECT WHEELED RAPIDLY AROUND AND WITHOUT WAITING FOR ANY FURTHER PARLEY, MADE FOR THE THICKET (P. 832)

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huge object wheeled rapidly around, and without waiting for any further parley, made for the thicket.

The tramp of a horse's feet now assured me as to the nature of at least part of the spectacle, when click went the trigger behind me, and the trooper's ball rushed whistling through the brushwood. In a moment the whole party were up and stirring.

"This way, lads!" cried I, as drawing my sabre, I dashed into the pine wood.

For a few moments all was dark as midnight; but as we proceeded further, we came out upon a little open space which commanded the plain beneath for a great extent.

"There it goes!" said one of the men, pointing to a narrow, beaten path, in which the tall figure moved at a slow and stately pace, while still the same wild gestures of heads and limbs continued.

"Don't fire, men! don't fire!" I cried, "but follow me," as I set forward as hard as I could.

As we neared it, the frantic gesticulations grew more and more remarkable, while some stray words which we half-caught, sounded like English in our ears. We were now within pistol-shot distance, when suddenly the horse—for that much at least we were assured of—stumbled and fell forward, precipitating the remainder of the object headlong into the road.

In a second we were upon the spot, when the first sounds which greeted me were the following, uttered in an accent by no means new to me:

"Oh, blessed Virgin! Wasn't it yourself that threw me in the mud, or my nose was done for? Shaugh, Shaugh, my boy! since we are taken, tip them the blarney, and say we're generals of division!"

I need not say with what a burst of laughter I received this very original declaration.

"I ought to know that laugh," cried a voice I at once knew to be my friend O'Shaughnessy. "Are you Charles O'Malley, by any chance in life?"

"The same, Major, and delighted to meet you; though, faith, we were near giving you a rather warm reception. What in the devil's name did you represent just now?"

"Ask Maurice, there, bad luck to him! I wish the devil had him when he persuaded me into it."

"Introduce me to your friend," replied the other, rubbing his shins as he spoke. "Mr. O'Mealey,"—so he called me—"I think. Happy to meet you; my mother was a Ryan of Kildooley, married to a first cousin of your father's, before she took Mr. Quill, my respected progenitor. I'm Dr. Quill, of the 48th, more commonly called Maurice Quill. Tear and ages! how sore my back is! It was all the fault of the baste, Mr. O'Mealey. We set out in search of you this morning, to bring you back with us to Torrijos, but we fell in with a very pleasant funeral at Barcaventer, and joined them; they invited us, I may say, to spend the day; and a very jovial day it was. I was the chief mourner, and carried a very big candle through the village, in consideration of as fine a meat-pie, and as much lush as my grief permitted me to indulge in afterward. But, my dear sir, when it was all finished, we found ourselves nine miles from our quarters, and as neither of us were in a very befitting condition for pedestrian exercise, we stole one of the leaders out of the hearse—velvet, plumes, and all—and set off home.

"When we came upon your party, we were not over clear whether you were English, Portuguese, or French, and that was the reason I called out to you, 'God save all here!' in Irish. Your polite answer was a shot, which struck the old horse in the knee, and although we wheeled about in double quick, we never could get him out of his professional habits on the road. He had a strong notion he was engaged in another funeral—as he was very likely to be—and the devil a bit faster than a dead march could we get him to, with all our thrashing. Orderly time, for men in a hurry, with a whole platoon blazing away behind them! But long life to the cavalry, they never hit anything!"

While he continued to run on in this manner, we reached our watch-fire, when what was my surprise to discover, in my newly-made acquaintance, the worthy Doctor I had seen a day or two before, operating at the fountain at Talavera!

"Well, Mr. O'Mealey," said he, as he seated himself before the blaze, "What is the state of the larder? Anything savory—anything drink-inspiring to be had?"

"I fear, Doctor, my fare is of the very humblest; but still—"

"What are the fluids, Charley?" cried the Major; "the cruel performance I have been enacting on that cursed beast has left me in a fever."

"This was a pigeon-pie, formerly," said Dr. Quill, investigating the ruined walls of a pasty: "and—but come, here's a duck; and if my nose deceive me not, a very tolerable ham. Peter—Larry—Patsy—What's the name of your familiar there?"

"Mickey—Mickey Free."

"Mickey Free, then; come here, avick! Devise a little drink, my son—none of the weakest—no lemon—hot! You understand, hot! That chap has an eye for punch; there's no mistaking an Irish fellow, nature has endowed them richly—fine features, and a beautiful absorbent system! That's the gift! Just look at him, blowing up the fire—isn't he a picture? Well, O'Mealey, I was fretting that we hadn't you up at Torrijos, we were enjoying life very respectably; we established a little system of small tithes upon fowl—sheep—pigs' heads and wine skins, that throve remarkably for the time. Here's the lush! Put it down there, Mickey, in the middle; that's right. Your health, Shaugh. O'Mealey, here's a troop to you; and in the mean time I'll give you a chant:

"'Come, ye jovial souls, don't over the bowl be sleeping,
Nor let the grog go round like a cripple creeping;
If your care comes up—in the liquor sink it,
Pass along the lush—I'm the boy can drink it.
Isn't that so, Mrs. Mary Callaghan?
Isn't that so, Mrs. Mary Callaghan?'

"Shaugh, my hearty, this begins to feel comfortable."

"Your man, O'Mealey, has a most judicious notion of punch for a small party; and though one has prejudices about a table, chairs, and that sort of thing, take my word for it, it's better than fighting the French any day."

"Well, Charley, it certainly did look quite awkward enough the other day toward three o'clock, when the Legion fell back before that French column, and broke the Guards behind them."

"Yes, you're quite right; but I think every one felt that the confusion was but momentary; the gallant Forty-eighth was up in an instant."

"Faith! I can answer for their alacrity," said the Doctor; "I was making my way to the rear with all convenient dispatch, when an aide-de-camp called out,

"'Cavalry coming! take care, Forty-eighth.'

"'Left face, wheel! Fall in there, fall in there!' I heard on every side, and soon found myself standing in a square, with Sir Arthur himself, and Hill, and the rest of them all around me.

"'Steady, men! Steady, now!' said Hill, as he rode around the ranks, while we saw an awful column of cuirassiers *forming* on the rising ground to our left.

"'Here they come!' said Sir Arthur, as the French came powdering along, making the very earth tremble beneath them.

"My first thought was, 'The devils are mad! and they'll ride down into us, before they know they're kilt!' And sure enough, smash into our first rank they pitched, sabring and cutting all before them; when at last the word 'Fire!' was given, and the whole head of the column broke like a shell, and rolled horse over man on the earth.

"'Very well done! very well, indeed!' said Sir Arthur, turning as coolly round to me as if he was asking for more gravy.

"'Mighty well done!' said I in reply; and resolving not to be outdone in coolness, I pulled out my snuff-box and offered him a pinch, saying, 'The real thing, Sir Arthur; our own countryman—blackguard.'

"He gave a little grim kind of a smile, took a pinch, and then called out,

"'Let Sherbroke advance!' while turning again toward me, he said, 'Where are your people, Colonel?'

"'Colonel!' thought I; 'is it possible he's going to promote me?' But before I could answer, he was talking to another. Meanwhile, Hill came up, and, looking at me steadily, burst out with—

"'Why the devil are you here, sir? Why ain't you at the rear?'

"'Upon my conscience,' said I, 'that's the very thing I'm puzzling myself about this minute! but if you think it's pride in me, you're greatly mistaken, for I'd rather the greatest scoundrel in Dublin was kicking me down Sackville street, than be here now!'

"You'd think it was fun I was making, if you heard how they all laughed, Hill and Cameron and the others louder than any.

"'Who is he?' said Sir Arthur, quickly.

"'Dr. Quill, surgeon of the Thirty-third, where I exchanged, to be near my brother, sir, in the Thirty-fourth.'

"'A doctor,—a surgeon! That fellow a surgeon! Damn him, I took him for Colonel Grosvenor! I say, Gordon, these medical officers must be docked of their fine feathers, there's no knowing them from the staff; look to that in the next general order.'

"And sure enough they left us bare and naked the next morning; and if the French sharpshooters pick us down now, devil mend them for wasting powder, for if they look in the orderly books, they'll find their mistake."

"Ah, Maurice, Maurice!" said Shaugh,

with a sigh, "you'll never improve—you'll never improve!"

"Why the devil would I?" said he; "ain't I at the top of my profession—full surgeon—with nothing to expect—nothing to hope for? Oh, if I only remained in the light company, what wouldn't I be now?"

"Then you were not always a doctor?" said I.

"Upon my conscience I wasn't," said he. "When Shaugh knew me first, I was the Adonis of the Roscommon militia, with more heiresses in my list than any man in the regiment; but Shaugh and myself were always unlucky."

"Poor Mrs. Rogers!" said the Major, pathetically, drinking off his glass and heaving a profound sigh.

"Ah, the darling!" said the Doctor; "if it wasn't for a jug of punch that lay on the hall table, our fortune in life would be very different."

"True for you, Maurice!" quoth O'Shaughnessy.

"I should like much to hear that story," said I, pushing the jug briskly round.

"He'll tell it you," said O'Shaughnessy, lighting his cigar, and leaning pensively back against a tree,—"he'll tell it you."

"I will with pleasure," said Maurice. "Let Mr. Free meantime amuse himself with the punch-bowl, and I'll relate it."

CHAPTER LXVIII.

THE DOCTOR'S TALE.*

It is now some fifteen years since—if it wasn't for O'Shaughnessy's wrinkles, I could not believe it five—we were quartered in Loughrea. There were, besides our regiment, the Fiftieth and the Seventy-third, and a troop or two of horse artillery, and the whole town was literally a barrack, and, as you may suppose, the pleasantest place imaginable. All the young ladies, and indeed all those that had got their brevet some years before, came flocking into the town, not knowing but the devil might persuade a raw ensign or so to marry some of them.

"Such dinner parties—such routs and balls—never were heard of west of Athlone. The gayeties were incessant; and if good feeding, plenty of claret, short whist, country-dances, and kissing, could have done the thing, there wouldn't have been a bachelor with a red coat for six miles around.

"You know the west, O'Mealey; so I needn't tell you what the Galway girls are like; fine, hearty, free-and-easy, talking, laughing devils; but as deep and as 'cute as a Master in Chancery—ready for any fun or merriment; but always keeping a sly look-out for a proposal or a tender acknowledgment, which—what between the heat of a ball-room, whisky negus, white satin shoes, and a quarrel with your guardian—it's ten to one you fall into before you're a week in the same town with them.

"As for the men, I don't admire them so much; pleasant and cheerful enough, when they're handicapping the coat off your back, and your new tilbury for a spavined pony and a cotton umbrella; but regular devils if you come to cross them the least in life; nothing but ten paces—three shots a piece—to begin and end with something like Roger de Coverley, when every one has a pull at his neighbor. I'm not saying they're not agreeable, well-informed, and mild in their habits; but they lean overmuch to corduroys and coroners' inquests for one's taste farther south. However, they're a fine people, take them all in all; and, if they were not interfered with, and their national customs invaded with road-making, petty-sessions, grand-jury laws, and a stray commission now and then, they are capable of great things, and would astonish the world.

"But, as I was saying, we were ordered to Loughrea, after being fifteen months in detachments about Birr, Tullamore, Kilbeggan, and all that country; the change was indeed a delightful one; and we soon found ourselves the center of the most marked and determined civilities. I told you they were wise people in the west; this was their calculation: the line—ours was the Roscommon militia—are here to-day, there to-morrow; they may be flirting in Tralee this week, and fighting on the Tagus the next; not that there was any fighting there in those times, but then there was always Nova Scotia and St. John's, and a hundred other places that a

* I cannot permit the reader to fall into the same blunder with regard to the worthy "Maurice," as my friend Charles O'Malley has done. It is only fair to state that the Doctor in the following tale was hoaxing the "Dragoon." A braver and a better fellow than Quill never existed, equally beloved by his brother officers, as delighted in for his convivial talents. His favorite amusement was to invent some story or adventure, in which, mixing up his own name with that of some friend or companion, the veracity of the whole was never questioned. Of this nature was the pedigree he devised in the previous chapter to impose upon O'Malley, who believed implicitly all he told him.

Galway young lady knew nothing about, except that people never came back from them. Now, what good, what use was there in falling in love with them? mere transitory and passing pleasure that was. But as for us: there we were; if not in Kilkenny we were in Cork. Safe cut and come again; no getting away under pretense of foreign service; no excuse for not marrying by any cruel pictures of the colonies, where they make spatchcocks of the officers' wives, and scrape their infant families to death with a small-tooth comb. In a word, my dear O'Mealey, we were at a high premium; and even O'Shaughnessy, with his red head and the legs you see, had his admirers—there now, don't be angry, Dan—the men, at least, were mighty partial to you.

"Loughrea, if it was a pleasant, was a very expensive place. White gloves and car hire—there wasn't a chaise in the town—short whist too (God forgive me if I wrong them, but I wonder were they honest?), cost money; and as our popularity rose, our purses fell, till at length, when the one was at the flood, the other was something very like low water.

"Now, the Roscommon was a beautiful corps—no petty jealousies, no little squabbling among the officers, no small spleen between the Major's wife and the Paymaster's sister—all was amiable, kind, brotherly, and affectionate. To proceed: I need only mention one fine trait of them—no man ever refused to indorse a brother officers' bill. To think of asking the amount, or even the date, would be taken personally; and thus we went on mutually aiding and assisting each other—the Colonel drawing on me, I on the Major, the senior Captain on the Surgeon, and so on—a regular cross-fire of 'promises to pay,' all stamped and regular.

"Not but the system had its inconveniences; for sometimes an obstinate tailor or bootmaker would make a row for his money, and then we'd be obliged to get up a little quarrel between the drawer and the acceptor of the bill; they couldn't speak for some days; and a mutual friend to both would tell the creditor that the slightest imprudence on his part would lead to bloodshed; 'and the Lord help him! if there was a duel, he'd proved the whole cause of it.' This and twenty other plans were employed, and, finally, the matter would be left to arbitration among our brother officers; and, I need not say, they behaved like trumps. But, notwithstanding all this, we were frequently hard-pressed for cash; as the Colonel said, 'It's a mighty expensive corps.' Our dress was costly—not that it had much lace and gold on it, but that, what between falling on the road at night, shindies at mess, and other devilment, a coat lasted no time. Wine, too, was heavy on us; for, though we often changed our wine-merchant, and rarely paid him, there was an awful consumption at the mess!

"Now, what I have mentioned may prepare you for the fact, that, before we were eight weeks in garrison, Shaugh and myself, upon an accurate calculation of our conjoint finances, discovered that, except some vague promises of discounting here and there through the town, and seven and fourpence in specie, we were innocent of any pecuniary treasures. This was embarrassing; we had both embarked in several small schemes of pleasurable amusement; had a couple of hunters each, a tandem, and a running account—I think it *galloped*—at every shop in the town.

"Let me pause for a moment here, O'Mealey, while I moralize a little in a strain I hope may benefit you. Have you ever considered—of course you have not, you're too young and unreflecting—how beautifully every climate and every soil possesses some one antidote or another to its own noxious influences? The tropics have their succulent and juicy fruits, cooling and refreshing; the northern latitudes have their beasts with fur and warm skin to keep out the frost-bites; and so it is in Ireland—nowhere on the face of the habitable globe does a man contract such habits of small debt, and nowhere, I'll be sworn, can he so easily get out of any scrape concerning them. They have their tigers in the east, their antelopes in the south, their white bears in Norway, their buffaloes in America; but we have an animal in Ireland that beats them all hollow—a country attorney!

"Now, let me introduce you to Mr. Matthew Donevan. Mat, as he was familiarly called by his numerous acquaintances, was a short, florid, rosy little gentleman of some four or five-and-forty, with a well-curled wig of the fairest imaginable auburn, the gentle wave of the front locks, which played in infantine loveliness upon his little bullet forehead, contrasting strongly enough with a cunning leer of his eye, and a certain *nisi prius* laugh that, however it might please a client, rarely brought pleasurable feelings to his opponent in a cause.

"Mat was a character in his way; deep, double, and tricky in everything that concerned his profession, he affected the gay

fellow; liked a jolly dinner at Brown's Hotel—would go twenty miles to see a steeple-chase and a coursing match—bet with any one, when the odds were strong in his favor, with an easy indifference about money that made him seem, when winning, rather the victim of good luck than anything else. As he kept a rather pleasant bachelor's house, and liked the military much, we soon became acquainted. Upon him, therefore, for reasons I can't explain, both our hopes reposed; and Shaugh and myself at once agreed that, if Mat could not assist us in our distresses, the case was a bad one.

"A pretty little epistle was accordingly concocted, inviting the worthy attorney to a small dinner at five o'clock the next day, intimating that we were to be perfectly alone, and had a little business to discuss. True to the hour, Mat was there; and, as if instantly guessing that ours was no regular party of pleasure, his look, dress, and manner were all in keeping with the occasion—quiet, subdued, and searching.

"When the claret had been superseded by the whisky, and the confidential hours were approaching, by an adroit allusion to some heavy wager then pending, we brought our finances upon the *tapis*. The thing was done beautifully; an easy *adagio* movement—no violent transition; but hang me if old Mat didn't catch the matter at once.

"'Oh! it's there ye are, Captain,' said he, with his peculiar grin; 'two-and-sixpence in the pound, and no assets.'

"'The last is nearer the mark, my old boy,' said Shaugh, blurting out the whole truth at once. The wily attorney finished his tumbler slowly, as if giving himself time for reflection, and then, smacking his lips in a preparatory manner, took a quick survey of the room with his piercing green eye.

"'A very sweet mare of yours that little mouse-colored one is, with the dip in the back; and she has a trifling curb—maybe it's a spavin, indeed—in the near hind-leg. You gave five-and-twenty for her, now, I'll be bound?'

"'Sixty guineas, as sure as my name's Dan,' said Shaugh, not at all pleased at the value put upon his hackney; 'and, as to spavin and curb, I'll wager double the sum she has neither the slightest trace of one nor the other.'

"'I'll not take the bet,' said Mat, dryly; 'money's scarce in these parts.'

"This hit silenced us both; and our friend continued:

"'Then there's the bay horse—a great strapping, leggy beast he is for a tilbury; and the hunters—worth nothing here, they don't know this country; them's neat pistols; and the tilbury is not bad—'

"'Confound you!' said I, losing all patience, 'we didn't ask you here to appraise our movables; we want to raise the wind without that.'

"'I see—I perceive,' said Mat, taking a pinch of snuff very leisurely as he spoke; 'I see. Well, that is difficult—very difficult, just now. I've mortgaged every acre of ground in the two counties near us, and a sixpence more is not to be had that way. Are you lucky at the races?'

"'Never win a sixpence.'

"'What can you do at whist?'

"'Revoke, and get cursed by my partner; devil a more!'

"'That's mighty bad, for, otherwise, we might arrange something for you. Well, I only see one thing for it—you must marry; a wife with some money will get you out of your present difficulties, and we'll manage that easily enough.'

"'Come, Dan,' said I—for Shaugh was dropping asleep—'cheer up, old fellow. Donevan has found the way to pull us through our misfortunes; a girl with forty thousand pounds, the best cock shooting in Ireland; an old family, a capital cellar, all await ye—rouse up, there!'

"'I'm convanient,' said Shaugh, with a look intended to be knowing, but really very tipsy.

"'I didn't say much for her personal attractions, Captain,' said Mat; 'nor, indeed, did I specify the exact sum; but Mrs. Rogers Dooley, of Clonakilty, might be a princess—'

"'And so she shall be, Mat; the O'Shaughnessys were Kings of Ennis in the time of Nero; and I'm only waiting for a trifle of money to revive the title. What's her name?'

"'Mrs. Rogers Dooley.'

"'Here's her health, and long life to her—

> "'And may the devil cut the toes
> Of all her foes,
> That we may know them by their limping.'

"This benevolent wish uttered, Dan fell flat upon the hearth-rug, and was soon sound asleep. I must hasten on; so need only say that, before we parted that night, Mat and myself had finished the half-gallon bottle of Loughrea whisky, and concluded a treaty for the hand and fortune of Mrs. Rogers Dooley; he being guaranteed a very handsome percentage on the property, and the lady being reserved—for

choice between Dan and myself, which, however, I was determined should fall upon my more fortunate friend.

"The first object which presented itself to my aching senses the following morning, was a very spacious card of invitation from Mr. Jonas Malone, requesting me to favor him with the seductions of my society the next evening to a ball; at the bottom of which, in Mr. Donevan's hand, I read:

"'Don't fail; you know who is to be there. I've not been idle since I saw you. Would the Captain take twenty-five for the mare?'

"'So far so good,' thought I, as, entering O'Shaughnessy's quarters, I discovered him endeavoring to spell out his card, which, however, had no postscript. We soon agreed that Mat should have his price; so, sending a polite answer to the invitation, we dispatched a still more civil note to the attorney, and begged of him, as a weak mark of esteem, to accept the mouse-colored mare as a present."

Here O'Shaughnessy sighed deeply, and even seemed affected by the souvenir.

"Come, Dan, we did it all for the best. Oh! O'Mealey, he was a cunning fellow; but no matter. We went to the ball, and, to be sure, it was a great sight. Two hundred and fifty souls, where there was not good room for the odd fifty: such laughing, such squeezing, such pressing of hands and waists in the staircase! and then such a row and riot at the top,—four fiddles, a key bugle, and a bagpipe, playing 'Haste to the wedding,' amid the crash of refreshment-trays, the tramp of feet, and the sounds of merriment on all sides!

"It's only in Ireland, after all, people have fun; old and young, merry and morose, the gay and cross-grained, are crammed into a lively country-dance; and, ill-matched, ill-suited, go jigging away together to the blast of a bad band, till their heads, half turned by the noise, the heat, the novelty, and the hubbub, they all get as tipsy as if they were really deep in liquor.

"Then there is that particularly free-and-easy tone in every one about: here go a couple capering daintily out of the ball-room to take a little fresh air on the stairs, where every step has its own separate flirtation party; there, a riotous old gentleman, with a boarding-school girl for his partner, has plunged smack into a party at loo, upsetting cards and counters, and drawing down curses innumerable. Here are a merry knot round the refreshments, and well they may be; for the negus is strong punch, and the biscuit is tipsy cake, —and all this with a running fire of good stories, jokes, and witticisms on all sides, in the laughter for which even the droll-looking servants join as heartily as the rest.

"We were not long in finding out Mrs. Rogers, who sat in the middle of a very high sofa, with her feet just touching the floor. She was short, fat, wore her hair in a crop, had a species of shining yellow skin, and a turned-up nose, all of which were by no means prepossessing. Shaugh and myself were too hard-up to be particular, and so we invited her to dance alternately for two consecutive hours, plying her assiduously with negus during the lulls in the music.

"Supper was at last announced, and enabled us to recruit for new efforts; and so, after an awful consumption of fowl, pigeon-pie, ham, and brandy cherries, Mrs. Rogers brightened up considerably, and professed her willingness to join the dancers. As for us, partly from exhaustion, partly to stimulate our energies, and in some degree to drown reflection, we drank deep, and when we reached the drawing-room, not only the agreeable guests themselves, but even the furniture, the venerable chairs and the stiff old sofa, seemed performing 'Sir Roger de Coverley.' How we conducted ourselves till five in the morning, let our cramps confess, for we were both bed-ridden for ten days after. However, at last, Mrs. Rogers gave in; and, reclining gracefully upon a window-seat, pronounced it a most elegant party, and asked me to look for her shawl. While I perambulated the staircase with her bonnet on my head, and more wearing apparel than would stock a magazine, Shaugh was roaring himself hoarse in the street, calling Mrs. Rogers's coach.

"'Sure, Captain,' said the lady, with a tender leer, 'it's only a chair.'

"'And here it is,' said I, surveying a very portly-looking old sedan, newly painted and varnished, that blocked up half the hall.

"'You'll catch cold, my angel,' said Shaugh, in a whisper, for he was coming it very strong by this; 'get into the chair. Maurice, can't you find those fellows?' said he to me; for the chairmen had gone down-stairs, and were making very merry among the servants.

"'She's fast now,' said I, shutting the door to. 'Let us do the gallant thing, and carry her home ourselves.' Shaugh thought this a great notion; and, in a minute, we mounted the poles and sallied forth, amid a great chorus of laughing

from all the footmen, maids, and teaboys that filled the passage.

"'The big house, with the bow-window and the pillars, Captain,' said a fellow, as we issued upon our journey.

"'I know it,' said I. 'Turn to the left after you pass the square.'

"'Isn't she heavy?' said Shaugh, as he meandered across the narrow streets with a sidelong motion, that must have suggested to our fair inside passenger some notions of a sea voyage. In truth, I must confess our progress was rather a devious one; now zig-zagging from side to side, now getting into a sharp trot, and then suddenly pulling up at a dead stop, or running the machine chuck against a wall, to enable us to stand still and gain breath.

"'Which way now?' cried he, as we swung round the angle of a street, and entered the large market-place; 'I'm getting terribly tired.'

"'Never give in, Dan; think of Clonakilty, and the old lady herself;' and here I gave the chair a hoist that evidently astonished our fair friend, for a very imploring cry issued forth immediately after.

"'To the right, quick step, forward—charge!' cried I; and we set off at a brisk trot down a steep narrow lane.

"'Here it is now: the light in the window; cheer up!'

"As I said this, we came short up to a fine portly-looking doorway, with great stone pillars and cornice.

"'Make yourself at home, Maurice,' said he; 'bring her in;' and so saying we pushed forward—for the door was open—and passed boldly into a great flagged hall, silent and cold, and dark as the night itself.

"'Are you sure we're right?' said he.

"'All right,' said I; 'go ahead.'

"And so we did, till we came in sight of a small candle that burned dimly at a distance from us.

"'Make for the light,' said I; but just as I said so, Shaugh slipped and fell flat on the flagway. The noise of his fall sent up a hundred echoes in the silent building, and terrified us both dreadfully; and, after a minute's pause, by one consent, we turned and made for the door, falling almost at every step; and frightened out of our senses, we came tumbling together into the porch, and out in the street, and never drew breath till we reached the barracks. Meanwhile, let me return to Mrs. Rogers. The dear old lady, who had passed an awful time since she left the ball, had just rallied out of a fainting fit when we took to our heels; so, after screaming and crying her best, she at last managed to open the top of the chair, and by dint of great exertions succeeded in forcing the door, and at length freed herself from bondage. She was leisurely groping her way round it in the dark, when her lamentations being heard without, woke up the old sexton of the chapel—for it was there we placed her—who, entering cautiously with a light, no sooner caught a glimpse of the great black sedan and the figure beside it, than he also took to his heels, and ran like a madman to the priest's house.

"'Come, your reverance, come, for the love of marcy! sure didn't I see him myself! O wirra, wirra!'

"'What is it, ye ould fool?' said M'Kenny.

"'It's Father Con Doran, your reverance, that was buried last week, and there he is up now, coffin and all! saying a midnight mass as lively as ever.'

"Poor Mrs. Rogers, God help her! It was a trying sight for her, when the priest and the two coadjutors, and three little boys and the sexton, all came in to lay her spirit; and the shock she received that night, they say, she never got over.

"Need I say, my dear O'Mealey, that our acquaintance with Mrs. Rogers was closed? The dear woman had a hard struggle for it afterward. Her character was assailed by all the elderly ladies in Loughrea for going off in our company, and her blue satin, piped with scarlet, utterly ruined by a deluge of holy water bestowed on her by the pious sexton. It was in vain that she originated twenty different reports to mystify the world; and even ten pounds spent in masses for the eternal repose of Father Con Doran only increased the laughter this unfortunate affair gave rise to. As for us, we exchanged into the Line, and foreign service took us out of the road of duns, debts, and devilment, and we soon reformed, and eschewed such low company."

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The day was breaking ere we separated, and amid the rich and fragrant vapors that exhaled from the earth, the faint traces of sunlight dimly stealing, told of the morning. My two friends set out for Torrijos, and I pushed boldly forward in the direction of the Alberche.

It was a strange thing, that although but two days before the roads we were then traveling had been the line of retreat of the whole French army, not a vestige of their equipment nor a trace of their *matériel* had been left behind. In vain we searched each thicket by the wayside for some strag-

gling soldier, some wounded or wearied man—nothing of the kind was to be seen. Except the deeply-rutted road, torn by the heavy wheels of the artillery, and the white ashes of a wood fire, nothing marked their progress.

Our journey was a lonely one. Not a man was to be met with. The houses stood untenanted, the doors lay open, no smoke wreathed from their deserted hearths, the peasantry had taken to the mountains, and although the plains were yellow with the ripe harvest, and the peaches hung temptingly upon the trees, all was deserted and forsaken. I had often seen the blackened walls and broken rafters, the traces of the wild revenge and reckless pillage of a retiring army—the ruined castle, and the desecrated altar, are sad things to look upon; but, somehow, a far heavier depression sunk into my heart as my eye ranged over the wide valleys and broad hills, all redolent of comfort, of beauty, and of happiness, and yet not one man to say, "This is my home; these are my household gods!" The birds caroled gayly in each leafy thicket, the bright stream sung merrily as it rippled through the rocks, the tall corn, gently stirred by the breeze, seemed to swell the concert of sweet sounds; but no human voice awoke the echoes there. It was as if the earth was speaking in thankfulness to its Maker; while man, ungrateful and unworthy man, pursuing his ruthless path of devastation and destruction, had left no being to say, "I thank Thee for all these."

The day was closing as we drew near the Alberche, and came in sight of the watch-fires of the enemy. Far as the eye could reach their column extended; but in the dim twilight nothing could be seen with accuracy. Yet, from the position their artillery occupied, and the unceasing din of baggage wagons and heavy carriages toward the rear, I came to the conclusion that a still further retreat was meditated. A picket of light cavalry was posted upon the river's bank, and seemed to watch with vigilance the approaches to the stream.

Our bivouac was a dense copse of pine trees, exactly opposite to the French advanced posts, and there we passed the night—fortunately, a calm and starlight one—for we dared not light fires, fearful of attracting attention.

During the long hours, I lay patiently watching the movements of the enemy till the dark shadows hid all from my sight; and even then, as my ears caught the challenge of a sentry, or the footsteps of some officer in his round, my thoughts were riveted upon them, and a hundred vague fancies as to the future were based upon no stronger foundation than the clink of a firelock or the low-muttered song of a patrol.

Toward morning I slept, and when day broke my first glance was toward the river side; but the French were gone—noiselessly—rapidly. Like one man, that vast army had departed; and a dense column of dust toward the horizon alone marked the long line of march where the martial legions were retreating.

My mission was thus ended; and, hastily partaking of the humble breakfast my friend Mike provided for me, I once more set out, and took the road toward headquarters.

CHAPTER LXIX.

THE SKIRMISH.

For several months after the battle of Talavera my life presented nothing which I feel worth recording. Our good fortune seemed to have deserted us when our hopes were highest; for from the day of that splendid victory we began our retrograde movement upon Portugal. Pressed hard by overwhelming masses of the enemy, we saw the fortresses of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida fall successively into their hands. The Spaniards were defeated wherever they ventured upon a battle; and our own troops, thinned by sickness and desertion, presented but a shadow of that brilliant army which only a few months previous had followed the retiring French beyond the frontiers of Portugal.

However willing I now am—and who is not?—to recognize the genius and foresight of that great man who then held the destinies of the Peninsula within his hands, I confess, at the time I speak of, I could ill comprehend and still less feel contented with the successive retreats our forces made; and while the words Torres Vedras brought nothing to my mind but the last resting place before embarkation, the sad fortunes of Corunna were now before me, and it was with a gloomy and desponding spirit I followed the routine of my daily duty.

During these weary months, if my life was devoid of stirring interest or adventure, it was not profitless. Constantly employed at the outposts, I became thoroughly inured to all the roughing of a soldier's life, and learned in the best of schools that tacit obedience which alone can form the

subordinate, or ultimately fit its possessor for command himself.

Humble and unobtrusive as such a career must ever be, it was not without its occasional rewards. From General Craufurd I more than once obtained most kind mention in his dispatches, and felt that I was not unknown or unnoticed by Sir Arthur Wellesley himself. At that time, these testimonies, slight and passing as they were, contributed to the pride and glory of my existence; and even now—shall I confess it?—when some gray hairs are mingling with the brown, and when my old dragoon swagger is taming down into a kind of half-pay shamble, I feel my heart warm at the recollection of them.

Be it so: I care not who smiles at the avowal. I know of little better worth remembering as we grow old than what pleased us while we were young. With the memory of the kind words once spoken, come back the still kinder looks of those who spoke them; and, better than all, that early feeling of budding manhood, when there was neither fear nor distrust. Alas! these are the things, and not weak eyes and tottering limbs, which form the burden of old age. Oh! if we could only go on believing, go on trusting, go on hoping to the last, who would shed tears for the bygone feats of his youthful days, when the spirit that evoked them lived young and vivid as before?

But to my story. While Ciudad Rodrigo still held out against the besieging French, its battered walls and breached ramparts sadly foretelling the fate inevitably impending, we were ordered, together with the 16th Light Dragoons, to proceed to Gallegos, to reinforce Craufurd's division, then forming a corps of observation upon Massena's movements.

The position he occupied was a most commanding one—the crown of a long mountain ridge, studded with pine copse and cork-trees, presenting every facility for light infantry movements; and here and there, gently sloping toward the plain, offering a field for cavalry maneuvers. Beneath, in the vast plain, were encamped the dark legions of France, their heavy siege-artillery planted against the doomed fortress, while clouds of their cavalry caracoled proudly before us, as if in taunting sarcasm at our inactivity.

Every artifice which his natural cunning could suggest, every taunt a Frenchman's vocabulary contains, had been used by Massena to induce Sir Arthur Wellesley to come to the assistance of the beleaguered fortress; but in vain. In vain he relaxed the energy of the siege, and affected carelessness. In vain he asserted that the English were either afraid, or else traitors to their allies. The mind of him he thus assailed was neither accessible to menace nor to sarcasm. Patiently abiding his time, he watched the progress of events, and provided for that future, which was to crown his country's arms with success, and himself with undying glory.

Of a far different mettle was the general formed under whose orders we were now placed. Hot, passionate, and impetuous, relying upon bold and headlong heroism, rather than upon cool judgment and well-matured plans, Craufurd felt in war all the asperity and bitterness of a personal conflict. Ill brooking the insulting tone of the wily Frenchman, he thirsted for any occasion of a battle; and his proud spirit chafed against the colder counsels of his superior.

On the very morning we joined, the pickets brought in the intelligence that the French patrols were nightly in the habit of visiting the villages at the outposts, and committing every species of cruel indignity upon the wretched inhabitants. Fired at this daring insult, our General resolved to cut them off, and formed two ambuscades for the purpose.

Six squadrons of the 14th were dispatched to Villa del Puerco, three of the 16th to Baguetto, while some companies of the 95th, and the caçadores, supported by artillery, were ordered to hold themselves in reserve, for the enemy were in force at no great distance from us.

The morning was just breaking as an aide-de-camp galloped up with the intelligence that the French had been seen near the Villa del Puerco, a body of infantry and some cavalry having crossed the plain, and disappeared in that direction. While our Colonel was forming us, with the intention of getting between them and their main body, the tramp of horses was heard in the wood behind, and in a few moments two officers rode up. The foremost, who was a short, stoutly-built man of about forty, with a bronzed face and eye of piercing black, shouted out as we wheeled into column:

"Halt, there! Why, where the devil are you going? That's your ground!" So saying, and pointing straight toward the village with his hand, he would not listen to our Colonel's explanation that several stone fences and inclosures would interfere with cavalry movements, but added, "Forward, I say! Proceed!"

Unfortunately, the nature of the ground

separated our squadron, as the Colonel anticipated; and although we came on at a topping pace, the French had time to form in square upon a hill to await us, and when we charged, they stood firmly, and firing with a low and steady aim, several of our troopers fell. As we wheeled round, we found ourselves exactly in front of their cavalry coming out of Baguilles; so, dashing straight at them, we revenged ourselves for our first repulse by capturing twenty-nine prisoners, and wounding several others.

The French infantry were, however, still unbroken; and Colonel Talbot rode boldly up with five squadrons of the 14th; but the charge, pressed home with all its gallantry, failed also, and the Colonel fell mortally wounded, and fourteen of his troopers around him. Twice we rode round the square seeking for a weak point, but in vain; the gallant Frenchman who commanded, Captain Guache, stood fearlessly amid his brave followers, and we could hear him, as he called out from time to time,

"*C'est ça, mes enfans! très bien fait, mes braves!*"

And at length they made good their retreat, while we returned to the camp, leaving thirty-two troopers and our brave Colonel dead upon the field in this disastrous affair.

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The repulse we had met with, so contrary to all our hopes and expectations, made that a most gloomy day to all of us. The brave fellows we had left behind us, the taunting cheer of the French infantry, the unbroken ranks against which we rode time after time in vain, never left our minds; and a sense of shame of what might be thought of us at head-quarters, rendered the reflection still more painful.

Our bivouac, notwithstanding all our efforts, was a sad one, and, when the moon rose, some drops of heavy rain falling at intervals in the still, unruffled air, threatened a night of storm; gradually the sky grew darker and darker, the clouds hung nearer to the earth, and a dense, thick mass of dark mist shrouded every object; the heavy cannonade of the siege was stilled, nothing betrayed that a vast army was encamped near us, their bivouac fires were even imperceptible, and the only sound we heard was the great bell of Ciudad Rodrigo as it struck the hour, and seemed, in the mournful cadence of its chime, like the knell of the doomed citadel.

The patrol which I commanded had to visit on its rounds the most advanced post of our position. This was a small farmhouse, which, standing upon a little rising ledge of ground, was separated from the French lines by a little stream tributary to the Aguda. A party of the Fourteenth were picketed here, and beneath them, in the valley, scarce five hundred yards distant, was the detachment of cuirassiers which formed the French outpost. As we neared our picket, the deep voice of the sentry challenged us, and, while all else was silent as the grave, we could hear from the opposite side the merry chorus of a French *chanson à boire*, with its clattering accompaniment of glasses, as some gay companions were making merry together.

Within the little hut which contained *our* fellows, the scene was a different one; the three officers who commanded sat moodily over a wretched fire of wet wood; a solitary candle dimly lighted the dismantled room, where a table but ill-supplied with cheer stood unminded and uncared for.

"Well, O'Malley," cried Baker, as I came in, "what is the night about? and what's Craufurd for next?"

"We hear," cried another, "that he means to give battle to-morrow; but surely Sir Arthur's orders are positive enough. Gordon himself told me that he was forbid to fight beyond the Coa, but to retreat at the first advance of the enemy."

"I'm afraid," replied I, "that retreating is his last thought just now. Ammunition has just been served out, and I know the horse artillery have orders to be in readiness by daybreak."

"All right," said Hampden, with a half-bitter tone. "Nothing like going through with it. If he is to be brought to court-martial for disobedience, he'll take good care we shan't be there to see it."

"Why, the French are fifty thousand strong!" said Baker. "Look there! What does that mean now? That's a signal from the town."

As he spoke, a rocket of great brilliancy shot up into the sky, and bursting, at length fell in millions of red lustrous sparks on every side, showing forth the tall fortress, and the encamped army around it, with all the clearness of noonday. It was a most splendid sight; and though the next moment all was dark as before, we gazed still fixedly into the gloomy distance, straining our eyes to observe what was hid from our view forever.

"That must be a signal," repeated Baker.

"Begad! if Craufurd sees it he'll interpret it as a reason for fighting. I trust he's asleep by this time," said Hampden. "By-the-by, O'Malley, did you see the fellows at work in the trenches? How beautifully clear it was toward the southward!"

"Yes, I remarked that! and what surprised me was the openness of their position in that direction. Toward the San Benito mole I could not see a man."

"Ah! they'll not attack on that side; but if we really are—"

"Stay, Hampden!" said I, interrupting him; "a thought has just struck me. At sunset I saw, through my telescope, the French engineers marking with their white tape the line of a new intrenchment in that quarter. Would it not be a glorious thing to move the tape, and bring the fellows under the fire of San Benito?"

"By Jove! O'Malley, that is a thought worth a troop to you."

"Far more likely to forward his promotion in the next world than in this," said Baker, smiling.

"By no means," added I; "I marked the ground this evening, and have it perfectly in my mind. If we were to follow the bend of the river, I'll be bound to come right upon the spot: by nearing the fortress we'll escape the sentries; and all this portion is open to us."

The project thus loosely thrown out was now discussed in all its bearings. Whatever difficulties it presented were combated so much to our own satisfaction, that at last its very facility damped our ardor. Meanwhile, the night wore on, and the storm of rain so long impending began to descend in very torrents: hissing along the parched ground, it rose in a mist, while overhead the heavy thunder rolled in long unbroken peals, the crazy door threatened to give way at each moment, and the whole building trembled to its foundation.

"Pass the brandy down here, Hampden, and thank your stars you're where you are. Eh, O'Malley? You'll defer your trip to San Benito for finer weather."

"Well, to come to the point," said Hampden, "I'd rather begin my engineering at a more favorable season; but if O'Malley's for it—"

"And O'Malley *is* for it," said I, suddenly.

"Then, faith, I'm not the man to balk his fancy; and as Craufurd is so bent upon fighting to-morrow, it don't make much difference. Is it a bargain?"

"It is; here's my hand on it."

"Come, come, boys, I'll have none of this; we've been prettily cut up this morning already. You shall not go upon this foolish excursion."

"Confound it, old fellow! it's all very well for you to talk, with the majority before you, next step; but here we are, if peace came to-morrow, scarcely better than we left England. No, no; if O'Malley's ready—and I see he is so before me—What have you got there? Oh! I see; that's our tape-line; capital fun, by George! The worst of it is, they'll make us colonels of engineers.—Now then, what's your plan—on foot or mounted?"

"Mounted, and for this reason, the country is all open; if we are to have a run for it, our thorough-breds ought to distance them; and, as we must expect to pass some of their sentries, our only chance is on horseback."

"My mind is relieved of a great load," said Hampden; "I was trembling in my skin lest you should make it a walking party. I'll do anything you like in the saddle, from robbing the mail to cutting out a frigate; but I never was much of a footpad."

"Well, Mike," said I, as I returned to the room with my trusty follower, "are the cattle to be depended on?"

"If we had a snaffle in Malachi Daly's mouth" (my brown horse), "I'd be afeared of nothing, sir; but, if it comes to fencing, with that cruel bit—but sure, you've a light hand, and let him have his head, if it's wall."

"By Jove, he thinks it a fox-chase!" said Hampden.

"Isn't it the same, sir?" said Mike, with a seriousness that made the whole party smile.

"Well, I hope we shall not be earthed, anyway," said I. "Now, the next thing is, who has a lantern?—ah! the very thing; nothing better. Look to your pistols, Hampden; and, Mike, here's a glass of grog for you; we'll want you. And now, one bumper for good luck. Eh, Baker, won't you pledge us?"

"And spare a little for me," said Hampden. "How it does rain! If one didn't expect to be waterproofed before morning, one really wouldn't go out in such weather."

While I busied myself in arranging my few preparations, Hampden proceeded gravely to inform Mike that we were going to the assistance of the besieged fortress, which could not possibly go on without us.

"Tare and ages!" said Mike, "that's mighty quare; and the blue rocket was a letter of invitation, I suppose?"

"Exactly," said Hampden; "and you see there's no ceremony between us. We'll just drop in, in the evening, in a friendly way."

"Well, then, upon my conscience, I'd wait, if I was you, till the family wasn't in confusion. They have enough on their hands just now."

"So you'll not be persuaded?" said Baker. "Well, I frankly tell you, that come what will of it, as your senior officer, I'll report you to-morrow. I'll not risk myself for any such hare-brained expeditions."

"A mighty pleasant lookout for me," said Mike; "if I'm not shot to-night, I may be flogged in the morning."

This speech once more threw us into a hearty fit of laughter, amid which we took leave of our friends, and set forth upon our way.

CHAPTER LXX.

THE LINES OF CIUDAD RODRIGO.

THE small twinkling lights which shone from the ramparts of Ciudad Rodrigo were our only guide, as we issued forth upon our perilous expedition. The storm raged, if possible, even more violently than before, and gusts of wind swept along the ground with the force of a hurricane; so that at first, our horses could scarcely face the tempest. Our path lay along the little stream for a considerable way; after which, fording the rivulet, we entered upon the open plain, taking care to avoid the French outpost on the extreme left, which was marked by a bivouac fire, burning under the heavy down-pour of rain, and looking larger through the dim atmosphere around it.

I rode foremost, followed closely by Hampden and Mike; not a word was spoken after we crossed the stream. Our plan was, if challenged by a patrol, to reply in French and press on; so small a party could never suggest the idea of attack, and we hoped in this manner to escape.

The violence of the storm was such, that many of our precautions as to silence were quite unnecessary; and we had advanced to a considerable extent into the plain before any appearance of the encampment struck us. At length, on mounting a little rising ground, we perceived several fires stretching far away to the northward; while, still to our left, there blazed one larger and brighter than the others. We now found that we had not outflanked their position as we intended, and learning, from the situation of the fires, that we were still only at the outposts, we pressed sharply forward, directing our course by the twin stars that shone from the fortress.

"How heavy the ground is here!" whispered Hampden, as our horses sunk above the fetlocks; "we had better stretch away to the right; the rise of the hill will favor us."

"Hark!" said I, "did you not hear something? Pull up; silence now; yes, there they come. It's a patrol, I hear their tramp." As I spoke, the measured tread of infantry was heard above the storm, and soon after a lantern was seen coming along the causeway near us. The column passed within a few yards of where we stood. I could even recognize the black covering of the shakos as the light fell on them. "Let us follow them," whispered I; and the next moment we fell in upon their track, holding our cattle well in hand, and ready to start at a moment.

"*Qui va là?*" a sentry demanded.

"*La deuxième division,*" cried a hoarse voice.

"*Halte là! la consigne?*"

"*Wagram!*" repeated the same voice as before, while his party resumed their march; and the next moment the patrol was again upon his post, silent and motionless as before.

"*En avant, Messieurs!*" said I aloud, as soon as the infantry had proceeded some distance; "*en avant!*"

"*Qui va là?*" demanded the sentry, as we came along at a sharp trot.

"*L'état-major, Wagram!*" responded I, pressing on without drawing rein; and in a moment we had regained our former position behind the infantry. We had scarcely time to congratulate ourselves upon the success of our scheme, when a tremendous clattering noise in front, mingled with the galloping of horses and the cracking of whips, announced the approach of the artillery as they came along by a narrow road which bisected our path; and, as they passed between us and the column, we could hear the muttered sentences of the drivers, cursing the unseasonable time for an attack, and swearing at their cattle in no measured tones.

"Did you hear that?" whispered Hampden; "the battery is about to be directed against the San Benito, which must be far away to the left. I heard one of the troop saying that they were to open their fire at daybreak."

"All right, now," said I; "look there!"

From the hill we now stood upon, a

range of lanterns was distinctly visible, stretching away for nearly half a mile.

"There are the trenches; they must be at work, too; see how the lights are moving from place to place! Straight now: forward!"

So saying, I pressed my horse boldly on.

We had not proceeded many minutes, when the sounds of galloping were heard coming along behind us.

"To the right, in the hollow," cried I; "be still."

Scarcely had we moved off when several horsemen galloped up, and, drawing their reins to breathe their horses up the hill, we could hear their voices as they conversed together.

In the few broken words we could catch, we guessed that the attack upon San Benito was only a feint to induce Craufurd to hold his position, while the French, marching upon his flank and front, were to attack him with overwhelming masses and crush him.

"You hear what's in store for us, O'Malley," whispered Hampden. "I think we could not possibly do better than hasten back with the intelligence."

"We must not forget what we came for, first," said I; and the next moment we were following the horsemen, who, from their helmets, seemed horse-artillery officers.

The pace our guides rode at showed us that they knew their ground. We passed several sentries, muttering something at each time, and seeming as if only anxious to keep up with our party.

"They've halted," said I. "Now to the left there; gently here, for we must be in the midst of their lines. Ha! I knew we were right; see there!"

Before us, now, at a few hundred yards, we could perceive a number of men engaged upon the field. Lights were moving from place to place rapidly, while immediately in front a strong picket of cavalry were halted.

"By Jove, there's sharp work of it to-night!" whispered Hampden; "they do intend to surprise us to-morrow."

"Gently now, to the left," said I, as, cautiously skirting the little hill, I kept my eye firmly fixed upon the watch-fire.

The storm, which for some time had abated considerably, was now nearly quelled, and the moon again peeped forth amid masses of black and watery clouds.

"What good fortune for us!" thought I, at this moment, as I surveyed the plain before me.

"I say, O'Malley, what are those fellows at, yonder, where the blue light is burning?"

"Ah! the very people we want; these are the sappers. Now for it; that's our ground: we'll soon come upon their track now."

We pressed rapidly forward, passing an infantry party as we went. The blue light was scarcely a hundred yards off; we could even hear the shouting of the officers to their men in the trenches, when suddenly my horse came down upon his head, and rolling over, crushed me to the earth.

"Not hurt, my boy," cried I, in a subdued tone, as Hampden jumped down beside me.

It was the angle of a trench I had fallen into; and though both my horse and myself felt stunned for the moment, we rallied the next minute.

"Here is the very spot," said I. "Now, Mike, catch the bridles and follow us closely."

Guiding ourselves along the edge of the trench, we crept stealthily forward; the only watch-fire near was where the engineer party was halted, and our object was to get outside of this.

"My turn this time," said Hampden, as he tripped suddenly, and fell head foremost upon the grass.

As I assisted him to rise, something caught my ankle; and, on stooping, I found it was a cord pegged fast into the ground, and lying only a few inches above it.

"Now, steady! see here; this is their working line; pass your hand along it there, and let us follow it out."

While Hampden accordingly crept along on one side, I tracked the cord upon the other; here I found it terminating upon a small mound, where probably some battery was to be erected. I accordingly gathered it carefully up, and was returning toward my friend, when what was my horror to hear Mike's voice, conversing, as it seemed to me, with some one in French.

I stood fixed to the spot, my very heart beating almost in my mouth as I listened.

"*Qui êtes-vous donc, mon ami?*" inquired a hoarse deep voice, a few yards off.

"*Bon cheval, non* beast, *sacré nom de Dieu!*" A hearty burst of laughter prevented my hearing the conclusion of Mike's French.

I now crept forward upon my hands and knees, till I could catch the dark outline of the horses, one hand fixed upon my pistol trigger, and my sword drawn in the other. Meanwhile the dialogue continued.

"*Vous êtes d'Alsace, n'est-ce-pas?*" ask-

ed the Frenchman, kindly supposing that Mike's French savored of Strasburg.

"Oh, blessed Virgin! av I might shoot him," was the muttered reply.

Before I had time to see the effect of the last speech, I pressed forward with a bold spring, and felled the Frenchman to the earth; my hand had scarcely pressed upon his mouth, when Hampden was beside me. Snatching up the pistol I let fall, he held it to the man's chest, and commanded him to be silent. To unfasten his girdle, and bind the Frenchman's hands behind him, was the work of a moment; and, as the sharp click of the pistol-cock seemed to calm his efforts to escape, we soon succeeded in fastening a handkerchief tight across his mouth, and, the next minute, he was placed behind Mike's saddle, firmly attached to this worthy individual by his sword-belt.

"Now, a clear run home for it, and a fair start," said Hampden, as he sprang into the saddle.

"Now, then, for it," I replied; as, turning my horse's head toward our lines, I dashed madly forward.

The moon was again obscured, but still the dark outline of the hill which formed our encampment was discernible on the horizon. Riding side by side, on we hurried; now splashing through the deep and wet marshes, now plunging through small streams. Our horses were high in mettle, and we spared them not; by taking a wide *détour* we had outflanked the French pickets, and were almost out of all risk, when suddenly, on coming to the verge of rather a steep hill, we perceived beneath us a strong cavalry picket standing around a watch-fire; their horses were ready saddled, the men accoutered, and quite prepared for the field. While we conversed together in whispers as to the course to follow, our deliberations were very rapidly cut short. The French prisoner, who hitherto had given neither trouble nor resistance, had managed to free his mouth from the incumbrance of the handkerchief; and, as we stood quietly discussing our plans, with one tremendous effort he endeavored to hurl himself and Mike from the saddle, shouting out, as he did so,

"A moi, camarades! à moi!"

Hampden's pistol leaped from the holster as he spoke, and, leveling it with a deadly aim, he pulled the trigger; but I threw up his arm, and the ball passed high above his head. To have killed the Frenchman would have been to lose my faithful follower, who struggled manfully with his adversary, and, at length, by throwing himself flatly forward upon the mane of his horse, completely disabled him. Meanwhile, the picket had sprung to their saddles, and looked wildly about on every side.

Not a moment was to be lost; so, turning our horses' heads toward the plain, away we went. One loud cheer announced to us that we had been seen, and the next instant the clash of the pursuing cavalry was heard behind us. It was now entirely a question of speed, and little need we have feared had Mike's horse not been doubly weighted. However, as we still had considerably the start, and the gray dawn of day enabled us to see the ground, the odds were in our favor. "Never let your horse's head go," was my often repeated direction to Mike, as he spurred with all the desperation of madness. Already the low meadow-land was in sight which flanked the stream we had crossed in the morning; but, unfortunately, the heavy rains had swollen it now to a considerable depth, and the muddy current, choked with branches of trees and great stones, was hurrying down like a torrent. "Take the river: never flinch it!" was my cry to my companions, as I turned my head and saw a French dragoon, followed by two others, gaining rapidly upon us. As I spoke, Mike dashed in, followed by Hampden, and the same moment the sharp ring of a carbine whizzed past me. To take off the pursuit from the others, I now wheeled my horse suddenly round, as if I feared to take the stream, and dashed along by the river's bank.

Beneath me, in the foaming current, the two horsemen labored; now stemming the rush of water, now reeling almost beneath. A sharp cry burst from Mike as I looked; and I saw the poor fellow bend nearly to his saddle. I could see no more, for the chase was now hot upon myself; behind me rode a French dragoon, his carbine pressed tightly to his side, ready to fire as he pressed on in pursuit. I had but one chance; so, drawing my pistol, I wheeled suddenly in my saddle, and fired straight at him. The Frenchman fell, while a regular volley from his party rung around me; one ball striking my horse, and another lodging in the pommel of my saddle. The noble animal reeled nearly to the earth, but, as if rallying for a last effort, sprang forward with renewed energy, and plunged boldly into the river.

For a moment, so sudden was my leap, my pursuers lost sight of me; but the bank being somewhat steep, the efforts of my horse to climb again discovered me,

and, before I reached the field, two pistol-balls took effect upon me: one slightly grazed my side, but my bridle-arm was broken by the other, and my hand fell motionless to my side. A cheer of defiance was, however, my reply, as I turned round in my saddle, and the next moment I was far beyond the range of their fire.

Not a man durst follow, and the last sight I had of them was the dismounted group who stood around their dead comrade; before me rode Hampden and Mike, still at top speed, and never turning their heads backward. I hastened after them; but my poor wounded horse, nearly hamstrung by the shot, became dead lame; and it was past daybreak ere I reached the first outposts of our lines.

CHAPTER LXXI

THE DOCTOR.

"AND his wound? Is it a serious one?" said a round full voice as the Doctor left my room at the conclusion of his visit.

"No, sir; a fractured bone is the worst of it; the bullet grazed, but did not cut the artery; and as—"

"Well, how soon will he be about again?"

"In a few weeks, if no fever sets in."

"There is no objection to my seeing him?—a few minutes only—I'll be cautious." So saying, and, as it seemed to me, without waiting for a reply, the door was opened by an aide-de-camp, who, announcing General Craufurd, closed it again and withdrew.

The first glance I threw upon the General enabled me to recognize the officer who, on the previous morning, had rode up to the picket and given us the orders to charge. I essayed to rise a little as he came forward, but he motioned me with his hand to lie still, while, placing a chair close beside my bed, he sat down.

"Very sorry for your mishap, sir, but glad it is no worse. Moreton says that nothing of consequence is injured; there, you mustn't speak, except I ask you. Hampden has told me everything necessary; at least, as far as he knew. Is it your opinion, also, that any movement is in contemplation? and from what circumstance?"

I immediately explained, and as briefly as I was able, the reasons for suspecting such, with which he seemed quite satisfied. I detailed the various changes in the positions of the troops that were taking place during the night, the march of the artillery, and the strong bodies of cavalry that were posted in reserve along the river.

"Very well, sir; they'll not move; your prisoner, quarter-master of an infantry battalion, says not, also. Yours was a bold stroke, but could not possibly have been of service, and the best thing I can do for you is not to mention it; a court-martial's but a poor recompense for a gun-shot wound. Meanwhile, when this blows over, I'll appoint you on my personal staff. There, not a word, I beg; and now, good-by."

So saying, and waving me an adieu with his hand, the gallant veteran withdrew before I could express my gratitude for his kindness.

I had little time for reflecting over my past adventure, such numbers of my brother officers poured in upon me. All the Doctor's cautions respecting quietness and rest were disregarded, and a perfect levee sat the entire morning in my bedroom. I was delighted to learn that Mike's wound, though painful at the moment, was of no consequence; and, indeed, Hampden, who escaped both steel and shot, was the worst off amongst us, his plunge in the river having brought on an ague he had labored under years before.

"The illustrious Maurice has been twice here this morning, but they wouldn't admit him. Your Scotch physician is afraid of his Irish *confrère*, and they had a rare set-to about Galen and Hippocrates outside," said Baker.

"By-the-by," said another, "did you see how Sparks looked when Quill joined us? Egad, I never saw a fellow in such a fright; he reddened up, then grew pale, turned his back, and slunk away at the very first moment."

'Yes, I remember it. We must find out the reason; for Maurice, depend upon it, has been hoaxing the poor fellow."

"Well, O'Malley," growled out the senior Major, "you certainly did give Hampden a benefit. He'll not trust himself in such company again; and, begad, he says, the man is as bad as the master. That fellow of yours never let go his prisoner till he reached the Quartermaster-General, and they were both bathed in blood by that time."

"Poor Mike! we must do something for him."

"Oh! he's as happy as a king. Maurice has been in to see him, and they've had a long chat about Ireland, and all the national pastimes of whisky drinking and

smashing skulls. My very temples ache at the recollection."

"Is Mr. O'Mealey at home?" said a very rich Cork accent, as the well-known and most droll features of Dr. Maurice Quill appeared at the door.

"Come in, Maurice," said the Major; "and, for Heaven's sake, behave properly. The poor fellow must not have a row about his bedside."

"A row, a row! Upon my conscience, it is little you know about a row, and there's worse things going than a row."

"Which leg is it?"

"It's an arm, Doctor, I'm happy to say."

"Not your punch hand, I hope. No; all's right. A neat fellow you have for a servant, that Mickey Free. I was asking him about a townsman of his own—one Tim Delany—the very cut of himself; the best servant I ever had. I never could make out what became of him. Old Hobson, of the 95th, gave him to me, saying, 'There he is for you, Maurice, and a bigger thief and a greater blackguard there's not in the 60th.'

"'Strong words,' said I.

"'And true,' said he; 'he'd steal your molar tooth while you were laughing at him.'

"'Let me have him and try my hand on him, anyway. I've got no one just now. Anything is better than nothing.'

"Well, I took Tim, and sending for him to my room, I locked the door, and sitting down gravely before him, explained in a few words that I was quite aware of his little propensities.

"'Now,' said I, 'if you like to behave well, I'll think you as honest as the Chief Justice; but, if I catch you stealing, if it be only the value of a brass snuff-box, I'll have you flogged before the regiment, as sure as my name's Maurice.'

"Oh! I wish you heard the volley of protestations that fell from him fast as hail. He was a calumniated man; the world conspired to wrong him; he was never a thief nor a rogue in his life. He had a weakness, he confessed, for the ladies; but, except that, he hoped he might die so thin that he could shave himself with his shin-bone if he ever so much as took a pinch of salt that wasn't his own.

"However this might be, nothing could be better than the way Tim and I got on together. Everything was in its place—nothing missing; and, in fact, for upward of a year, I went on wondering when he was to show out in his true colors—for hitherto he had been a phœnix.

"At last—we were quartered in Limerick at the time—every morning used to bring accounts of all manner of petty thefts in the barrack; one fellow had lost his belt, another his shoes, a third had three-and-sixpence in his pocket when he went to bed, and woke without a farthing, and so on. Everybody, save myself, was mulct of something. At length some rumors of Tim's former propensities got abroad; suspicion was excited; my friend Delany was rigidly watched, and some very dubious circumstances attached to the way he spent his evenings.

"My brother officers called upon me about the matter, and, although nothing had transpired like proof, I sent for Tim, and opened my mind on the subject.

"You may talk of the look of conscious innocence, but I defy you to conceive anything finer than the stare of offended honor Tim gave me as I begun.

"'They say it's me, Doctor,' said he, 'do they? And you—you believe them. You allow them to revile me that way? Well, well, the world is come to a pretty pass, anyhow! Now, let me ask your honor a few questions. How many shirts had yourself when I entered your service? Two, and one was more like a fishing-net! And how many have ye now? Eighteen; ay, eighteen bran new cambric ones; devil a hole in one of them! How many pair of stockings had you? Three and an odd one. You have two dozen this minute. How many pocket-handkerchiefs? One; devil a more! You could only blow your nose two days in the week, and now you may every hour of the twenty-four! And, as to the trifling articles of small value, snuff-boxes, gloves, boot-jacks, nightcaps, and—'

"'Stop, Tim, that's enough—'

"'No, sir, it is not,' said Tim, drawing himself up to his full height; 'you have wounded my feelings in a way I can't forget. It is impossible we can have that mutual respect our position demands. Farewell, farewell, Doctor, and forever!'

"Before I could say another word, the fellow had left the room, and closed the door after him; and from that hour to this I never set eyes on him."

In this vein did the worthy Doctor run on till some more discreet friend suggested that, however well-intentioned the visit, I did not seem to be fully equal to it—my flushed cheek and anxious eye betraying that the fever of my wound had commenced; they left me, therefore, once more alone, and to my solitary musings over the vicissitudes of my fortune.

CHAPTER LXXII.

THE COA.

WITHIN a week from the occurrence of the events just mentioned, Ciudad Rodrigo surrendered, and Craufurd assumed another position beneath the walls of Almeida. The Spanish contingent having left us, we were reinforced by the arrival of two battalions, renewed orders being sent not to risk a battle, but, if the French should advance, to retire beyond the Coa.

On the evening of the 21st July, a strong body of French cavalry advanced into the plain, supported by some heavy guns; upon which Craufurd retired upon the Coa, intending, as we supposed, to place that river between himself and the enemy. Three days, however, passed over without any movement upon either side, and we still continued, with a force of scarcely four thousand infantry and a thousand dragoons, to stand opposite to an army of nearly fifty thousand men. Such was our position as the night of the 24th set in. I was sitting alone in my quarters; Mike, whose wound had been severer than at first was supposed, had been sent to Almeida, and I was musing in solitude upon the events of the campaign, when the noise and bustle without excited my attention; the roll of artillery wagons, the clash of musketry, and the distant sounds of marching, all proved that the troops were effecting some new movement, and I burned with anxiety to learn what it was. My brother officers, however, came not as usual to my quarters; and although I waited with impatience while the hours rolled by, no one appeared.

Long, low moaning gusts of wind swept along the earth, carrying the leaves as they tore them from the trees, and mingling their sad sounds with the noises of the retiring troops; for I could perceive that gradually the sounds grew more and more remote, and only now and then could I trace their position as the roll of a distant drum swelled upon the breeze, or the more shrill cry of a pibroch broke upon my ear; a heavy down-pour of rain followed soon after, and in its unceasing plash drowned all other sounds.

As the little building shook beneath the peals of loud thunder, the lightning flashed in broad sheets upon the rapid river, which, swollen and foaming, dashed impetuously beside my window. By the uncertain but vivid glare of the flashes, I endeavored to ascertain where our force was posted; but in vain. Never did I witness such a night of storm; the deep booming of the thunder seeming never for a moment to cease, while the rush of the torrent grew gradually louder, till at length it swelled into one deep and sullen roar like that of distant artillery.

Weak and nervous as I felt from the effects of my wound, feverish and exhausted by days of suffering and sleepless nights, I paced my little room with tottering but impatient steps. The sense of my sad and imprisoned state impressed me deeply; and while from time to time I replenished my fire, and hoped to hear some friendly step upon the stair, my heart grew gradually heavier, and every gloomy and depressing thought suggested itself to my imagination. My most constant impression was, that the troops were retiring beyond the Coa, and that forgotten, in the haste and confusion of a night march, I had been left behind to fall a prisoner to the enemy.

The sounds of the troops retiring gradually farther and farther favored the idea, in which I was still more strengthened on finding that the peasants who inhabited the little hut had departed, leaving me utterly alone. From the moment I ascertained this fact, my impatience knew no bounds; and in proportion as I began to feel some exertion necessary on my part, so much more did my nervousness increase my debility, and at last I sank exhausted upon my bed, while a cold perspiration broke out upon my temples.

I have mentioned that the Coa was immediately beneath the house; I must also add, that the little building occupied the angle of a steep but narrow gorge which descended from the plain to the bridge across the stream. This, as far as I knew, was the only means we possessed of passing the river: so that, when the last retiring sounds of the troops were heard by me, I began to suspect that Craufurd, in compliance with his orders, was making a backward movement, leaving the bridge open to the French, to draw them on to his line of march, while he should cross over at some more distant point.

As the night grew later, the storm seemed to increase; the waves of the foaming river dashed against the frail walls of the hut, while its roof, rent by the blast, fell in fragments upon the stream, and all threatened a speedy and perfect ruin.

How I longed for morning! The doubt and uncertainty I suffered nearly drove me distracted. Of all the casualties my career as a soldier opened, none had such terrors for me as imprisonment; the very thought of the long years of inaction and inglorious

idleness was worse than any death. My wounds, and the state of fever I was in, increased the morbid dread upon me, and had the French captured me at the time, I know not that madness of which I was not capable. Day broke at last, but slowly and sullenly; the gray clouds hurried past upon the storm, pouring down the rain in torrents as they went, and the desolation and dreariness on all sides was scarcely preferable to the darkness and gloom of night. My eyes were turned ever toward the plain, across which the winter wind bore the plashing rain in vast sheets of water; the thunder crashed louder and louder; but except the sounds of the storm none others met my ear. Not a man, not a human figure could I see, as I strained my sight toward the distant horizon.

The morning crept over, but the storm abated not, and the same unchanged aspect of dreary desolation prevailed without. At times I thought I could hear, amidst the noises of the tempest, something like the roll of distant artillery; but the thunder swelled in sullen roar above all, and left me uncertain as before.

At last, in a momentary pause of the storm, a tremendous peal of heavy guns caught my ear, followed by the long rattling of small-arms. My heart bounded with ecstasy. The thought of the battle-field, with all its changing fortunes, was better, a thousand times better, than the despairing sense of desertion I labored under. I listened now with eagerness, but the rain bore down again in torrents, and the crumbling walls and falling timbers left no other sounds to be heard. Far as my eye could reach, nothing could still be seen save the dreary monotony of the vast plain, undulating slightly here and there, but unmarked by a sign of man.

Far away toward the horizon I had remarked for some time past that the clouds resting upon the earth grew blacker and blacker, spreading out to either side in vast masses, and not broken or wafted along like the rest. As I watched the phenomenon with an anxious eye, I perceived the dense mass suddenly appear, as it were, rent asunder, while a volume of liquid flame rushed wildly out, throwing a lurid glare on every side. One terrific clap, louder than any thunder, shook the air at this moment, while the very earth trembled beneath the shock.

As I hesitated what it might be, the heavy din of great guns again was heard, and from the midst of the black smoke rode forth a dark mass, which I soon recognized as the horse-artillery at full gallop. They were directing their course toward the bridge.

As they mounted the little rising ground, they wheeled and unlimbered with the speed of lightning, just as a strong column of cavalry showed above the ridge. One tremendous discharge again shook the field, and ere the smoke cleared away they were again far in retreat.

So much was my attention occupied with this movement, that I had not perceived the long line of infantry that came from the extreme left, and were now advancing also toward the bridge at a brisk quick-step; scattered bodies of cavalry came up from different parts, while from the little valley, every now and then, a rifleman would mount the rising ground, turning to fire as he retreated. All this boded a rapid and disorderly retreat; and although as yet I could see nothing of the pursuing enemy, I knew too well the relative forces of each to have a doubt for the result.

At last, the head of a French column appeared above the mist, and I could plainly distinguish the gestures of the officers as they hurried their men onward. Meanwhile, a loud hurrah attracted my attention, and I turned my eyes toward the road which led to the river. Here a small body of the 95th had hurriedly assembled; and, formed again, were standing to cover the retreat of the broken infantry as they passed on eagerly to the bridge; in a second after the French cuirassiers appeared. Little anticipating resistance from a flying and disordered mass, they rode headlong forward, and although the firm attitude and steady bearing of the Highlanders might have appalled them, they rode heedlessly down upon the square, sabring the very men in the front rank. Till now not a trigger had been pulled, when suddenly the word "Fire!" was given, and a withering volley of balls sent the cavalry column in shivers. One hearty cheer broke from the infantry in the rear, and I could hear "Gallant Ninety-fifth!" shouted on every side along the plain.

The whole vast space before me was now one animated battle-ground. Our own troops retiring in haste before the overwhelming forces of the French, occupied every little vantage ground with their guns and light infantry, charges of cavalry coursing hither and thither; while, as the French pressed forward, the retreating columns again formed into squares to permit stragglers to come up. The rattle of small-arms, the heavy peal of artillery, the earthquake crash of cavalry, rose on every side,

while the cheers which alternately told of the vacillating fortune of the fight rose amidst the wild pibroch of the Highlanders.

A tremendous noise now took place on the floor beneath me; and, looking down, I perceived that a sergeant and party of the Sappers had taken possession of the little hut, and were busily engaged piercing the walls for musketry; and before many minutes had elapsed, a company of the Rifles were thrown into the building, which, from its commanding position above the road, enfiladed the whole line of march. The officer in command briefly informed me that we had been attacked that morning by the French in force, and "devilishly well thrashed;" that we were now in retreat beyond the Coa, where we ought to have been three days previously, and desired me to cross the bridge and get myself out of the way as soon as I possibly could.

A twenty-four pounder from the French lines struck the angle of the house as he spoke, scattering the mortar and broken bricks about us on all sides. This was warning sufficient for me, wounded and disabled as I was; so, taking the few things I could save in my haste, I hurried from the hut, and descending the path, now slippery by the heavy rain, I took my way across the bridge, and established myself on a little rising knoll of ground beyond, from which a clear view could be obtained of the whole field.

I had not been many minutes in my present position ere the pass which led down to the bridge became thronged with troops, wagons, ammunition carts, and hospital stores, pressing thickly forward amid shouting and uproar; the hills on either side of the way were crowded with troops, who formed as they came up, the artillery taking up their position on every rising ground. The firing had already begun, and the heavy booming of the large guns was heard at intervals amid the rattling crash of musketry: except the narrow road before me, and the high bank of the stream, I could see nothing; but the tumult and din, which grew momentarily louder, told that the tide of battle raged nearer and nearer. Still the retreat continued; and at length the heavy artillery came thundering across the narrow bridge, followed by stragglers of all arms, and wounded, hurrying to the rear: the sharpshooters and the Highlanders held the heights above the stream, thus covering the retiring columns; but I could plainly perceive that their fire was gradually slackening, and that the guns which flanked their position were withdrawn, and everything bespoke a speedy retreat. A tremendous discharge of musketry at this moment, accompanied by a deafening cheer, announced the advance of the French, and soon the head of the Highland brigade was seen descending toward the bridge, followed by the Rifles and the 95th; the cavalry, consisting of the 11th and 14th Light Dragoons, were now formed in column of attack, and the infantry deployed into line; and, in an instant after, high above the din and crash of battle, I heard the word "Charge!" The rising crest of the hill hid them from my sight, but my heart bounded with ecstasy as I listened to the clanging sound of the cavalry advance. Meanwhile, the infantry pressed on, and, forming upon the bank, took up a strong position in front of the bridge; the heavy guns were also unlimbered, riflemen scattered through the low copse wood, and every precaution taken to defend the pass to the last. For a moment all my attention was riveted to the movements upon our own side of the stream, when suddenly the cavalry bugle sounded the recall, and the same moment the staff came galloping across the bridge. One officer I could perceive, covered with orders and trappings; his head was bare, and his horse, splashed with blood and foam, moved lamely and with difficulty; he turned in the middle of the bridge, as if irresolute whether to retreat farther: one glance at him showed me the bronzed, manly features of our leader. Whatever his resolve, the matter was soon decided for him, for the cavalry came galloping swiftly down the slope, and in an instant the bridge was blocked up by the retreating forces, while the French, as suddenly appearing above the height, opened a plunging fire upon their defenseless enemies: their cheer of triumph was answered by our fellows from the opposite bank, and a heavy cannonade thundered along the rocky valley, sending up a hundred echoes as it went.

The scene now became one of overwhelming interest; the French, posting their guns upon the height, replied to our fire, while their line, breaking into skirmishers, descended the banks to the river edge, and poured in one sheet of galling musketry. The road to the bridge, swept by our artillery, presented not a single file; and although a movement among the French announced the threat of an attack, the deadly service of the artillery seemed to pronounce it hopeless.

A strong cavalry force stood inactively, spectators of the combat on the French side, among whom I now remarked some

bustle and preparation, and, as I looked, an officer rode boldly to the river edge, and, spurring his horse forward, plunged into the stream. The swollen and angry torrent, increased by the late rains, boiled like barm, and foamed around him as he advanced; when suddenly his horse appeared to have lost its footing, and the rapid current, circling around him, bore him along with it. He labored madly, but in vain, to retrace his steps; the rolling torrent rose above his saddle, and all that his gallant steed could do was barely sufficient to keep afloat; both man and horse were carried down between the contending armies. I could see him wave his hand to his comrades, as if in adieu. One deafening cheer of admiration rose from the French lines, and the next moment he was seen to fall from his seat, and his body, shattered with balls, floated mournfully upon the stream.

This little incident, to which both armies were witnesses, seemed to have called forth all the fiercer passions of the contending forces; a loud yell of taunting triumph rose from the Highlanders, responded to by a cry of vengeance from the French, and the same moment the head of a column was seen descending the narrow causeway to the bridge, while an officer, with a whole blaze of decorations and crosses, sprang from his horse and took the lead. The little drummer, a child of scarcely ten years old, tripped gayly on, beating his little *pas de charge*, seeming rather like the play of infancy than the summons to death and carnage, as the heavy guns of the French opened a volume of fire and flame to cover the attacking column. For a moment all was hid from our eyes; the moment after the grape-shot swept along the narrow causeway; and the bridge, which but a second before was crowded with the life and courage of a noble column, was now one heap of dead and dying. The gallant fellow who led them on fell among the first rank, and the little child, as if kneeling, was struck dead beside the parapet; his fair hair floated across his cold features, and seemed in its motion to lend a look of life where the heart's throb had ceased forever. The artillery again re-opened upon us; and, when the smoke had cleared away, we discovered that the French had advanced to the middle of the bridge and carried off the body of their general. Twice they essayed to cross, and twice the death-dealing fire of our guns covered the narrow bridge with slain, while by the wild pibroch of the 42d, swelling madly into notes of exultation and triumph, the Highlanders could scarcely be prevented from advancing hand to hand with the foe. Gradually the French slackened their fire, their great guns were one by one withdrawn from the heights, and a dropping, irregular musketry at intervals sustained the fight, which ere sunset ceased altogether; and thus ended "The Battle of the Coa."

CHAPTER LXXIII.

THE NIGHT MARCH.

SCARCELY had the night fallen when our retreat commenced. Tired and weary as our brave fellows felt, but little repose was allowed them; their bivouac fires were blazing brightly, and they had just thrown themselves in groups around them, when the word to fall in was passed from troop to troop, and from battalion to battalion—no trumpet, no bugle called them to their ranks. It was necessary that all should be done noiselessly and speedily; while, therefore, the wounded were marched to the front, and the heavy artillery with them, a brigade of light four-pounders, and two squadrons of cavalry, held the heights above the bridge, and the infantry forming into three columns, began their march.

My wound, forgotten in the heat and excitement of the conflict, was now becoming excessively painful, and I gladly availed myself of a place in a wagon, where, stretched upon some fresh straw, with no other covering save the starry sky, I soon fell sound asleep, and neither the heavy jolting of the rough conveyance, nor the deep and rutty road, were able to disturb my slumbers. Still through my sleep I heard the sounds around me, the heavy tramp of infantry, the clash of the moving squadrons, and the dull roll of artillery; and ever and anon the half-stifled cry of pain, mingling with the reckless carol of some drinking-song, all flitted through my dreams, lending to my thoughts of home and friends a memory of glorious war.

All the vicissitudes of a soldier's life passed then in review before me, elicited in some measure by the things about. The pomp and grandeur, the misery and meanness, the triumph, the defeat, the moment of victory, and the hour of death were there, and in that vivid dream I lived a life long.

I awoke at length, the cold and chilling air which follows midnight blew around

me, and my wounded arm felt as though it were frozen. I tried to cover myself beneath the straw, but in vain, and as my limbs trembled and my teeth chattered, I thought again of home, where, at that moment, the poorest menial of my uncle's house was better lodged than I, and strange to say, something of pride mingled with the thought, and in my lonely heart a feeling of elation cheered me.

These reflections were interrupted by the sound of a voice near me, which I at once knew to be O'Shaughnessy's; he was on foot, and speaking evidently in some excitement.

"I tell you, Maurice, some confounded blunder there must be; sure he was left in that cottage near the bridge, and no one ever saw him after."

"The French took it from the Rifles before we crossed the river. By Jove! I'll wager my chance of promotion against a pint of sherry, he'll turn up somewhere in the morning; those Galway chaps have as many lives as a cat."

"See, now, Maurice, I wouldn't for a full colonelcy anything would happen to him—I like the boy."

"So do I myself; but I tell you there's no danger of him. Did you ask Sparks anything?"

"Ask Sparks! God help you! Sparks would go off in a fit at the sight of me. No, no, poor creature! it's little use it would be my speaking to him."

"Why so, Doctor?" cried I, from my straw couch.

"May I never, if it's not him! Charley, my son, I'm glad you're safe. 'Faith, I thought you were on your way to Verdun by this time."

"Sure, I told you he'd find his way here—but, O'Mealey, dear—you're mighty cowld—a rigor, as old M'Lauchlan would call it."

"E'en sae, Maister Quill," said a broad Scotch accent behind him; "and I canna see ony objection to giein' things their right names."

"The top of the morning to you," said Quill, familiarly patting him on the back; "how goes it, old Brimstone?"

The conversation might not have taken a very amicable turn had M'Lauchlan heard the latter part of this speech; but, as happily he was engaged unpacking a small canteen which he had placed in the wagon, it passed unnoticed.

"Ye'll nae dislike a toothfu' of something warm, Major," said he, presenting a glass to O'Shaughnessy; "and if ye'll permit me, Mr. O'Mealey, to help you—"

"A thousand thanks, Doctor; but I fear a broken arm—"

"There's naething in the whisky to prevent the proper formation of callus."

"By the rock of Cashel, it never made any one callous," said O'Shaughnessy, mistaking the import of the phrase.

"Ye are nae drinking frae the flask?" said the Doctor, turning in some agitation toward Quill.

"Devil a bit, my darling. I've a little horn convaniency here, that holds half a pint, nice measure."

I don't imagine that our worthy friend participated in Quill's admiration of the "convaniency," for he added, in a dry tone:

"Ye may as weel tak' your liquor frae a glass, like a Christian, as stick your nose in a coo's horn."

"By my conscience, you're no small judge of spirits, wherever you learned it," said the Major; "it's like Islay malt!"

"I was aye reckoned a gude ane," said the Doctor, "and my mither's brither, Caimbogie, had na his like in the north country. Ye maybe heerd tell what he aince said to the Duchess of Argyle, when she sent for him to taste her claret."

"Never heard of it," quoth Quill; "let's have it, by all means. I'd like to hear what the Duchess said to him."

"It was na what the Duchess said to him, but what he said to the Duchess, ye ken. The way of it was this:—My uncle, Caimbogie, was aye up at the castle, for, besides his knowledge of liquor, there was nae his match for deer-stalking, or spearing a salmon, in these parts. He was a great, rough carle, it's true, but ane ye'd rather crack wi' than fight wi'.

"Weel, ae day they had a grand dinner at the Duke's, and there were plenty o' great southern lords and braw leddies in velvets and satin; and vara muckle surprised they were at my uncle, when he came in wi' his tartan kilt, in full Highland dress, as the head of a clan ought to do. Caimbogie, however, pe'd nae attention to them, but he eat his dinner and drank his wine, and talked away about fallow and red deer, and at last the Duchess, for she was aye fond o' him, addressed him frae the head o' the table:

"'Caimbogie,' quoth she, 'I'd like to hae your opinion about that wine. It's some the Duke has just received, and we should like to hear what you think of it.'

"'It's nae sae bad, my leddy,' said my uncle; for ye see he was a man of few words, and never flattered onybody.

"'Then you don't approve much of it?' said the Duchess.

"'I've drank better, and I've drank waur,' quo' he.

"'I'm sorry you don't like it, Caimbogie,' said the Duchess, 'for it can never be popular now: we have such a dependence upon your taste.'

"'I canna say ower muckle for my *taste*, my leddy, but ae thing I *will* say—I've a most damnable SMELL!'

"I hear that never since the auld walls stood, was there ever the like o' the laughing that followed: the puir Duke himself was carried away, and nearly had a fit, and a' the grand lords and leddies a'most died of it. But, see here, the carle has nae left a drap o' whisky in the flask."

"The last glass I drained to your respectable uncle's health," said Quill, with a most professional gravity. "Now, Charley, make a little room for me in the straw."

The Doctor soon mounted beside me, and, giving me a share of his ample cloak, considerably ameliorated my situation.

"So you knew Sparks, Doctor?" said I, with a strong curiosity to hear something of his early acquaintance.

"That I did: I knew him when he was an Ensign in the 10th Foot; and, to say the truth, he is not much changed since that time;—the same lively look of a sick codfish about his gray eyes; the same disorderly wave of his yellow hair; the same whining voice, and that confounded apothecary's laugh."

"Come, come, Doctor, Sparks is a good fellow at heart; I won't have him abused. I never knew he had been in the infantry; I should think it must have been another of the same name."

"Not at all; there's only one like him in the service, and that's himself. Confound it, man, I'd know his skin upon a bush; he was only three weeks in the Tenth, and, indeed, your humble servant has the whole merit of his leaving it so soon."

"Do let us hear how that happened."

"Simply thus:—The jolly Tenth were some four years ago the pleasantest corps in the army; from the Lieutenant-Colonel down to the last joined sub., all were out-and-outers—real gay fellows. The mess was, in fact, like a pleasant club, and if you did not suit it, the best thing you could do was to sell out or exchange into a slower regiment; and, indeed, this very wholesome truth was not very long in reaching your ears some way or other, and a man that could remain after being given this hint, was likely to go afterward without one."

Just as Dr. Quill reached this part of his story, an orderly dragoon galloped furiously past, and the next moment an aide-de-camp rode by, calling, as he passed us,

"Close up, there—close up! Get forward, my lads—get forward!"

It was evident, from the stir and bustle about, that some movement was being made; and, soon after, a dropping, irregular fire from the rear showed that our cavalry were engaged with the enemy: the affair was scarcely of five minutes' duration, and our march resumed all its former regularity immediately after.

I now turned to the Doctor to resume his story, but he was gone; at what moment he left I could not say, but O'Shaughnessy was also absent, nor did I again meet with them for a considerable time after.

Toward daybreak we halted at Bonares, when my wound demanding rest and attention, I was billeted in the village, and consigned to all the miseries of a sick-bed.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

THE JOURNEY.

WITH that disastrous day my campaigning was destined, for some time at least, to conclude. My wound, which grew from hour to hour more threatening, at length began to menace the loss of the arm, and, by the recommendation of the regimental surgeons, I was ordered back to Lisbon.

Mike, by this time perfectly restored, prepared everything for my departure, and on the third day after the battle of the Coa, I began my journey with downcast spirits and depressed heart. The poor fellow was, however, a kind and affectionate nurse, and, unlike many others, his cares were not limited to the mere bodily wants of his patient: he sustained, as well as he was able, my drooping resolution, rallied my spirits, and cheered my courage. With the very little Portuguese he possessed, he contrived to make every imaginable species of bargain; always managed a good billet; kept every one in good humor, and rarely left his quarters in the morning without a most affecting leave-taking, and reiterated promises to renew his visit.

Our journeys were usually short ones, and already two days had elapsed, when, toward nightfall, we entered the little hamlet of Jaffra. During the entire of

that day, the pain of my wounded limb had been excruciating; the fatigue of the road and the heat had brought back violent inflammation, and, when at last the little village came in sight, my reason was fast yielding to the torturing agonies of my wound; but the transports with which I greeted my resting-place were soon destined to a change; for, as we drew near, not a light was to be seen, not a sound to be heard, not even a dog barked, as the heavy mule-cart rattled over the uneven road. No trace of any living thing was there: the little hamlet lay sleeping in the pale moonlight, its streets deserted, and its homes tenantless; our own footsteps alone echoed along the dreary causeway; here and there, as we advanced farther, we found some relics of broken furniture and house-gear; most of the doors lay open, but nothing remained within save bare walls; the embers still smoked in many places upon the hearth, and showed us that the flight of the inhabitants had been recent. Yet everything convinced us that the French had not been there; there was no trace of the reckless violence and wanton cruelty which marked their footsteps everywhere.

All proved that the desertion had been voluntary: perhaps in compliance with an order of our Commander-in-Chief, who frequently desired any intended line of march of the enemy to be left thus a desert. As we sauntered slowly on from street to street, half hoping that some one human being yet remained behind, and casting our eyes from side to side in search of quarters for the night, Mike suddenly came running up, saying,

"I have it, sir,—I've found it out—there's people living down that small street there—I saw a light this minute as I passed."

I turned immediately, and, accompanied by the mule-driver, followed Mike across a little open square into a small and narrow street, at the end of which a light was seen faintly twinkling; we hurried on, and in a few minutes reached a high wall of solid masonry, from a niche of which we now discovered, to our utter disappointment, the light proceeded. It was a small lamp placed before a little waxen image of the Virgin, and was probably the last act of piety of some poor villager ere he left his home and hearth forever: there it burned, brightly and tranquilly, throwing its mellow ray upon the cold, deserted stones.

Whatever impatience I might have given way to in a moment of chagrin, was soon repressed, as I saw my two followers, uncovering their heads in silent reverence, kneel down before the little shrine. There was something at once touching and solemn in this simultaneous feeling of homage from the hearts of those removed in country, language, and in blood; they bent meekly down; their heads bowed upon their bosoms, while with muttering voices each offered up his prayer. All sense of their disappointment, all memory of their forlorn state, seemed to have yielded to more powerful and absorbing thoughts as they opened their hearts in prayer.

My eyes were still fixed upon them, when suddenly Mike, whose devotion seemed of the briefest, sprang to his legs, and with a spirit of levity but little in accordance with his late proceedings, commenced a series of kicking, rapping, and knocking at a small oak postern sufficient to have aroused a whole convent from their cells. "House there!—good people within!"—bang, bang, bang: but the echoes alone responded to his call, and the sounds died away at length in the distant streets, leaving all as silent and dreary as before.

Our Portuguese friend, who by this time had finished his orisons, now began a vigorous attack upon the small door, and, with the assistance of Mike, armed with a fragment of granite about the size of a man's head, at length separated the frame from the hinges and sent the whole mass prostrate before us.

The moon was just rising as we entered the little park, where graveled walks, neatly kept and well trimmed, bespoke recent care and attention; following a handsome alley of lime-trees, we reached a little jet d'eau, whose sparkling fountain shone, diamond-like, in the moonbeams; and, escaping from the edge of a vast shell, ran murmuring amid mossy stones and water-lilies, that however naturally they seemed thrown around, bespoke also the hand of taste in their position. On turning from the spot, we came directly in front of an old but handsome château, before which stretched a terrace of considerable extent. Its balustraded parapet, lined with orange-trees, now in full blossom, scented the still air with their delicious odor; marble statues peeped here and there amid the foliage, while a rich acacia, loaded with flowers, covered the walls of the building, and hung in vast masses of variegated blossom across the tall windows.

As, leaning on Mike's arm, I slowly ascended the steps of the terrace, I was more than ever struck with the silence and death-like stillness around; except the gen-

tle plash of the fountain, all was at rest; the very plants seemed to sleep in the yellow moonlight, and not a trace of any living thing was there.

The massive door lay open as we entered the spacious hall, flagged with marble, and surrounded with armorial bearings. We advanced farther, and came to a broad and handsome stair, which led us to a long gallery, from which a suite of rooms opened, looking toward the front part of the building. Wherever we went, the furniture appeared perfectly untouched; nothing was removed; the very chairs were grouped around the windows and the tables; books, as if suddenly dropped from their readers' hands, were scattered upon the sofas and the ottomans; and, in one small apartment, whose blue satin walls and damask drapery bespoke a boudoir, a rich mantilla of black velvet and a silk glove were thrown upon a chair. It was clear the desertion had been most recent; and everything indicated that no time had been given to the fugitives to prepare for flight. What a sad picture of war was there! To think of those whose home, endeared to them by all the refinements of cultivated life, and all the associations of years of happiness, sent out upon the wide world —wanderers and houseless; while their hearth, sacred by every tie that binds us to our kindred, was to be desecrated by the ruthless and savage hands of a ruffian soldiery. I thought of them; perhaps at that very hour their thoughts were clinging round the old walls; remembering each well-beloved spot, while they took their lonely path through mountain and through valley; and felt ashamed and abashed at my own intrusion there. While thus my revery ran on, I had not perceived that Mike, whose views were very practical upon all occasions, had lighted a most cheerful fire upon the hearth, and disposing a large sofa before it, had carefully closed the curtains, and was, in fact, making himself and his master as much at home as though he had spent his life there.

"Isn't it a beautiful place, Misther Charles? and this little room, doesn't it remind you of the blue bedroom in O'Malley Castle, barrin' the elegant view out upon the Shannon and the mountain of Scariff?"

Nothing short of Mike's patriotism could forgive such a comparison; but, however, I did not contradict him, as he ran on:

"Faith, I knew well there was luck in store for us this evening; and ye see the handful of prayers I threw away outside wasn't lost. José's making the beasts comfortable in the stable, and I'm thinking we'll none of us complain of our quarters. But you're not eating your supper; and the beautiful hare-pie that I stole this morning, won't you taste it? Well, a glass of Malaga? not a glass of Malaga? Oh, mother of Moses! what's this for?"

Unfortunately, the fever produced by the long and toilsome journey, had gained considerably on me, and, except copious libations of cold water, I could touch nothing; my arm, too, was much more painful than before. Mike soon perceived that rest and quietness were most important to me at the moment, and having with difficulty been prevailed upon to swallow a few hurried mouthfuls, the poor fellow disposed cushions around me in every imaginable form for comfort; and then, placing my wounded limb in its easiest position, he extinguished the lamp, and sat silently down beside the hearth, without speaking another word.

Fatigue and exhaustion, more powerful than pain, soon produced their effects upon me, and I fell asleep, but it was no refreshing slumber which visited my heavy eyelids; the slow fever of suffering had been hour by hour increasing, and my dreams presented nothing but scenes of agony and torture. Now I thought that, unhorsed and wounded, I was trampled beneath the clanking hoofs of charging cavalry; now, I felt the sharp steel piercing my flesh; and heard the loud cry of a victorious enemy; then, methought I was stretched upon a litter, covered by gore and mangled by a grape-shot. I thought I saw my brother officers approach and look sadly upon me, while one, whose face I could not remember, muttered, "I should not have known him." The dreadful hospital of Talavera, and all its scenes of agony, came up before me, and I thought that I lay waiting my turn for amputation. This last impression, more horrible to me than all the rest, made me spring from my couch, and I awoke; the cold drops of perspiration stood upon my brow, my mouth was parched and open, and my temples throbbed so, that I could count their beatings; for some seconds I could not throw off the frightful illusion I labored under, and it was only by degrees I recovered consciousness, and remembered where I was. Before me, and on one side of the bright wood fire, sat Mike, who, apparently deep in thought, gazed fixedly at the blaze; the start I gave on awaking had not attracted his attention, and I could see, as the flickering glare fell upon his features, that he was pale and ghastly,

while his eyes were riveted upon the fire; his lips moved rapidly, as if in prayer, and his locked hands were pressed firmly upon his bosom; his voice, at first inaudible, I could gradually distinguish, and at length heard the following muttered sentences:

"Oh, mother of mercy! so far from his home and his people, and so young, to die in a strange land — there it is again." Here he appeared listening to some sounds from without. "Oh, wirra, wirra, I know it well!—the winding-sheet, the winding-sheet! there it is, my own eyes saw it!" The tears coursed fast upon his pale cheeks, and his voice grew almost inaudible, as, rocking to and fro, for some time he seemed in a very stupor of grief; when at last, in a faint, subdued tone, he broke into one of those sad and plaintive airs of his country, which only need the moment of depression to make them wring the very heart in agony.

His song was that to which Moore has appended the beautiful lines, "Come, rest on this bosom." The following imperfect translation may serve to convey some impression of the words, which in Mike's version were Irish:

"The day was declining,
The dark night drew near,
And the old Lord grew sadder,
And paler with fear:
'Come listen, my daughter,
Come nearer—oh! near.
Is't the wind or the water
That sighs in my ear?'

"Not the wind nor the water
Now stirr'd the night air,
But a warning far sadder—
The banshee was there!
Now rising, now swelling,
On the night wind it bore
One cadence, still telling,—
'I want thee, Rossmore!'

"And then fast came his breath,
And more fix'd grew his eye;
And the shadow of death
Told his hour was nigh.
Ere the dawn of that morning
The struggle was o'er,
For when thrice came the warning—
A corpse was Rossmore!"

The plaintive air to which these words were sung fell heavily upon my heart, and it needed but the low and nervous condition I was in to make me feel their application to myself. But so it is; the very superstition your reason rejects and your sense spurns, has, from old association, from habit, and from mere nationality too, a hold upon your hopes and fears, that demands more firmness and courage than a sick-bed possesses to combat with success; and I now listened with an eager ear to mark if the banshee cried, rather than sought to fortify myself by any recurrence to my own convictions. Meanwhile, Mike's attitude became one of listening attention. Not a finger moved; he scarce seemed even to breathe; the state of suspense I suffered from was maddening; and at last, unable to bear it longer, I was about to speak, when suddenly, from the floor beneath us, one long-sustained note swelled upon the air and died away again, and immediately after, to the cheerful sounds of a guitar, we heard the husky voice of our Portuguese guide, indulging himself in a love-ditty.

Ashamed of myself for my fears, I kept silent; but Mike, who felt only one sensation—that of unmixed satisfaction at his mistake—rubbed his hands pleasantly, filled up his glass, drank it, and refilled; while with an accent of reassured courage, he briefly remarked:

"Well, Mr. José, if that be singing, upon my conscience I wonder what crying is like!"

I could not forbear a laugh at the criticism; and, in a moment, the poor fellow, who up to that moment believed me sleeping, was beside me. I saw from his manner that he dreaded lest I had been listening to his melancholy song, and had overheard any of his gloomy forebodings; and as he cheered my spirits and spoke encouragingly, I could remark that he made more than usual endeavors to appear light-hearted and at ease. Determined, however, not to let him escape so easily, I questioned him about his belief in ghosts and spirits, at which he endeavored, as he ever did when the subject was an unpleasing one, to avoid the discussion; but rather perceiving that I indulged in no irreverent disrespect of these matters, he grew gradually more open, treating the affair with that strange mixture of credulity and mockery, which formed his estimate of most things: now seeming to suppose that any palpable rejection of them might entail sad consequences in future, now half ashamed to go the whole length in his credulity.

"And so, Mike, you never saw a ghost yourself!—that you acknowledge?"

"No, sir, I never saw a real ghost: but sure there's many a thing I never saw; but Mrs. Moore, the housekeeper, seen two. And your grandfather that's gone—the Lord be good to him!—used to walk once a year in Lurra Abbey; and sure you know the story about Tim Clinchy, that was seen every Saturday night coming out of the cellar with a candle and a mug of

wine, and a pipe in his mouth, till Mr. Barry laid him. It cost his honor your uncle ten pounds in masses to make him easy; not to speak of a new lock and two bolts on the cellar door."

"I have heard all about that; but, as you never yourself saw any of these things—"

"But sure my father did, and that's the same any day. My father seen the greatest ghost that ever was seen in the county Cork, and spent the evening with him, that's more."

"Spent the evening with him!—what do you mean?"

"Just that, devil a more nor less. If your honor wasn't so weak, and the story wasn't a trying one, I'd like to tell it to you."

"Out with it by all means, Mike; I am not disposed to sleep; and, now that we are upon these matters, my curiosity is strongly excited by your worthy father's experience."

Thus encouraged, having trimmed the fire, and reseated himself beside the blaze, Mike began; but, as a ghost is no every-day personage in our history, I must give him a chapter to himself.

CHAPTER LXXV.

THE GHOST.

"WELL, I believe your honor heard me tell long ago how my father left the army, and the way that he took to another line of life that was more to his liking. And so it was, he was happy as the day was long; he drove a hearse for Mr. Callaghan of Cork, for many years, and a pleasant place it was; for ye see, my father was a 'cute man, and knew something of the world; and though he was a droll devil, and could sing a funny song when he was among the boys, no sooner had he the big black cloak on him and the weepers, and he seated on the high box with the six long-tailed blacks before him, you'd really think it was his own mother was inside, he looked so melancholy and miserable. The sexton and gravedigger was nothing to my father; and he had a look about his eye—to be sure there was a reason for it—that you'd think he was up all night crying; though it's little indulgence he took that way.

"Well, of all Mr. Callaghan's men, there was none so great a favorite as my father. The neighbors were all fond of him.

"'A kind crayture, every inch of him!' the women would say. 'Did ye see his face at Mrs. Delany's funeral?'

"'True for you,' another would remark; 'he mistook the road with grief, and stopped at a shebeen house instead of Kilmurry church.'

"I need say no more, only one thing: that it was principally among the farmers and the country people my father was liked so much. The great people and the quality—I ax your pardon; but sure isn't it true, Mister Charles?—they don't fret so much after their fathers and brothers, and they care little who's driving them, whether it was a decent, respectable man like my father, or a chap with a grin on him like a rat-trap. And so it happened, that my father used to travel half the county; going here and there wherever there was trade stirring; and, faix, a man didn't think himself rightly buried if my father wasn't there; for ye see, he knew all about it; he could tell to a quart of spirits what would be wanting for a wake; he knew all the good criers for miles round; and I've heard it was a beautiful sight to see him standing on a hill, arranging the procession, as they walked into the churchyard, and giving the word like a captain,

"'Come on, the stiff—now the friends of the stiff—now the pop'lace.'

"That's what he used to say, and troth he was always repeating it, when he was a little gone in drink—for that's the time his spirits would rise—and he'd think he was burying half Munster.

"And sure it was a real pleasure and a pride to be buried in them times; for av it was only a small farmer with a potato garden, my father would come down with the black cloak on him, and three yards of crape behind his hat, and set all the children crying and yelling for half a mile round; and then the way he'd walk before them with a spade on his shoulder, and sticking it down in the ground, clap his hat on the top of it, to make it look like a chief mourner. It was a beautiful sight!"

"But, Mike, if you indulge much longer in this flattering recollection of your father, I'm afraid we shall lose sight of the ghost entirely."

"No fear in life, your honor; I'm coming to him now. Well, it was this way it happened: In the winter of the great frost, about forty-two or forty-three years ago, the ould priest of Tulloughmurray took ill and died; he was sixty years priest of the parish, and mightily beloved by all the people, and good reason for it: a pleasanter man, and a more social crayture, never lived—'twas himself was the life of

the whole country-side. A wedding nor a christening wasn't lucky av he wasn't there, sitting at the top of the table, with mayby his arm round the bride herself, or the baby on his lap, a smoking jug of punch before him, and as much kindness in his eye as would make the fortunes of twenty hypocrites if they had it among them, and then he was so good to the poor; the Priory was always full of ould men and ould women sitting around the big fire in the kitchen, that the cook could hardly get near it. There they were, eating their meals and burning their shins, till they were speckled like a trout's back, and grumbling all the time; but Father Dwyer liked them, and he would have them.

"'Where have they to go,' he'd say, 'av it wasn't to me? Give Molly Kinshela a lock of that bacon. Tim, it's a cowld morning; will ye have a taste of the "dew?"'

"Ah! that's the way he'd spake to them; but sure goodness is no warrant for living any more than devilment, and so he got cowld in his feet at a station, and he rode home in the heavy snow without his big coat—for he gave it away to a blind man on the road: in three days he was dead.

"I see you're getting impatient, so I'll not stop to say what grief was in the parish when it was known; but troth, there never was seen the like before—not a crayture would lift a spade for two days, and there was more whisky sold in that time than at the whole spring fair. Well, on the third day the funeral set out, and never was the equal of it in them parts; first, there was my father—he came special from Cork with the six horses all in new black, and plumes like little poplar-trees—then came Father Dwyer, followed by the two coadjutors in beautiful surplices, walking bare-headed, with the little boys of the Priory school, two and two."

"Well, Mike, I'm sure it was very fine; but, for Heaven's sake! spare me all these descriptions, and get on to the ghost."

"'Faith, your honor's in a great hurry for the ghost—maybe ye won't like him when ye have him; but I'll go faster if ye please. Well, Father Dwyer, ye see, was born at Aghan-lish, of an ould family, and he left it in his will that he was to be buried in the family vault; and as Aghan-lish was eighteen miles up the mountains, it was getting late when they drew near. By that time the great procession was all broke up and goes home. The coadjutors stopped to dine at the 'Blue Bellows' at the cross-roads, the little boys took to pelting snowballs, there was a fight or two on the way besides—and, in fact, except an ould deaf fellow that my father took to mind the horses, he was quite alone. Not that he minded that same; for when the crowd was gone, my father began to sing a droll song, and tould the deaf chap that it was a lamentation. At last they came in sight of Aghan-lish. It was a lonesome, melancholy-looking place, with nothing near it except two or three ould fir-trees, and a small slated house with one window, where the sexton lived, and even that was shut up, and a padlock on the door. Well, my father was not over-much pleased at the look of matters, but as he was never hard put to what to do, he managed to get the coffin into the vestry; and then, when he unharnessed the horses, he sent the deaf fellow with them down to the village to tell the priest that the corpse was there, and to come up early in the morning and perform mass. The next thing to do was to make himself comfortable for the night; and then he made a roaring fire on the ould hearth—for there was plenty of bog-fir there—closed the windows with the black cloaks, and, wrapping two round himself, he sat down to cook a little supper he brought with him in case of need.

"Well, you may think it was melancholy enough to pass the night up there alone, with a corpse in an ould ruined church in the middle of the mountains, the wind howling about on every side, and the snow-drift beating against the walls; but as the fire burned brightly, and the little plate of rashers and eggs smoked temptingly before him, my father mixed a jug of the strongest punch, and set down as happy as a king. As long as he was eating away he had no time to be thinking of anything else; but, when all was done, and he looked about him, he began to feel very low and melancholy in his heart. There was the great black coffin on three chairs in one corner; and then the mourning cloaks that he had stuck up against the windows moved backward and forward like living things; and, outside, the wild cry of the plover as he flew past, and the night-owl sitting in a nook of the old church. 'I wish it was morning, anyhow,' said my father, 'for this is a lonesome place to be in; and, faix, he'll be a cunning fellow that catches me passing the night this way again.' Now, there was one thing distressed him most of all—my father used always to make fun of the ghosts and sperits the neighbors would tell of, pretending there was no such thing; and now the thought came to him, 'Maybe they'll revenge them-

selves on me to-night when they have me up here alone;' and with that he made another jug stronger than the first, and tried to remember a few prayers in case of need, but somehow his mind was not too clear, and he said afterward he was always mixing up ould songs and toasts with the prayers, and when he thought he had just got hold of a beautiful psalm, it would turn out to be 'Tatter Jack Walsh,' or 'Limping James,' or something like that. The storm, meanwhile, was rising every moment, and parts of the old abbey were falling, as the wind shook the ruin, and my father's spirits, notwithstanding the punch, were lower than ever.

"'I made it too weak,' said he, as he set to work on a new jorum; and, troth, this time that was not the fault of it, for the first sup nearly choked him.

"'Ah!' said he now, 'I knew what it was; this is like the thing; and, Mr. Free, you are beginning to feel easy and comfortable. Pass the jug. Your very good health and song. I'm a little hoarse, it's true, but if the company will excuse—"

"And then he began knocking on the table with his knuckles as if there was a room full of people asking him to sing. In short, my father was drunk as a fiddler; the last brew finished him; and he began roaring away all kinds of droll songs, and telling all manner of stories, as if he was at a great party.

"While he was capering this way about the room, he knocked down his hat, and with it a pack of cards he put into it before leaving home, for he was mighty fond of a game.

"'Will ye take a hand, Mr. Free?' said he, as he gathered them up and sat down beside the fire.

"'I'm convanient,' said he, and began dealing out as if there was a partner fornenst him.

"When my father used to get this far in the story, he became very confused. He says, that once or twice he mistook the liquor, and took a pull at the bottle of potteen instead of the punch; and the last thing he remembers was asking poor Father Dwyer if he would draw near to the fire, and not be lying there near the door.

"With that he slipped down on the ground and fell fast asleep. How long he lay that way he could never tell. When he awoke and looked up, his hair nearly stood on an end with fright. What do you think he seen fornenst him, sitting at the other side of the fire, but Father Dwyer himself. There he was, divil a lie in it, wrapped up in one of the mourning cloaks, trying to warm his hands at the fire.

"'*Salve hoc nomine patri!*' said my father, crossing himself; 'av it's your ghost, God presarve me!'

"'Good evening t'ye, Mr. Free,' said the ghost; 'and av I might be bould, what's in the jug?'—for ye see my father had it under his arm fast, and never let it go when he was asleep.

"'*Pater noster qui es in*—potteen, sir,' said my father; for the ghost didn't look pleased at his talking Latin.

"'Ye might have the politeness to ax if one had a mouth on him, then,' says the ghost.

"'Sure, I didn't think the like of you would taste sperits.'

"'Try me,' said the ghost; and with that he filled out a glass, and tossed it off like a Christian.

"'Beamish!' says the ghost, smacking his lips.

"'The same,' says my father; 'and sure what's happened you has not spoilt your taste.'

"'If you'd mix a little hot,' says the ghost, 'I'm thinking it would be better; the night is mighty sevare.'

"'Anything that your reverance pleases,' says my father, as he began to blow up a good fire to boil the water.

"'And what news is stirring?' says the ghost.

"'Devil a word, your reverance: your own funeral was the only thing doing last week; times is bad; except the measles, there's nothing in our parts.'

"'And we're quite dead hereabouts, too,' says the ghost.

"'There's some of us so, anyhow,' says my father, with a sly look. 'Taste that, your reverance.'

"'Pleasant and refreshing,' says the ghost; 'and now, Mr. Free, what do you say to a little spoilt five, or beggar my neighbor?'

"'What will we play for?' says my father; for a thought just struck him—'maybe it's some trick of the devil to catch my soul.'

"'A pint of Beamish,' says the ghost.

"'Done!' says my father; 'cut for deal; the ace of clubs; you have it.'

"Now, the whole time the ghost was dealing the cards my father never took his eyes off of him, for he wasn't quite asy in his mind at all; but when he saw him turn up the trump, and take a strong drink afterward, he got more at ease, and began the game.

"How long they played it was never

rightly known; but one thing is sure, they drank a cruel deal of sperits; three quart bottles my father brought with him were all finished, and by that time his brain was so confused with the liquor, and all he lost—for somehow he never won a game—that he was getting very quarrelsome.

"'You have your own luck to it,' says he, at last.

"'True for you; and, besides, we play a great deal where I come from.'

"'I've heard so,' says my father. 'I lead the knave, sir; spades! Bad cess to it, lost again!'

"Now it was really very distressing; for by this time, though they only began for a pint of Beamish, my father went on betting till he lost the hearse and all the six horses, mourning cloaks, plumes, and everything.

"'Are you tired, Mr. Free? Maybe you'd like to stop?'

"'Stop! faith it's a nice time to stop; of course not.'

"'Well, what will ye play for now?'

"The way he said these words brought a trembling all over my father, and his blood curdled in his heart. 'Oh, murther!' says he to himself, 'it's my sowl he is wanting all the time.'

"'I've mighty little left,' says my father, looking at him keenly, while he kept shuffling the cards quick as lightning.

"'Mighty little; no matter, we'll give you plenty of time to pay; and if you can't do it, it shall never trouble you as long as you live.'

"'Oh, you murthering devil!' says my father, flying at him with a spade that he had behind his chair, 'I've found you out.'

"With one blow he knocked him down; and now a terrible fight begun, for the ghost was very strong too; but my father's blood was up, and he'd have faced the devil himself then. They rolled over each other several times, the broken bottles cutting them to pieces, and the chairs and tables crashing under them. At last the ghost took the bottle that lay on the hearth, and leveled my father to the ground with one blow; down he fell, and the bottle and the whisky were both dashed into the fire; that was the end of it, for the ghost disappeared that moment in a blue flame that nearly set fire to my father as he lay on the floor.

"Och! it was a cruel sight to see him next morning, with his cheek cut open and his hands all bloody, lying there by himself; all the broken glass, and the cards all round him; the coffin, too, was knocked down off the chair: maybe the ghost had trouble getting into it. However that was, the funeral was put off for a day; for my father couldn't speak; and, as for the sexton, it was a queer thing, but when they came to call him in the morning, he had two black eyes, and a gash over his ear, and he never knew how he got them. It was easy enough to know the ghost did it; but my father kept the secret, and never told it to any man, woman, or child in them parts."

CHAPTER LXXVI.

LISBON.

I HAVE little power to trace the events which occupied the succeeding three weeks of my history. The lingering fever which attended my wound detained me during that time at the château; and when at last I did leave Lisbon, the winter was already beginning, and it was upon a cold raw evening that I once more took possession of my old quarters at the Quay de Soderi.

My eagerness and anxiety to learn something of the campaign was ever uppermost, and no sooner had I reached my destination than I dispatched Mike to the Quartermaster's office to pick up some news, and hear which of my friends and brother officers were then at Lisbon. I was sitting in a state of nervous impatience watching for his return, when at length I heard footsteps approaching my room, and the next moment Mike's voice, saying, "The ould room, sir, where he was before." The door suddenly opened, and my friend Power stood before me.

"Charley, my boy!"—"Fred, my fine fellow!" was all either could say for some minutes. Upon my part, the recollection of his bold and manly bearing in my behalf choked all utterance; while, upon his, my haggard cheek and worn look produced an effect so sudden and unexpected that he became speechless.

In a few minutes, however, we both rallied, and opened our store of mutual remembrances since we parted. My career I found he was perfectly acquainted with, and his consisted of nothing but one unceasing round of gayety and pleasure. Lisbon had been delightful during the summer; parties to Cintra, excursions through the surrounding country, were of daily occurrence; and, as my friend was a favorite everywhere, his life was one of continued amusement.

"Do you know, Charley, had it been any other man than yourself, I should not

have spared him; for I have fallen head over ears in love with your little dark-eyed Portuguese."

"Ah! Donna Inez, you mean?"

"Yes, it is she I mean, and you need not affect such an air of uncommon *nonchalance*. She's the loveliest girl in Lisbon, and with fortune to pay off all the mortgages in Connemara."

"Oh, faith! I admire her amazingly; but, as I never flattered myself upon any preference—"

"Come, come, Charley, no concealment, my old fellow; every one knows the thing's settled. Your old friend Sir George Dashwood told me yesterday."

"Yesterday! Why, is he here; at Lisbon?"

"To be sure he is; didn't I tell you that before? confound it! what a head I have! Why, man, he's come out as Deputy Adjutant-General; but for him I should not have got renewed leave."

"And Miss Dashwood, is she here?"

"Yes, she came with him. By Jove, how handsome she is! quite a different style of thing from our dark friend, but, to my thinking, even handsomer. Hammersley seems of my opinion, too."

"How! is Hammersley at Lisbon?"

"On the staff here. But, confound it, what makes you so red, you have no ill-feeling toward him now. I know he speaks most warmly of you; no later than last night, at Sir George's—"

What Power was about to add I know not, for I sprang from my chair with a sudden start, and walked to the window, to conceal my agitation from him.

"And so," said I, at length regaining my composure in some measure, "Sir George also spoke of my name in connection with the Senhora?"

"To be sure he did. All Lisbon does. Why, what can you mean? But I see, my dear boy; you know you are not of the strongest; and we've been talking far too long. Come now, Charley, I'll say good-night. I'll be with you at breakfast to-morrow, and tell you all the gossip; meanwhile, promise me to get quietly to bed, and so good-night."

Such was the conflicting state of feeling I suffered from, that I made no effort to detain Power. I longed to be once more alone, to think—calmly, if I could—over the position I stood in, and to resolve upon my plans for the future.

My love for Lucy Dashwood had been long rather a devotion than a hope. My earliest dawn of manly ambition was associated with the first hour I met her. She it was who first touched my boyish heart, and suggested a sense of chivalrous ardor within me; and, even though lost to me forever, I could still regard her as the mainspring of my actions, and dwell upon my passion as the thing that hallowed every enterprise of my life.

In a word, my love, however little it might reach her heart, was everything to mine. It was the worship of the devotee to his protecting saint. It was the faith that made me rise above misfortune and mishap, and led me onward; and in this way I could have borne anything, everything, rather than the imputation of fickleness.

Lucy might not—nay, I felt she did not—love me. It was possible that some other was preferred before me; but to doubt my own affection, to suspect my own truth, was to destroy all the charm of my existence, and to extinguish within me forever the enthusiasm that made me a hero to my own heart.

It may seem but poor philosophy, but, alas! how many of our happiest, how many of our brightest thoughts here are but delusions like this! The dayspring of youth gilds the tops of the distant mountains before us, and many a weary day through life, when clouds and storms are thickening around us, we live upon the mere memory of the past. Some fast-flitting prospect of a bright future, some passing glimpse of a sunlit valley, tinges all our after-years.

It is true that he will suffer fewer disappointments, he will incur fewer of the mishaps of the world, who indulges in no fancies such as these; but equally true is it that he will taste none of that exuberant happiness which is that man's portion who weaves out a story of his life, and who, in connecting the promise of early years with the performance of later, will seek to fulfill a fate and destiny.

Weaving such fancies, I fell sound asleep, nor woke before the stir and bustle of the great city aroused me. Power, I found, had been twice at my quarters that morning, but, fearing to disturb me, had merely left a few lines to say that, as he should be engaged on service during the day, we could not meet before the evening. There were certain preliminaries requisite regarding my leave which demanded my appearing before a board of medical officers, and I immediately set about dressing; resolving that, as soon as they were completed, I should, if permitted, retire to one of the small cottages on the opposite bank of the Tagus, there to remain until my re-

stored health allowed me to rejoin my regiment.

I dreaded meeting the Dashwoods. I anticipated with a heavy heart how effectually one passing interview would destroy all my day-dreams of happiness, and I preferred anything to the sad conviction of hopelessness such a meeting must lead to.

While I thus balanced with myself how to proceed, a gentle step came to the door, and, as it opened slowly, a servant in a dark livery entered.

"Mr. O'Malley, sir?"

"Yes," said I, wondering to whom my arrival could be thus early known.

"Sir George Dashwood requests you will step over to him as soon as you go out," continued the man; "he is so engaged that he cannot leave home, but is most desirous to see you."

"It is not far from here?"

"No, sir; scarcely five minutes' walk."

"Well, then, if you will show me the way, I'll follow you."

I cast one passing glance at myself to see that all was right about my costume, and sallied forth.

In the middle of the Black Horse square, at the door of a large, stone-fronted building, a group of military men were assembled, chatting and laughing away together; some reading the lately-arrived English papers; others were lounging upon the stone parapet, carelessly puffing their cigars. None of the faces were known to me; so, threading my way through the crowd, I reached the steps. Just as I did so, a half-muttered whisper met my ear:

"Who did you say?"

"O'Malley, the young Irishman who behaved so gallantly at the Douro."

The blood rushed hotly to my cheek; my heart bounded with exultation; my step, infirm and tottering but a moment before, became fixed and steady, and I felt a thrill of proud enthusiasm playing through my veins. How little did the speaker of those few and random words know what courage he had given to a drooping heart, what renewed energy to a breaking spirit! The voice of praise, too, coming from those to whom we had thought ourselves unknown, has a magic about it that must be felt to be understood. So it happened, that in a few seconds a revolution had taken place in all my thoughts and feelings, and I, who had left my quarters dispirited and depressed, now walked confidently and proudly forward.

"Mr. O'Malley, sir," said the servant to the officer in waiting, as we entered the ante-chamber.

"Ah! Mr. O'Malley," said the aide-de-camp, in his blandest accent, "I hope you're better. Sir George is most anxious to see you; he is at present engaged with the staff—"

A bell rang at the moment, and cut short the sentence; he flew to the door of the inner room, and, returning in an instant, said,

"Will you follow me? This way, if you please."

The room was crowded with general officers and aides-de-camp, so that for a second or two I could not distinguish the parties; but no sooner was my name announced, than Sir George Dashwood, forcing his way through, rushed forward to meet me.

"O'Malley, my brave fellow! delighted to shake your hand again! How much grown you are—twice the man I knew you! and the arm, too, is it getting on well?"

Scarcely giving me a moment to reply, and still holding my hand tightly in his grasp, he introduced me on every side.

"My young Irish friend, Sir Edward, the man of the Douro. My Lord, allow me to present Lieutenant O'Malley of the Fourteenth."

"A very dashing thing, that of yours, sir, at Ciudad Rodrigo."

"A very senseless one, I fear, my Lord."

"No, no, I don't agree with you at all; even when no great results follow, the *morale* of an army benefits by acts of daring."

A running fire of kind and civil speeches poured in on me from all quarters, and, amid all that crowd of bronzed and war-worn veterans, I felt myself the lion of the moment. Craufurd, it appeared, had spoken most handsomely of my name, and I was thus made known to many of those whose own reputations were then extending over Europe.

In this happy trance of excited pleasure I passed the morning. Amid the military chit-chat of the day around me, treated as an equal by the greatest and the most distinguished, I heard all the confidential opinions upon the campaign and its leaders; and in that most entrancing of all flatteries—the easy tone of companionship of our elders and betters—forgot my griefs, and half believed I was destined for great things.

Fearing at length that I had prolonged my visit too far, I approached Sir George to take my leave, when, drawing my arm within his, he retired toward one of the windows.

"A word, O'Malley, before you go. I've arranged a little plan for you; mind, I

shall insist upon obedience. They'll make some difficulty about your remaining here, so that I have appointed you one of our extra aides-de-camp. That will free you from all trouble, and I shall not be very exacting in my demands upon you. You must, however, commence your duties to-day, and, as we dine at seven precisely, I shall expect you. I am aware of your wish to stay in Lisbon, my boy, and, if all I hear be true, congratulate you sincerely; but more of this another time, and so good-by." So saying, he shook my hand once more, warmly; and, without well feeling how or why, I found myself in the street.

The last few words Sir George had spoken threw a gloom over all my thoughts. I saw at once that the report Power had alluded to had gained currency at Lisbon. Sir George believed it; doubtless, Lucy, too; and, forgetting in an instant all the emulative ardor that so lately stirred my heart, I took my path beside the river, and sauntered slowly along, lost in my reflections.

I had walked for above an hour, before paying any attention to the path I followed. Mechanically, as it were, retreating from the noise and tumult of the city, I wandered toward the country. My thoughts fixed but upon one theme, I had neither ears nor eyes for aught around me; the great difficulty of my present position now appearing to me in this light—my attachment to Lucy Dashwood, unrequitted and unreturned as I felt it, did not permit of my rebutting any report which might have reached her concerning Donna Inez. I had no right, no claim to suppose her sufficiently interested about me to listen to such an explanation, had I even the opportunity to make it. One thing was thus clear to me,—all my hopes had ended in that quarter; and, as this conclusion sank into my mind, a species of dogged resolution to brave my fortune crept upon me, which only waited the first moment of my meeting her to overthrow and destroy forever.

Meanwhile I walked on; now rapidly, as some momentary rush of passionate excitement; now slowly, as some depressing and gloomy notion succeeded; when suddenly my path was arrested by a long file of bullock cars which blocked up the way. Some chance squabble had arisen among the drivers, and, to avoid the crowd and collision, I turned into a gateway which opened beside me, and soon found myself in a lawn handsomely planted, and adorned with flowering shrubs and ornamental trees.

In the half-dreamy state my musings had brought me to, I struggled to recollect why the aspect of the place did not seem altogether new. My thoughts were, however, far away; now blending some memory of my distant home with scenes of battle and bloodshed, or resting upon my first interview with her whose chance word, carelessly and lightly spoken, had written the story of my life. From this reverie I was rudely awakened by a rustling noise in the trees behind me, and, before I could turn my head, the two fore-paws of a large stag-hound were planted upon my shoulders, while the open mouth and panting tongue were close beside my face. My day-dream was dispelled quick as lightning; it was Juan himself, the favorite dog of the Senhora, who gave me this rude welcome, and who now, by a thousand wild gestures and bounding caresses, seemed to do the honors of his house. There was something so like home in these joyful greetings, that I yielded myself at once his prisoner, and followed, or rather was accompanied by him toward the villa.

Of course, sooner or later, I should have called upon my kind friends; then why not now, when chance had already brought me so near? Besides, if I held to my resolution, which I meant to do—of retiring to some quiet and sequestered cottage till my health was restored—the opportunity might not readily present itself again. This line of argument perfectly satisfied my reason, while a strong feeling of something like curiosity piqued me to proceed, and, before many minutes elapsed, I reached the house. The door, as usual, lay wide open, and the ample hall, furnished like a sitting-room, had its customary litter of books, music, and flowers scattered upon the tables. My friend Juan, however, suffered me not to linger here, but, rushing furiously at a door before me, began a vigorous attack for admittance.

As I knew this to be the drawing-room, I opened the door and walked in, but no one was to be seen; a half-open book lay upon an ottoman, and a fan, which I recognized as an old acquaintance, was beside it, but the owner was absent.

I sat down, resolved to wait patiently for her coming, without any announcement of my being there. I was not sorry, indeed, to have some moments to collect my thoughts, and restore my erring faculties to something like order.

As I looked about the room, it seemed as if I had been there but yesterday. The folding-doors lay open to the garden, just as I had seen them last; and, save that

the flowers seemed fewer, and those which remained of a darker and more somber tint, all seemed unchanged. There lay the guitar, to whose thrilling chords my heart had bounded; there, the drawing over which I had bent in admiring pleasure, suggesting some tints of light or shadow, as the fairy fingers traced them; every chair was known to me, and I greeted them as things I cared for.

While thus I scanned each object around me, I was struck by a little china vase, which, unlike its other brethren, contained a bouquet of dead and faded flowers; the blood rushed to my cheek; I started up; it was one I had myself presented to her the day before we parted. It was in that same vase I placed it; the very table, too, stood in the same position beside that narrow window. What a rush of thoughts came pouring on me! And oh! shall I confess it? how deeply did such a mute testimony of remembrance speak to my heart, at the moment that I felt myself unloved and uncared for by another! I walked hurriedly up and down; a maze of conflicting resolves combating in my mind, while one thought ever recurred—"Would that I had not come there!" and yet, after all, it may mean nothing; some piece of passing coquetry, which she will be the very first to laugh at. I remember how she spoke of poor Howard; what folly to take it otherwise! "Be it so, then," said I, half aloud; "and now for my part of the game;" and with this I took from my pocket the light blue scarf she had given me the morning we parted, and, throwing it over my shoulder, prepared to perform my part in what I had fully persuaded myself to be a comedy. The time, however, passed on, and she came not; a thousand high-flown Portuguese phrases had time to be conned over again and again by me, and I had abundant leisure to enact my coming part; but still the curtain did not rise. As the day was wearing, I resolved at last to write a few lines, expressive of my regret at not meeting her, and promising myself an early opportunity of paying my respects under more fortunate circumstances. I sat down accordingly, and, drawing the paper toward me, began, in a mixture of French and Portuguese, as it happened, to indite my billet.

"Senhora Inez"—no—"Ma chère Mademoiselle Inez"—confound it, that's too intimate; well, here goes—"Monsieur O'Malley presente ses respects"—that will never do; and, then, after twenty other abortive attempts, I began thoughtlessly sketching heads upon the paper, and scribbling with wonderful facility in fifty different ways—"Ma charmante amie—Ma plus chère Inez," etc., and in this most useful and profitable occupation did I pass another half hour.

How long I should have persisted in such an employment it is difficult to say, had not an incident intervened, which suddenly but most effectually put an end to it. As the circumstance is one which, however little striking in itself, had the greatest and most lasting influence upon my future career, I shall, perhaps, be excused in devoting another chapter to its recital.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

A PLEASANT PREDICAMENT.

As I sat vainly endeavoring to fix upon some suitable and appropriate epithet by which to commence my note, my back was turned toward the door of the garden; and so occupied was I in my meditations, that, even had any one entered at the time, in all probability I should not have perceived it. At length, however, I was aroused from my study by a burst of laughter, whose girlish joyousness was not quite new to me. I knew it well; it was the Senhora herself; and the next moment I heard her voice.

"I tell you, I'm quite certain I saw his face in the mirror as I passed. Oh, how delightful! and you'll be charmed with him; so, mind, you must not steal him from me; I shall never forgive you if you do; and look, only look! he has got the blue scarf I gave him when he marched to the Douro."

While I perceived that I was myself seen, I could see nothing of the speaker, and, wishing to hear something further, appeared more than ever occupied in the writing before me.

What her companion replied I could not, however, catch, but only guess at its import by the Senhora's answer.

"*Fi donc!*—I really am very fond of him; but, never fear, I shall be as stately as a queen. You shall see how meekly he will kiss my hand, and with what unbending reserve I'll receive him."

"Indeed!" thought I; "mayhap, I'll mar your plot a little; but let us listen."

Again her friend spoke, but too low to be heard.

"It is so provoking," continued Inez; "I never can remember names, and his was something too absurd; but, never

mind, I shall make him a grandee of Portugal. Well, but come along, I long to present him to you."

Here a gentle struggle seemed to ensue; for I heard the Senhora coaxingly entreat her, while her companion steadily resisted.

"I know very well you think I shall be so silly, and perhaps wrong; eh, is it not so? but you're quite mistaken. You'll be surprised at my cold and dignified manner. I shall draw myself proudly up, thus, and courtesying deeply, say, 'Monsieur, j'ai l'honneur de vous saluer.'"

A laugh twice as mirthful as before interrupted her account of herself, while I could hear the tones of her friend evidently in expostulation.

"Well then, to be sure, you are provoking, but you really promise to follow me. Be it so; then give me that moss-rose. How you have fluttered me; now for it!"

So saying, I heard her foot upon the gravel, and the next instant upon the marble step of the door. There is something in expectation that sets the heart beating, and mine throbbed against my side. I waited, however, till she entered, before lifting my head, and then springing suddenly up, with one bound clasped her in my arms, and pressing my lips upon her roseate cheek, said,

"*Ma charmante amie!*" To disengage herself from me, and to spring suddenly back, was her first effort; to burst into an immoderate fit of laughing, her second; her cheek was, however, covered with a deep blush, and I already repented that my malice had gone so far.

"Pardon, Mademoiselle," said I, in affected innocence, "if I have so far forgotten myself as to assume a habit of my own country to a stranger."

A half-angry toss of the head was her only reply, and, turning toward the garden, she called to her friend:

"Come here, dearest, and instruct my ignorance upon your national customs; but first let me present to you—I never know his name—the Chevalier de —— What is it?"

The glass door opened as she spoke; a tall and graceful figure entered, and, turning suddenly round, showed me the features of Lucy Dashwood. We both stood opposite each other, each mute with amazement. *My* feelings let me not attempt to convey; shame, for the first moment stronger than aught else, sent the blood rushing to my face and temples, and the next I was cold and pale as death. As for her, I cannot guess at what passed in her mind. She courtesyed deeply to me, and with a half-smile of scarce recognition passed by me, and walked toward a window.

"*Comme vous êtes aimable!*" said the lively Portuguese, who comprehended little of this dumb show; "here have I been flattering myself what friends you'd be the very moment you meet, and now you'll not even look at each other."

What was to be done? The situation was every instant growing more and more embarrassing; nothing but downright effrontery could get through with it now; and never did a man's heart more fail him than did mine at this conjuncture. I made the effort, however, and stammered out certain unmeaning common-places. Inez replied, and I felt myself conversing with the headlong recklessness of one marching to a scaffold, a coward's fear at his heart, while he essayed to seem careless and indifferent.

Anxious to reach what I esteemed safe ground, I gladly adverted to the campaign; and at last, hurried on by the impulse to cover my embarrassment, was describing some skirmish with a French outpost. Without intending, I had succeeded in exciting the Senhora's interest, and she listened with sparkling eye and parted lips to the description of a sweeping charge in which a square was broken, and several prisoners carried off. Warming with the eager avidity of her attention, I grew myself more excited, when just as my narrative reached its climax, Miss Dashwood walked gently toward the bell, rang it, and ordered her carriage. The tone of perfect *nonchalance* of the whole proceeding struck me dumb: I faltered, stammered, hesitated, and was silent. Donna Inez turned from one to the other of us with a look of unfeigned astonishment, and I heard her mutter to herself something like a reflection upon "national eccentricities." Happily, however, her attention was now exclusively turned toward her friend, and while assisting her to shawl, and extorting innumerable promises of an early visit, I got a momentary reprieve; the carriage drew up also, and, as the gravel flew right and left beneath the horses' feet, the very noise and bustle relieved me.

"*Adios!*" then said Inez, as she kissed her for the last time, while she motioned to me to escort her to her carriage. I advanced—stopped—made another step forward, and again grew irresolute; but Miss Dashwood speedily terminated the difficulty; for, making me a formal courtesy, she declined my scarce-proffered attention, and left the room.

As she did so, I perceived that, on passing the table, her eyes fell upon the paper I had been scribbling over so long, and I thought that for an instant an expression of ineffable scorn seemed to pass across her features, save which—and perhaps even in this I was mistaken—her manner was perfectly calm, easy, and indifferent.

Scarce had the carriage rolled from the door, when the Senhora, throwing herself upon a chair, clapped her hands in childish ecstasy, while she fell into a fit of laughing that I thought would never have an end. "Such a scene?" cried she; "I would not have lost it for the world; what cordiality! what *empressement* to form acquaintance! I shall never forget it, Monsieur le Chevalier; your national customs seem to run sadly in extremes. One would have thought you deadly enemies; and poor me! after a thousand delightful plans about you both."

As she ran on thus, scarce able to control her mirth at each sentence, I walked the room with impatient strides, now, resolving to hasten after the carriage, stop it, explain in a few words how all had happened, and then fly from her forever; then, the remembrance of her cold, impassive look crossed me, and I thought that one bold leap into the Tagus might be the shortest and easiest solution to all my miseries; perfect abasement, thorough self-contempt had broken all my courage, and I could have cried like a child. What I said, or how I comforted myself after, I know not; but my first consciousness came to me as I felt myself running at the top of my speed far upon the road toward Lisbon.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

THE DINNER.

It may easily be imagined that I had little inclination to keep my promise of dining that day with Sir George Dashwood. However, there was nothing else for it; the die was cast—my prospects as regarded Lucy were ruined forever. We were not, we never could be anything to each other; and as for me, the sooner I braved my altered fortunes the better; and, after all, why should I call them altered. She evidently never had cared for me; and even supposing that my fervent declaration of attachment had interested her, the apparent duplicity and falseness of my late conduct could only fall the more heavily upon me.

I endeavored to philosophize myself into calmness and indifference. One by one I exhausted every argument for my defense, which, however ingeniously put forward, brought no comfort to my own conscience. I pleaded the unerring devotion of my heart—the uprightness of my motives—and when called on for the proofs—alas! except the blue scarf I wore in memory of another, and my absurd conduct at the villa, I had none. From the current gossip of Lisbon, down to my own disgraceful folly, all—all was against me.

Honesty of intention—rectitude of purpose, may be, doubtless they are, admirable supports to a rightly constituted mind; but even then they must come supported by such claims to probability as make the injured man feel he has not lost the sympathy of all his fellows. Now, I had none of these, had even my temperament, broken by sickness and harassed by unlucky conjectures, permitted my appreciating them.

I endeavored to call my wounded pride to my aid, and thought over the glance of haughty disdain she gave me as she passed on to her carriage; but even this turned against me, and a humiliating sense of my own degraded position sank deeply into my heart. "This impression at least," thought I, "must be effaced. I cannot permit her to believe—"

"His Excellency is waiting dinner, sir," said a lackey, introducing a finely powdered head gently within the door. I looked at my watch, it was eight o'clock; so, snatching my sabre and shocked at my delay, I hastily followed the servant down stairs, and thus at once cut short my deliberations.

The man must be but little observant, or deeply sunk in his own reveries, who, arriving half an hour too late for dinner, fails to detect in the faces of the assembled and expectant guests a very palpable expression of discontent and displeasure. It is truly a moment of awkwardness, and one in which few are found to manage with success; the blushing, hesitating, blundering apology of the absent man, is scarcely better than the ill-affected surprise of the more practiced offender. The bashfulness of the one is as distasteful as the cool impertinence of the other; both are so thoroughly out of place, for we are thinking of neither; our thoughts are wandering to cold soups and rechauffé pâtés, and we neither care for nor estimate the cause, but satisfy our spleen by cursing the offender.

Happily for me I was clad in a triple insensibility to such feelings, and with an

air of most perfect unconstraint and composure walked into a drawing-room where about twenty persons were busily discussing what peculiar amiability in my character could compensate for my present conduct.

"At last, O'Malley, at last!" said Sir George. "Why, my dear boy, how very late you are!"

I muttered something about a long walk —distance from Lisbon, etc.

"Ah! that was it. I was right, you see!" said an old lady in a spangled turban, as she whispered something to her friend beside her, who appeared excessively shocked at the information conveyed; while a fat, round-faced little general, after eyeing me steadily through his glass, expressed a *sotto voce* wish that I was upon *his* staff. I felt my cheek reddening at the moment, and stared around me like one whose trials were becoming downright insufferable, when happily dinner was announced, and terminated my embarrassment.

As the party filed past, I perceived that Miss Dashwood was not amongst them; and, with a heart relieved for the moment by the circumstance, and inventing a hundred conjectures to account for it, I followed with the aides-de-camp and the staff to the dinner-room.

The temperament is very Irish, I believe, which renders a man so elastic that, from the extreme of depression to the very climax of high spirits, there is but one spring. To this I myself plead guilty, and thus, scarcely was I freed from the embarrassment which a meeting with Lucy Dashwood must have caused, when my heart bounded with lightness.

When the ladies withdrew, the events of the campaign became the subject of conversation, and upon these, very much to my astonishment, I found myself consulted as an authority. The Douro, from some fortunate circumstance, had given me a reputation I never dreamed of, and I heard my opinions quoted upon topics of which my standing as an officer and my rank in the service could not imply a very extended observation. Power was absent on duty; and, happily for my supremacy, the company consisted entirely of generals in the commissariat, or new arrivals from England, all of whom knew still less than myself.

What will not iced champagne and flattery do? Singly, they are strong impulses; combined, their power is irresistible. I now heard for the first time that our great leader had been elevated to the peerage by the title of Lord Wellington, and I sincerely believe—however now I may smile at the confession—that, at the moment, I felt more elation at the circumstance than he did. The glorious sensation of being in any way, no matter how remotely, linked with the career of those whose path is a high one, and whose destinies are cast for great events, thrilled through me; and, in all the warmth of my admiration and pride for our great captain, a secret pleasure stirred within me as I whispered to myself, "And I, too, am a soldier!"

I fear me, that very little flattery is sufficient to turn the head of a young man of eighteen; and if I yielded to the "pleasant incense," let my apology be, that I was not used to it; and, lastly, let me avow, if I did get tipsy—I liked the liquor. And why not? It is the only tipple I know of that leaves no headache the next morning, to punish you for the glories of the past night. It may, like all other strong potations, it is true, induce you to make a fool of yourself when under its influence; but, like the nitrous oxide gas, its effects are passing, and as the pleasure is an ecstasy for the time, and your constitution none the worse when it is over, I really see no harm in it.

Then the benefits are manifest; for while he who gives becomes never the poorer for his benevolence, the receiver is made rich indeed. It matters little that some dear, kind friend is ready with his bitter draught, to remedy what he is pleased to call its unwholesome sweetness; you betake yourself with only the more pleasure to the "blessed elixir," whose fascinations neither the poverty of your pocket nor the penury of your brain can withstand, and by the magic of whose spell you are great and gifted. "*Vive la bagatelle!*" saith the Frenchman. "Long live Flattery!" say I, come from what quarter it will; the only wealth of the poor man,—the only reward of the unknown one; the arm that supports us in failure,—the hand that crowns us in success; the comforter in our affliction,—the gay companion in our hours of pleasure; the lullaby of the infant,—the staff of old age; the secret treasure we lock up in our own hearts, and which ever grows greater as we count it over. Let me not be told that the coin is fictitious, and the gold not genuine; its clink is as musical to the ear as though it bore the last impression of the mint, and I'm not the man to cast an aspersion upon its value.

This little digression, however seemingly out of place, may serve to illustrate what it might be difficult to convey in

other words,—namely, that if Charles O'Malley became, in his own estimation, a very considerable personage that day at dinner, the fault lay not entirely with himself, but with his friends, who told him he was such. In fact, my good reader, I was the lion of the party,—the man who saved Laborde,—who charged through a brigade of guns,—who performed feats which newspapers quoted, though he never heard of them himself. At no time is a man so successful in society as when his reputation heralds him, and it needs but little conversational eloquence to talk well, if you have but a willing and ready auditory. Of mine, I could certainly not complain; and as, drinking deeply, I poured forth a whole tide of campaigning recital, I saw the old colonels of recruiting districts exchanging looks of wonder and admiration with officers of the ordnance, while Sir George himself, evidently pleased at my *début*, went back to an early period of our acquaintance, and related the rescue of his daughter in Galway.

In an instant, the whole current of my thoughts was changed. My first meeting with Lucy, my boyhood's dream of ambition, my plighted faith, my thought of our last parting in Dublin, when, in a moment of excited madness, I told my tale of love. I remembered her downcast look, as, her cheek now flushing, now growing pale, she trembled while I spoke. I thought of her, as in the crash of battle her image flashed across my brain, and made me feel a rush of chivalrous enthusiasm to win her heart by "doughty deeds."

I forgot all around and about me. My head reeled, the wine, the excitement, my long previous illness, all pressed upon me; and, as my temples throbbed loudly and painfully, a chaotic rush of discordant, ill-connected ideas flitted across my mind. There seemed some stir and confusion in the room, but why or wherefore I could not think, nor could I recall my scattered senses, till Sir George Dashwood's voice roused me once again to consciousness.

"We are going to have some coffee, O'Malley. Miss Dashwood expects us in the drawing-room. You have not seen her yet?"

I know not my reply; but he continued:

"She has some letters for you, I think."

I muttered something, and suffered him to pass on; no sooner had he done so, however, than I turned toward the door, and rushed into the street. The cold night air suddenly recalled me to myself, and I stood for a moment, endeavoring to collect myself; as I did so, a servant stopped, and, saluting me, presented me with a letter. For a second, a cold chill came over me; I knew not what fear beset me. The letter I at last remembered must be that one alluded to by Sir George, so I took it in silence, and walked on.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

THE LETTER.

As I hurried to my quarters, I made a hundred guesses from whom the letter could have come; a kind of presentiment told me that it bore, in some measure, upon the present crisis of my life, and I burned with anxiety to read it.

No sooner had I reached the light, than all my hopes on this head vanished; the envelope bore the well-known name of my old college chum, Frank Webber, and none could, at the moment, have more completely dispelled all chance of interesting me. I threw it from me with disappointment, and sat moodily down to brood over my fate.

At length, however, and almost without knowing it, I drew the lamp toward me, and broke the seal. The reader being already acquainted with my amiable friend, there is the less indiscretion in communicating the contents, which ran thus:

"Trinity College, Dublin, No. 2.
"Oct. 5, 1810.

"MY DEAR O'MALLEY,—Nothing short of your death and burial, with or without military honors, can possibly excuse your very disgraceful neglect of your old friends here. Nesbitt has never heard of you, neither has Smith. Ottley swears never to have seen your handwriting, save on the back of a protested bill. You have totally forgotten *me*, and the Dean informs me that you have never condescended a single line to him; which latter inquiry on my part nearly cost me a rustication.

"A hundred conjectures to account for your silence—a new feature in you since you were here—are afloat. Some assert that your soldiering has turned your head, and that you are above corresponding with civilians. Your friends, however, who know you better, and value your worth, think otherwise; and having seen a paragraph about a certain O'Malley being tried by court-martial for stealing a goose, and maltreating the woman that owned it, ascribe your not writing to other motives. Do, in any case, relieve our minds; say, is

it yourself, or only a relative that's mentioned?

"Herbert came over from London with a long story about your doing wonderful things—capturing cannon and general officers by scores—but devil a word of it is extant; and if you have really committed these acts, they have 'misused the king's press damnably,' for neither in the *Times* nor the *Post* are you heard of. Answer this point, and say also if you have got promotion; for what precise sign you are algebraically expressed by at this writing, may serve Fitzgerald for a fellowship question. As for us, we are jogging along, *semper eadem*—that is, worse and worse. Dear Cecil Cavendish, our gifted friend, slight of limb and soft of voice, has been rusticated for immersing four bricklayers in that green receptacle of stagnant water and duckweed, yclept the 'Haha.' Roper, equally unlucky, has taken to reading for honors, and obtained a medal, I fancy—at least his friends shy him, and it must be something of that kind. Belson—poor Belson (fortunately for him he was born in the nineteenth not the sixteenth century, or he'd be most likely ornamenting a pile of fagots)—ventured upon some stray excursions into the Hebrew verbs—the Professor himself never having transgressed beyond the declensions—and the consequence is, he is in disgrace among the seniors. And as for me, a heavy charge hangs over my devoted head even while I write. The Senior Lecturer, it appears, has been for some time instituting some very singular researches into the original state of our goodly college at its founding. Plans and specifications showing its extent and magnificence have been continually before the board for the last month; and in such repute have been a smashed door-sill or an old arch, that freshmen have now abandoned conic sections for crowbars, and instead of the 'Principia' have taken up the pickaxe. You know, my dear fellow, with what enthusiasm I enter into any scheme for the aggrandizement of our Alma Mater, so I need not tell you how ardently I adventured into the career now opened to me. My time was completely devoted to the matter; neither means nor health did I spare, and in my search for antiquarian lore, I have actually undermined the old wall of the fellows' garden, and am each morning in expectation of hearing that the big bell near the commons-hall has descended from its lofty and most noisy eminence, and is snugly reposing in the mud. Meanwhile, accident put me in possession of a most singular and remarkable discovery. Our chambers—I call them ours for old association sake—are, you may remember, in the Old Square. Well, I have been fortunate enough, within the very precincts of my own dwelling, to contribute a very wonderful fact to the history of the University; alone—unassisted—unaided, I labored at my discovery. Few can estimate the pleasure I felt—the fame and reputation I anticipated. I drew up a little memoir for the board, most respectfully and civilly worded, having for title the following:

'Account
Of a remarkable Subterranean Passage lately discovered in the Old Building of Trinity College, Dublin:
With Observations upon its Extent, Antiquity, and Probable Use.
By F. Webber, Senior Freshman.'

"My dear O'Malley, I'll dwell upon the pride I felt in my new character of antiquarian; it is enough to state, that my very remarkable tract was well considered and received, and a commission appointed to investigate the discovery, consisting of the Vice-Provost, the Senior Lecturer, old Woodhouse, the Sub-Dean, and a few more.

"On Tuesday last they came accordingly in full academic costume. I, being habited most accurately in the like manner, and conducting them with all form into my bedroom, where a large screen concealed from view the entrance to the tunnel alluded to. Assuming a very John Kemble-ish attitude, I struck this down with one hand, pointing with the other to the wall, as I exclaimed, 'There! look there!'

"I need only quote Barret's exclamation to enlighten you upon my discovery, as, drawing in his breath with a strong effort, he burst out:

"'May the devil admire me, but it's a rat-hole!'

"I fear Charley, he's right, and, what's more, that the board will think so, for this moment a very warm discussion is going on among that amiable and learned body, whether I shall any longer remain an ornament to the University. In fact, the terror with which they fled from my chambers, overturning each other in the passage, seemed to imply that they thought me mad; and I do believe my voice, look, and attitude would not have disgraced a blue cotton dressing-gown and a cell in 'Swift's.' Be this as it may, few men have done more for college than I have. The sun never stood still for Joshua with more resolution than I have rested in my career of freshman; and if I have contributed

little to the fame, I have done much for the funds of the University; and when they come to compute the various sums I have paid in, for fines, penalties, and what they call properly 'impositions,' if they don't place a portrait of me in the examination-hall, between Archbishop Ussher and Flood, then do I say there is no gratitude in mankind; not to mention the impulse I have given to the various artisans whose business it is to repair lamps, windows, chimneys, iron railings, and watchmen, all of which I have devoted myself to, with an enthusiasm for political economy well known, and registered in the College street police office.

"After all, Charley, I miss you greatly. Your second in a ballad is not to be replaced; besides, Carlisle Bridge has got low; medical students and young attorneys affect minstrelsy, and actually frequent the haunts sacred to our muse.

"Dublin is, upon the whole, I think, worse; though one scarcely ever gets tired laughing at the small celebrities—"

Master Frank gets here indiscreet, so I shall skip.

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"And so the Dashwoods are going too; this will make mine a pitiable condition, for I really did begin to feel tender in that quarter. You may have heard that she refused me; this, however, is not correct, though I have little doubt it might have been—had I asked her.

"Hammersley has, you know, got his dismissal. I wonder how the poor fellow took it, when Power gave him back his letters and his picture. How *you* are to be treated remains to be seen; in any case, you certainly stand first favorite."

I laid down the letter at this passage, unable to read further. Here, then, was the solution of the whole chaos of mystery—here the full explanation of what had puzzled my aching brain for many a night long. These were the very letters I had myself delivered into Hammersley's hands; this the picture he had trodden to dust beneath his heel the morning of our meeting. I now felt the reason of his taunting allusion to my "success," his cutting sarcasm, his intemperate passion. A flood of light poured at once across all the dark passages of my history; and Lucy, too—dare I think of her? A rapid thought shot through my brain. What if she had really cared for me! What, if for me she had rejected another's love! What, if, trusting to my faith—my pledged and sworn faith—she had given me her heart! Oh! the bitter agony of that thought, to think that all my hopes were shipwrecked, with the very land in sight.

I sprang to my feet with some sudden impulse, but as I did so, the blood rushed madly to my face and temples, which beat violently; a parched and swollen feeling came about my throat; I endeavored to open my collar and undo my stock, but my disabled arm prevented me. I tried to call my servant, but my utterance was thick, and my words would not come; a frightful suspicion crossed me that my reason was tottering. I made toward the door, but, as I did so, the objects around me became confused and mingled, my limbs trembled, and I fell heavily upon the floor; a pang of dreadful pain shot through me as I fell—my arm was rebroken. After this, I knew no more; all the accumulated excitement of the evening bore down with one fell swoop upon my brain;—ere day broke, I was delirious.

I have a vague and indistinct remembrance of hurried and anxious faces around my bed, of whispered words and sorrowful looks; but my own thoughts careered over the bold hills of the far west as I trod them in my boyhood, free and high of heart, or recurred to the din and crash of the battle-field, with the mad bounding of the war-horse, and the loud clang of the trumpet; perhaps the acute pain of my swollen and suffering arm gave the character to my mental aberration; for I have more than once observed among the wounded in battle, that even when torn and mangled by grape from a howitzer, their ravings have partaken of a high feature of enthusiasm, shouts of triumph, and exclamations of pleasure; even songs have I heard—but never once the low muttering of despair, or the half-stifled cry of sorrow and affliction.

Such were the few gleams of consciousness which visited me, and even to such as these I soon became insensible.

Few like to chronicle, fewer still to read, the sad history of a sick-bed. Of mine, I know but little. The throbbing pulses of the erring brain, the wild fancies of lunacy, take no note of time. There is no past nor future—a dreadful present, full of its hurried and confused impressions, is all that the mind beholds; and even when some gleams of returning reason flash upon the mad confusion of the brain, they come like sunbeams through a cloud, dimmed, darkened, and perverted.

It is the restless activity of the mind in fever that constitutes its most painful anguish; the fast-flitting thoughts that rush

leafed Spanish hat with an air of most imposing pretension, and bowed reverently to himself.

"*Come sta vostra senoria?*" said he.

The whole gesture and style of this proceeding struck me as so ricículous, that, in spite of all my efforts, I could scarcely repress a laugh. He turned quickly round, and approached the bed. The deep shadow of the sombrero darkened the upper part of his features, but I could distinguish a pair of fierce-looking moustaches beneath, which curled upward toward his eyes, while a stiff point beard stuck straight from his chin. Fearing lest my rude interruption had been overheard, I was framing some polite speech in Portuguese, when he opened the dialogue by asking in that language how I did.

I replied, and was about to ask some questions relative to where, and under whose protection I then was, when my grave-looking friend, giving a pirouette upon one leg, sent his hat flying into the air, and cried out in a voice that not even my memory could fail to recognize,

"By the rock of Cashel he's cured! he's cured!—the fever's over! Oh, Master Charles dear! oh, Master darling! and you ain't mad, after all?"

"Mad! no, faith! but I shrewdly suspect you must be."

"Oh, devil a taste! but spake to me, honey—spake to me, acushla."

"Where am I? Whose house is this? What do you mean by that disguise—that beard—"

"Whisht, I'll tell you all, av you have patience; but are you cured?—tell me that first: sure they was going to cut the arm off you, till you got out of bed, and with your pistols, sent them flying, one out of the window and the other down-stairs; and I bate the little chap with the saw myself till he couldn't know himself in the glass."

While Mike ran on at this rate, I never took my eyes from him, and it was all my poor faculties were equal to, to convince myself that the whole scene was not some vision of a wandering intellect. Gradually, however, the well-known features recalled me to myself, and, as my doubts gave way at length, I laughed long and heartily at the masquerade absurdity of his appearance.

Mike, meanwhile, whose face expressed no small mistrust at the sincerity of my mirth, having uncloaked himself, proceeded to lay aside his beard and moustaches, saying, as he did so,

"There now, darling; there now, master dear don't be grinning that way; I'll not be a Portigee any more, av you'll be quiet and listen to reason."

"But, Mike, where am I? Answer me that one question."

"You're at home, dear; where else would you be?"

"At home?" said I, with a start, as my eye ranged over the various articles of luxury and elegance around, so unlike the more simple and unpretending features of my uncle's house—"at home?"

"Ay, just so; sure, isn't it the same thing? It's ould Don Emanuel that owns it; and won't it be your own—when you're married to that lovely crayture herself?"

I started up, and placing my hand upon my throbbing temple, asked myself if I were really awake; or if some flight of fancy had not carried me away beyond the bounds of reason and sense. "Go on, go on!" said I, at length, in a hollow voice, anxious to gather from his words something like a clue to this mystery. "How did this happen?"

"Av ye mean how you came here, faith it was just this way: After you got the fever, and beat the doctors, devil a one would go near you but myself and the Major."

"The Major—Major Monsoon?"

"No, Major Power himself. Well, he told your friends up here how it was going very hard with you, and that you were like to die; and the same evening they sent down a beautiful litter, as like a hearse as two peas, for you, and brought you up here in state; devil a thing was wanting but a few people to raise the cry to make it as fine a funeral as ever I seen; and sure I set up a whillilew myself in the Black Horse square, and the devils only laughed at me.

"Well, you see they put you into a beautiful elegant bed, and the young lady herself sat down beside you, betune times fanning you with a big fan, and then drying her eyes, for she was weeping like a waterfall. 'Don Miguel,' says she to me,—for, ye see, I put your cloak on by mistake when I was leaving the quarters,—'Don Miguel, questa hidalgo é vostro amigo?'

"'My most particular friend,' says I; 'God spare him many years to be so.'

"'Then take up your quarters here,' said she, 'and don't leave him; we'll do everything in our power to make you comfortable.'

"'I'm not particular,' says I; 'the run of the house—'"

"Then this is the Villa Nuova?" said I, with a faint sigh.

"The same," replied Mike; "and a sweet place it is for eating and drinking—for wine in buckets full, av ye axed for it,—for dancing and singing every evening, with as pretty craytures as ever I set eyes upon. Upon my conscience, it's as good as Galway; and good manners it is they have. What's more, none of your liberties nor familiarities with strangers, but it's Don Miguel, devil a less. 'Don Miguel, av it's plazing to you to take a drop of Xeres before your meat?'—or, 'Would you have a shaugh of a pipe or cigar when you're done?' That's the way of it."

"And Sir George Dashwood," said I, "has he been here? has he inquired for me?"

"Every day, either himself or one of the staff comes galloping up at luncheon time to ask after you; and then they have a bit of tender discoorse with the Senhora herself. Oh! devil a bit need ye fear them, she's true blue; and it isn't the Major's fault,—upon my conscience it isn't; for he does be coming the blarney over her in beautiful style."

"Does Miss Dashwood ever visit here?" said I, with a voice faltering and uncertain enough to have awakened suspicion in a more practiced observer.

"Never once; and that's what I call unnatural behavior, after you saving her life; and if she wasn't—"

"Be silent, I say."

"Well—well, there; I won't say any more; and sure it's time for me to be putting on my beard again. I'm going to the casino with Catrina, and sure it's with real ladies I might be going av it wasn't for Major Power, that told them I wasn't a officer; but it's all right again. I gave them a great history of the Frees, from the time of Cuilla na Toole, that was one of the family, and a cousin of Moses, I believe; and they behave well to one that comes from an ould stock."

"Don Miguel! Don Miguel!" said a voice from the garden.

"I'm coming, my angel! I'm coming, my turtle-dove!" said Mike, arranging his moustaches and beard with amazing dexterity. "Ah, but it would do your heart good av you could take a peep at us about twelve o'clock, dancing 'dirty James' for a bolero, and just see Miss Catrina, the lady's maid, doing 'cover the buckle' as neat as nature. There now, there's the lemonade near your hand, and I'll leave you the lamp, and you may go asleep as soon as you please, for Miss Inez won't come in to-night to play the guitar, for the doctor said it might do you harm now."

So saying, and before I could summon presence of mind to ask another question, Don Miguel wrapped himself in the broad folds of his Spanish cloak, and strode from the room with the air of an hidalgo.

I slept but little that night; the full tide of memory rushing in upon me, brought back the hour of my return to Lisbon, and the wreck of all my hopes, which, from the narrative of my servant, I now perceived to be complete. I dare not venture upon recording how many plans suggested themselves to my troubled spirit, and were in turn rejected. To meet Lucy Dashwood—to make a full and candid declaration—to acknowledge that flirtation alone with Donna Inez—a mere passing, boyish flirtation—had given the coloring to my innocent passion, and that in heart and soul I was hers and hers only. This was my first resolve; but, alas! if I had not courage to sustain a common interview, to meet her in the careless crowd of a drawing-room, what could I do under circumstances like these? Besides, the matter would be cut very short by her coolly declaring that she had neither right nor inclination to listen to such a declaration. The recollection of her look as she passed me to her carriage came flashing across my brain and decided this point. No, no! I'll not encounter that; however appearances for the moment had been against me, she should not have treated me thus coldly and disdainfully. It was quite clear she had never cared for me; wounded pride had been her only feeling: and so as I reasoned, I ended by satisfying myself that in that quarter all was at an end forever.

Now then for dilemma number two, I thought. The Senhora—my first impulse was one of anything but gratitude to her, by whose kind, tender care my hours of pain and suffering had been soothed and alleviated. But for her, I should have been spared all my present embarrassment—all my shipwrecked fortunes; but for her I should now be the aide-de-camp residing in Sir George Dashwood's own house, meeting with Lucy every hour of the day, dining beside her, riding out with her, pressing my suit by every means and with every advantage of my position; but for her and her dark eyes—and, by-the-by, what eyes they are!—how full of brilliancy, yet how teeming with an expression of soft and melting sweetness; and her mouth, too, how perfectly chiseled those full lips—how different from the cold, unbending firmness of Miss Dashwood's—not but I have seen Lucy smile too, and what a sweet

smile!—how it lighted up her fair cheek, and made her blue eyes darken and deepen till they looked like Heaven's own vault. Yes, there is more poetry in a blue eye. But still Inez is a very lovely girl, and her foot never was surpassed; she is a coquette, too, about that foot and ankle—I rather like a woman to be so. What a sensation she would make in England—how she would be the rage! and then I thought of home and Galway, and the astonishment of some, the admiration of others, as I presented her as my wife; the congratulations of my friends, the wonder of the men, the tempered envy of the women. Methought I saw my uncle, as he pressed her in his arms, say, "Yes, Charley, this is a prize worth campaigning for."

The stray sounds of a guitar which came from the garden broke in upon my musings at this moment. It seemed as if a finger was straying heedlessly across the strings. I started up, and to my surprise perceived it was Inez. Before I had time to collect myself, a gentle tap at the window aroused me; it opened softly, while from an unseen hand a bouquet of fresh flowers was thrown upon my bed; before I could collect myself to speak, the sash closed again and I was alone.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

THE VISIT.

MIKE'S performances at the masquerade had doubtless been of the most distinguished character, and demanded a compensating period of repose, for he did not make his appearance the entire morning. Toward noon, however, the door from the garden gently opened, and I heard a step upon the stone terrace, and something which sounded to my ears like the clank of a sabre. I lifted my head, and saw Fred Power beside me.

I shall spare my readers the recital of my friend, which, however, more full and explanatory of past events, contained in reality little more than Mickey Free had already told me. In fine, he informed me that our army, by a succession of retreating movements, had deserted the northern provinces, and now occupied the intrenched lines of Torres Vedras. That Massena, with a powerful force, was still in march: reinforcements daily pouring in upon him—and every expectation pointing to the probability that he would attempt to storm *our position*.

"The wise-heads," remarked Power, "talk of our speedy embarkation—the sanguine and the hot-brained rave of a great victory, and the retreat of Massena; but I was up at headquarters last week with dispatches, and saw Lord Wellington myself."

"Well, what did you make out? Did he drop any hint of his own views?"

"Faith, I can't say he did. He asked me some questions about the troops just landed—he spoke a little of the commissary department—damned the blankets—said that green forage was bad food for the artillery horses—sent me an English paper to read about the O.P. riots, and said the harriers would throw off about six o'clock, and that he hoped to see me at dinner."

I could not restrain a laugh at Power's catalogue of his Lordship's topics. "So," said I, "he at least does not take any gloomy views of our present situation."

"Who can tell what he thinks? he's ready to fight, if fighting will do anything—and to retreat, if that be better. But that he'll sleep an hour less, or drink a glass of claret more—come what will of it—I'll believe from no man living.

"We've lost one gallant thing in any case, Charley," resumed Power. "Busaco was, I'm told, a glorious day, and our people were in the heat of it. So that if we do leave the Peninsula now—that will be a confounded chagrin. Not for you, my poor fellow, for you could not stir; but I was so cursed foolish to take the staff appointment: thus one folly ever entails another."

There was a tone of bitterness in which these words were uttered, that left no doubt upon my mind some *arrière pensée* remained lurking behind them. My eyes met his—he bit his lip, and, coloring deeply, rose from the chair, and walked toward the window.

The chance allusion of my man Mike flashed upon me at the moment, and I dared not trust myself to break silence. I now thought I could trace in my friend's manner less of that gay and careless buoyancy which ever marked him. There was a tone, it seemed, of more grave and somber character, and even when he jested, the smile his features bore was not his usual frank and happy one, and speedily gave way to an expression I had never before remarked. Our silence, which had now lasted for some minutes, was becoming embarrassing—that strange consciousness that, to a certain extent, we were reading each other's thoughts, made us both cautious of breaking it; and when, at length, turning abruptly round, he asked, "When

I hoped to be up and about again?" I felt my heart relieved from I knew not well what load of doubt and difficulty that oppressed it. We chatted on for some little time longer, the news of Lisbon, and the daily gossip finishing our topics.

"Plenty of gayety, Charley! dinners and balls to no end! so get well, my boy, and make the most of it."

"Yes," I replied, "I'll do my best; but be assured the first use I'll make of health will be to join the regiment. I am heartily ashamed of myself for all I have lost already—though not altogether my fault."

"And will you really join at once?" said Power, with a look of eager anxiety I could not possibly account for.

"Of course I will; what have I—what can I have to detain me here?"

What reply he was about to make at this moment I know not, but the door opened, and Mike announced Sir George Dashwood.

"Gently! my worthy man, not so loud, if you please?" said the mild voice of the General, as he stepped noiselessly across the room, evidently shocked at the indiscreet tone of my follower. "Ah, Power, you here! and our poor friend, how is he?"

"Able to answer for himself at last, Sir George," said I, grasping his proffered hand.

"My poor lad! you've had a long bout of it; but you've saved your arm, and that's well worth the lost time. Well, I've come to bring you good news; there's been a very sharp cavalry affair, and our fellows have been the conquerors."

"There again, Power,—listen to that! We are losing everything!"

"Not so, not so, my boy," said Sir George, smiling blandly, but archly. "There are conquests to be won here, as well as there; and, in your present state, I rather think you better fitted for such as these."

Power's brow grew clouded, he essayed a smile, but it failed, and he rose and hurried toward the window.

As for me, my confusion must have led to a very erroneous impression of my real feelings, and I perceived Sir George anxious to turn the channel of the conversation.

"You see but little of your host, O'Malley," he resumed; "he is ever from home; but I believe nothing could be kinder than his arrangements for you. You are aware that he kidnapped you from us? I had sent Forbes over to bring you to us, your room was prepared, everything in readiness, when he met your man Mike, setting forth upon a mule, who told him you had just taken your departure for the villa. We both had our claim upon you, and, I believe, pretty much on the same score. By-the-by, you have not seen Lucy since your arrival. I never knew it till yesterday, when I asked if she did not find you altered."

I blundered out some absurd reply, blushed, corrected myself, and got confused. Sir George, attributing this, doubtless, to my weak state, rose soon after, and, taking Power along with him, remarked, as he left the room,

"We are too much for him yet, I see that; so we'll leave him quiet some time longer."

Thanking him in my heart for his true appreciation of my state, I sank back upon my pillow to think over all I had heard and seen.

"Well, Mister Charles," said Mike, as he came forward with a smile, "I suppose you heard the news? The Fourteenth bate the French down at Merca there, and took seventy prisoners; but, sure, it's little good it'll do, after all."

"And why not, Mike?"

"Musha! isn't Boney coming himself? He's bringing all the Roossian down with him, and going to destroy us entirely."

"Not at all, man; you mistake. He's nothing to do with Russia, and has quite enough on his hands at this moment."

"God grant it was truth you were talking! But, you see, I read it myself in the papers,—or Sergeant Haggerty did, which is the same thing,—that he's coming with the Cusacks."

"With who?—with what?"

"With the Cusacks."

"What the devil do you mean? Who are they?"

"Oh, Tower of Ivory! did you never hear of the Cusacks, with the red beards, and the red breeches, and long poles with pike-heads on them, that does all the devilment on horseback—spiking and spitting the people like larks?"

"The Cossacks, is it, you mean? The Cossacks?"

"Ay, just so, the Cusacks. They're from Clare Island, and thereabouts; and there's more of them in Meath. They're my mother's people, and was always real devils for fighting."

I burst out into an immoderate fit of laughing at Mike's etymology, which thus converted Hetman Platoff into a Galway man.

"Oh, murder! isn't it cruel to hear you laugh that way! There now, alanna! be

asy, and I'll tell you more news. We've the house to ourselves to-day. The ould gentleman's down at Behlem, and the daughter's in Lisbon, making great preparation for a grand ball they're to give when you are quite well."

"I hope I shall be with the army in a few days, Mike; and certainly, if I'm able to move about, I'll not remain longer in Lisbon."

"Arrah! don't say so, now! When was you ever so comfortable? Upon my conscience, it's more like Paradise than anything else. If ye see the dinner we sit down to every day! and, as for drink—if it wasn't that I sleep on a ground-floor, I'd seldom see a blanket."

"Well, certainly, Mike, I agree with you, these are hard things to tear ourselves away from."

"Aren't they now, sir? And then Miss Catherine, I'm taching her Irish!"

"Teaching her Irish! for Heaven's sake, what use can she make of Irish?"

"Ah, the crayture, she doesn't know better; and, as she was always bothering me to learn her English, I promised one day to do it; but ye see, somehow, I never was very proficient in strange tongues; so I thought to myself Irish will do as well. So, you perceive, we're taking a course of Irish literature, as Mr. Lynch says in Athlone; and, upon my conscience, she's an apt scholar."

"'Good-morning to you, Katey,' says Mr. Power to her the other day, as he passed through the hall. 'Good-morning, my dear; I hear you speak English perfectly now?'

"'*Honia mon diaoul*,' says she, making a courtesy.

"Be the powers, I thought he'd die with the laughing.

"'Well, my dear, I hope you don't mean it—do you know what you're saying?'

"'Honor bright, Major!' says I—'honor bright!' and I gave him a wink at the same time.

"'Oh, that's it!' said he, 'is it?' and so he went off holding his hands to his sides with the bare laughing; and your honor knows it wasn't a blessing she wished him for all that."

CHAPTER LXXXII.

THE CONFESSION.

"WHAT a strange position this of mine!" *thought I*, a few mornings after the events detailed in the last chapter. "How very fascinating in some respects—how full of all the charm of romance, and how confoundedly difficult to see one's way through!"

To understand my cogitation right, *figurez-vous*, my dear reader, a large and splendidly furnished drawing-room, from one end of which an orangery in full blossom opens; from the other is seen a delicious little boudoir, where books, bronzes, pictures and statues, in all the artistic disorder of a lady's sanctum, are bathed in a deep purple light from a stained glass window of the seventeenth century.

At a small table beside the wood fire, whose mellow light is flirting with the sunbeams upon the carpet, stands an antique silver breakfast service, which none but the hand of Benvenuto could have chiseled; beside it sits a girl, young and beautiful; her dark eyes, beaming beneath their long lashes, are fixed with an expression of watchful interest upon a pale and sickly youth who, lounging upon a sofa opposite, is carelessly turning over the leaves of a new journal, or gazing steadfastly on the fretted gothic of the ceiling, while his thoughts are traveling many a mile away. The lady being the Senhora Inez; the nonchalant invalid, your unworthy acquaintance, Charles O'Malley.

What a very strange position, to be sure.

"Then you are not equal to this ball to-night?" said she, after a pause of some minutes.

I turned as she spoke; her words had struck audibly upon my ear—but, lost in my reverie, I could but repeat my own fixed thought—how strange to be so situated!

"You are really very tiresome, Signor; I assure you, you are. I have been giving you a most elegant description of the Casino fête, and the beautiful costume of our Lisbon belles, but I can get nothing from you but this muttered something, which may be very shocking for aught I know. I'm sure your friend Major Power would be much more attentive to me; that is," added she, archly, "if Miss Dashwood were not present."

"What—why—you don't mean that there is anything there—that Power is paying attention to—"

"*Madre divina*, how that seems to interest you, and how red you are! If it were not that you never met her before, and that your acquaintance did not seem to make rapid progress, then I should say you are in love with her yourself."

I had to laugh at this, but felt my face flushing more. "And so," said I, affect-

ing a careless and indifferent tone, "the gay Fred Power is smitten at last!"

"Was it so very difficult a thing to accomplish?" said she, slyly.

"He seems to say so, at least. And the lady, how does she appear to receive his attentions?"

"Oh, I should say with evident pleasure and satisfaction, as all girls do the advances of men they don't care for, nor intend to care for."

"Indeed," said I, slowly; "indeed, Senhora?" looking into her eyes as I spoke, as if to read if the lesson were destined for my benefit.

"There, don't stare so!—every one knows that."

"So you don't think, then, that Lucy—I mean Miss Dashwood,—why are you laughing so?"

"How can I help it; your calling her Lucy is so good, I wish she heard it; she's the very proudest girl I ever knew."

"But to come back; you really think she does not care for him?"

"Not more than for you; and I may be pardoned for the simile, having seen your meeting. But let me give you the news of our own *fête*. Saturday is the day fixed; and you must be quite well—I insist upon it. Miss Dashwood has promised to come—no small concession; for, after all, she has never once been here since the day you frightened her. I can't help laughing at my blunder—the two people I had promised myself should fall desperately in love with each other, and who will scarcely meet."

"But I trusted," said I, pettishly, "that you were not disposed to resign your own interest in me?"

"Neither was I," said she, with an easy smile, "except that I have so many admirers. I might even spare to my friends; though, after all, I should be sorry to lose you—I like you."

"Yes," said I, half bitterly, "as girls do those who they never intend to care for; is it not so?"

"Perhaps yes, and perhaps— But is it going to rain? How provoking! and I have ordered my horse. Well, Signor Carlos, I leave you to your delightful newspaper, and all the magnificent descriptions of battles, and sieges, and skirmishes for which you seem doomed to pine without ceasing. There, don't kiss my hand twice; that's not right."

"Well, let me begin again—"

"I shall not breakfast with you any more; but, tell me, am I to order a costume for you in Lisbon; or will you arrange all that yourself? You must come to the *fête*, you know."

"If you would be so very kind."

"I will, then, be so very kind; and, once more, *adios*." So saying, and with a slight motion of her hand, she smiled a good-by, and left me.

"What a lovely girl!" thought I, as I rose and walked to the window, muttering to myself Othello's line, and

"When I love thee not, chaos is come again."

In fact, it was the perfect expression of my feeling—the only solution to all the difficulties surrounding me, being to fall desperately, irretrievably in love with the fair Senhora, which, all things considered, was not a very desperate resource for a gentleman in trouble. As I thought over the hopelessness of one attachment, I turned calmly to consider all the favorable points of the other. She was truly beautiful, attractive in every sense; her manner most fascinating, and her disposition, so far as I could pronounce, perfectly amiable. I felt already something more than interest about her; how very easy would be the transition to a stronger feeling! There was an *éclat*, too, about being her accepted lover that had its charm. She was the belle *par excellence* of Lisbon; and then a sense of pique crossed my mind as I reflected, what would Lucy say of him whom she had slighted and insulted, when he became the husband of the beautiful and millionaire Senhora Inez?

As my meditations had reached thus far, the door opened stealthily, and Catherine appeared, her finger upon her lips, and her gesture indicating caution. She carried on her arm a mass of drapery covered by a large mantle, which, throwing off as she entered, she displayed before me a rich blue domino with silver embroidery. It was large and loose in its folds, so as thoroughly to conceal the figure of any wearer. This she held up before me for an instant without speaking; when at length, seeing my curiosity fully excited, she said,

"This is the Senhora's domino. I should be ruined if she knew I showed it; but I promised—that is, I told—"

"Yes, yes, I understand," relieving her embarrassment about the source of her civilities; "go on."

"Well, there are several others like it, but with this small difference, instead of a carnation, which all the others have embroidered upon the cuff, I have made it a rose—you perceive? La Senhora knows nothing of this—none save yourself knows

it. I'm sure I may trust you with the secret."

"Fear not in the least, Catherine; you have rendered me a great service. Let me look at it once more; ah, there's no difficulty in detecting it. And you are certain she is unaware of it?"

"Perfectly so; she has several other costumes, but in this one I know she intends some surprise, so be upon your guard."

With these words, carefully once more concealing the rich dress beneath the mantle, she withdrew; while I strolled forth to wonder what mystery might lie beneath this scheme, and speculate how far I myself was included in the plot she spoke of.

* * * * *
* * * * *

For the few days which succeeded I passed my time much alone. The Senhora was but seldom at home; and I remarked that Power rarely came to see me. A strange feeling of half-coolness had latterly grown between us, and, instead of the open confidence we formerly indulged in when together, we appeared now rather to chat over things of mere every-day interest than of our own immediate plans and prospects. There was a kind of preoccupation, too, in his manner that struck me; his mind seemed ever straying from the topics he talked of to something remote, and, altogether, he was no longer the frank and reckless dragoon I had ever known him. What could be the meaning of this change? Had he found out by any accident that I was to blame in my conduct toward Lucy—had any erroneous impression of my interview with her reached his ears? This was most improbable; besides, there was nothing in that to draw down his censure or condemnation, however represented; and was it that he was himself in love with her—that, devoted heart and soul to Lucy, he regarded me as a successful rival, preferred before him! Oh, how could I have so long blinded myself to the fact! This was the true solution of the whole difficulty. I had more than once suspected this to be so; now all the circumstances of proof poured in upon me. I called to mind his agitated manner the night of my arrival in Lisbon, his thousand questions concerning the reasons of my furlough; and then, lately, the look of unfeigned pleasure with which he heard me resolve to join my regiment the moment I was sufficiently recovered. I also remembered how assiduously he pressed his intimacy with the Senhora, Lucy's dearest friend here; his *continual* visits at the villa; these long walks in the garden, where his very look betokened some confidential mission of the heart. Yes, there was no doubt of it, he loved Lucy Dashwood! Alas! there seemed to be no end to the complication of my misfortunes; one by one, I appeared fated to lose whatever had a hold upon my affections, and to stand alone, unloved and uncared for in the world. My thoughts turned toward the Senhora, but I could not deceive myself into any hope there. My own feelings were untouched, and hers I felt to be equally so. Young as I was, there was no mistaking the easy smile of coquetry, the merry laugh of flattered vanity, for a deeper and holier feeling. And then I did not wish it otherwise. One only had taught me too feel how ennobling, how elevating, in all its impulses can be a deep-rooted passion for a young and beautiful girl! From her eyes alone had I caught the inspiration—that made me pant for glory and distinction. I could not transfer the allegiance of my heart, since it had taught that very heart to beat high and proudly. Lucy, lost to me forever as she must be, was still more than any other woman ever could be; all the past clung to her memory, all the prestige of the future must point to it also.

And Power, why had he not trusted—why had he not confided in me? Was this like my old and tried friend? Alas! I was forgetting that in his eye I was the favored rival, and not the despised, rejected suitor.

"It is past now," thought I, as I rose and walked into the garden; "the dream that made life a fairy tale is dispelled; the cold reality of the world is before me, and my path lies a lonely and solitary one." My first resolution was to see Power, and relieve his mind of any uneasiness as regarded my pretensions; they existed no longer. As for me, I was no obstacle to his happiness; it was, then, but fair and honorable that I should tell him so; this done, I should leave Lisbon at once: the cavalry had for the most part been ordered to the rear; still there was always something going forward at the outposts.

The idea of active service, the excitement of a campaigning life, cheered me, and I advanced along the dark alley of the garden with a lighter and a freer heart. My resolves were not destined to meet delay; as I turned the angle of a walk, Power was before me. He was leaning against a tree, his hands crossed upon his bosom, his head bowed forward, and his whole air and attitude betokening deep reflection.

He started as I came up, and seemed almost to change color.

"Well, Charley," said he, after a moment's pause, "you look better this morning. How goes the arm?"

"The arm is ready for service again, and its owner most anxious for it. Do you know, Fred, I'm thoroughly weary of this life."

"They're little better, however, at the lines. The French are in position but never adventure a movement; and, except some few affairs at the pickets, there is really nothing to do."

"No matter, remaining here can never serve one's interests, and besides, I have accomplished what I came for—"

I was about to add, "the restoration of my health," when he suddenly interrupted me, eyeing me fixedly as he spoke.

"Indeed! indeed! Is that so?"

"Yes," said I, half puzzled at the tone and manner of the speech; "I can join now when I please; meanwhile, Fred, I have been thinking of you. Yes, don't be surprised, at the very moment we met you were in my thoughts."

I took his arm as I said this, and led him down the alley.

"We are too old, and, I trust, too true friends, Fred, to have secrets from each other, and yet we have been playing this silly game for some weeks past. Now, my dear fellow, I have yours, and it is only fair justice you should have mine, and, faith, I feel you'd have discovered it long since, had your thoughts been as free as I have known them to be. Fred, you are in love; there, don't wince, man, I know it; but hear me out. You believe me to be so also; nay, more, you think that my chances of success are better, stronger than your own; learn, then, that I have none—absolutely none. Don't interrupt me now, for this avowal cuts me deeply; my own heart alone knows what I suffer as I record my wrecked fortunes; but I repeat it, my hopes are at an end forever; but, Fred, my boy, I cannot lose my friend too. If I have been the obstacle to your path, I am so no more. Ask me not why; it is enough that I speak in all truth and sincerity. Ere three days I shall leave this, and with it all the hopes that once beamed upon my fortunes, and all the happiness,—nay, not all, my boy, for I feel some thrill at my heart yet, as I think that I have been true to you."

I know not what more I spoke, nor how he replied to me. I felt the warm grasp of his hand, I saw his delighted smile; the words of grateful acknowledgments his lips uttered conveyed but an imperfect meaning to my ear, and I remembered no more.

The courage which sustained me for the moment sank gradually as I meditated over my avowal, and I could scarce help accusing Power of a breach of friendship for exacting a confession which, in reality, I had volunteered to give him. How Lucy herself would think of my conduct was ever occurring to my thoughts, and I felt, as I ruminated upon the conjectures it might give rise to, how much more likely a favorable opinion might now be formed of me, than when such an estimation could have crowned me with delight.

"Yes," thought I, "she will at last learn to know him, who loved her with truth and with devoted affection; and, when the blight of all his hopes is accomplished, the fair fame of his fidelity will be proved. The march, the bivouac, the battle-field, are now all to me, and the campaign alone presents a prospect which may fill up the aching void that disappointed and ruined hopes have left behind them."

How I longed for the loud call of the trumpet, the clash of the steel, the tramp of the war-horse; though the proud distinction of a soldier's life were less to me in the distance than the mad and whirlwind passion of a charge, and the loud din of the rolling artillery.

It was only some hours after, as I sat alone in my chamber, that all the circumstances of our meeting came back clearly to my memory, and I could not help muttering to myself,

"It is indeed a hard lot, that, to cheer the heart of my friend, I must bear witness to the despair that sheds darkness on my own."

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

MY CHARGER.

ALTHOUGH I felt my heart relieved of a heavy load by the confession I had made to Power, yet still I shrank from meeting him for some days after; a kind of fear lest he should in any way recur to our conversation continually beset me, and I felt that the courage which bore me up for my first effort would desert me on the next occasion.

My determination to join my regiment was now made up, and I sent forward a resignation of my appointment to Sir George Dashwood's staff, which I had never been in health to fulfill, and commenced with

energy all my preparations for a speedy departure.

The reply to my rather formal letter was a most kind note written by himself. He regretted the unhappy cause which had so long separated us, and though wishing, as he expressed it, to have me near him, perfectly approved of my resolution.

"Active service alone, my dear boy, can ever place you in the position you ought to occupy, and I rejoice the more at your decision in this matter, as I feared the truth of certain reports here, which attributed to you other plans than those which a campaign suggests. My mind is now easy on this score, and I pray you forgive me if my congratulations are *mal à propos*."

After some hints for my future management, and a promise of some letters to his friends at headquarters, he concluded:

"As this climate does not seem to suit my daughter, I have applied for a change, and am in daily hope of obtaining it. Before going, however, I must beg your acceptance of the charger which my groom will deliver to your servant with this. I was so struck with his figure and action, that I purchased him before leaving England, without well knowing why or wherefore. Pray let him see some service under your auspices, which he is most unlikely to do under mine. He has plenty of bone to be a weight-carrier, and they tell me also that he has speed enough for anything."

Mike's voice in the lawn beneath interrupted my reading further, and, on looking out, I perceived him and Sir George Dashwood's servant standing beside a large and striking-looking horse, which they were both examining with all the critical accuracy of adepts.

"Arrah, isn't he a darling, a real beauty, every inch of him?"

"'That 'ere splint don't signify nothing; he aren't the worse of it," said the English groom.

"Of coorse it doesn't," replied Mike. "What a forehand! and the legs, clean as a whip."

"There's the best of him, though," interrupted the other, patting the strong hind-quarters with his hand. "There's the stuff to push him along through heavy ground and carry him over timber."

"Or a stone wall," said Mike, thinking of Galway.

My own impatience to survey my present had now brought me into the conclave, and before many minutes were over I had him saddled, and was cantering around the lawn with a spirit and energy I had not *felt* for months long. Some small fences lay before me, and over these he carried me with all the ease and freedom of a trained hunter. My courage mounted with the excitement, and I looked eagerly around for some more bold and dashing leap.

"You may take him over the avenue gate," said the English groom, divining with a jockey's readiness what I looked for; "he'll do it, never fear him."

Strange as my equipment was, with an undress jacket flying loosely open, and a bare head, away I went. The gate which the groom spoke of was a strongly barred one of oak timber, nearly five feet high—its difficulty as a leap only consisted in the winding approach, and the fact that it opened upon a hard road beyond it.

In a second or two a kind of half fear came across me. My long illness had unnerved me, and my limbs felt weak and yielding; but as I pressed into the canter, that secret sympathy between the horse and his rider shot suddenly through me, I pressed my spurs to his flanks, and dashed him at it.

Unaccustomed to such treatment, the noble animal bounded madly forward; with two tremendous plunges he sprang wildly in the air, and shaking his long mane with passion, stretched out at the gallop.

My own blood boiled now as tempestuously as his; and, with a shout of reckless triumph, I rose him at the gate. Just at the instant two figures appeared before it—the copse had concealed their approach hitherto—but they stood now, as if transfixed; the wild attitude of the horse, the not less wild cry of his rider, had deprived them for a time of all energy; and, overcome by the sudden danger, they seemed rooted to the ground. What I said, spoke, begged, or imprecated, Heaven knows—not I. But they stirred not! One moment more, and they must lie trampled beneath my horse's hoofs—he was already on his haunches for the bound; when, wheeling half aside, I faced him at the wall. It was at least a foot higher, and of solid stone masonry, and as I did so, I felt that I was periling my life to save theirs. One vigorous dash of the spur I gave him, as I lifted him to the leap—he bounded beneath it quick as lightning—still, with a spring like a rocket, he rose into the air, cleared the wall, and stood trembling and frightened on the road outside.

"Safe, by Jupiter! and splendidly done too," cried a voice near me, that I immediately recognized as Sir George Dashwood's.

"Lucy, my love, look up—Lucy, my dear, there's no danger now. She has

fainted. O'Malley, fetch some water—fast. Poor fellow—your own nerves seem shaken. Why, you've let your horse go! Come here, for Heaven's sake!—support her for an instant. I'll fetch some water."

It appeared to me like a dream—I leaned against the pillar of the gate—the cold and death-like features of Lucy Dashwood lay motionless upon my arm—her hand, falling heavily upon my shoulder, touched my cheek—the tramp of my horse, as he galloped onward, was the only sound that broke the silence, as I stood there, gazing steadfastly upon the pale brow and paler cheek, down which a solitary tear was slowly stealing. I knew not how the minutes passed—my memory took no note of time, but at length a gentle tremor thrilled her frame, a slight, scarce-perceptible blush colored her fair face, her lips slightly parted, and heaving a deep sigh, she looked around her. Gradually her eyes turned and met mine. Oh, the bliss unutterable of that moment. It was no longer the look of cold scorn she had given me last—the expression was one of soft and speaking gratitude—she seemed to read my very heart, and know its truth: there was a tone of deep and compassionate interest in the glance; and forgetting all—everything that had passed—all save my unaltered, unalterable love, I kneeled beside her, and, in words burning as my own heart burned, poured out my tale of mingled sorrow and affection with all the eloquence of passion. I vindicated my unshaken faith—reconciling the conflicting evidences with the proofs I proffered of my attachment. If my moments were measured—I spent them not idly; I called to witness how every action of my soldier's life emanated from her—how her few and chance words had decided the character of my fate—if aught of fame or honor were my portion, to her I owed it. As, hurried onward by my ardent hopes, I forgot Power and all about him—a step up the gravel walk came rapidly nearer, and I had but time to assume my former attitude beside Lucy as her father came up.

"Well, Charley, is she better? Oh, I see she is: here we have the whole household at our heels." So saying, he pointed to a string of servants pressing eagerly forward with every species of restorative that Portuguese ingenuity has invented.

The next moment we were joined by the Senhora, who, pale with fear, seemed scarcely less in need of assistance than her friend.

Amid questions innumerable—explanations sought for on all sides—mistakes and misconceptions as to the whole occurrence—we took our way toward the villa, Lucy walking between Sir George and Donna Inez, while I followed, leaning upon Power's arm.

"They've caught him again, O'Malley," said the General, turning half round to me; "he, too, seemed as much frightened as any of us."

"It is time, Sir George, I should think of thanking you. I never was so mounted in my life—"

"A splendid charger, by Jove!" said Power; "but, Charley, my lad, no more feats of this nature if you love me. No girl's heart will stand such continual assaults as your winning horsemanship submits it to."

I was about making some half-angry reply, when he continued: "There, don't look sulky; I have news for you. Quill has just arrived. I met him at Lisbon; he has got leave of absence for a few days, and is coming to our masquerade here this evening."

"This evening!" said I, in amazement; "why, is it so soon?"

"Of course it is. Have you not got all your trappings ready? The Dashwoods came out here on purpose to spend the day—but come, I'll drive you into town. My tilbury is ready, and we'll both look out for our costumes." So saying, he led me along toward the house, when, after a rapid change of my toilet, we set out for Lisbon.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

MAURICE.

It seemed a conceded matter between Power and myself that we should never recur to the conversation we held in the garden; and so, although we dined *tête-à-tête* that day, neither of us ventured, by any allusion the most distant, to advert to what it was equally evident was uppermost in the minds of both.

All our endeavors, therefore, to seem easy and unconcerned, were in vain; a restless anxiety to seem interested about things and persons we were totally indifferent to, pervaded all our essays at conversation. By degrees, we grew weary of the parts we were acting, and each relapsed into a moody silence, thinking over his plans and projects, and totally forgetting the existence of the other.

The decanter was passed across the table without speaking, a half nod intimated the

bottle was standing; and, except an occasional malediction upon an intractable cigar, nothing was heard.

Such was the agreeable occupation we were engaged in, when, toward nine o'clock, the door opened, and the great Maurice himself stood before us.

"Pleasant fellows, upon my conscience, and jovial over their liquor! Confound your smoking! That may do very well in a bivouac. Let us have something warm!"

Quill's interruption was a most welcome one to both parties, and we rejoiced with a sincere pleasure at his coming.

"What shall it be, Maurice? Port or sherry mulled, and an anchovy?"

"Or, what say you to a bowl of bishop?" said I.

"Hurrah for the church, Charley! Let us have the bishop; and, not to disparage Fred's taste, we'll be eating the anchovy while the liquor's concocting."

"Well, Maurice, and now for the news. How are matters at Torres Vedras? Anything like movement in that quarter?"

"Nothing very remarkable. Massena made a reconnaissance some days since, and one of our batteries threw a shower of grape among the staff, which spoiled the procession, and sent them back in very disorderly time. Then we've had a few skirmishes to the front with no great results—a few courts-martial—bad grub, and plenty of grumbling."

"Why, what would they have? It's a great thing to hold the French army in check within a few marches of Lisbon."

"Charley, my man, who cares twopence for the French army, or Lisbon, or the Portuguese, or the Junta, or anything about it?—every man is pondering over his own affairs. One fellow wants to get home again, and be sent upon some recruiting station. Another wishes to get a step or two in promotion, to come to Torres Vedras, where even the *grande armée* can't. Then some of us are in love, and some of us are in debt. There is neither glory nor profit to be had. But here's the bishop, smoking and steaming with an odor of nectar!"

"And our fellows, have you seen them lately?"

"I dined with yours on Tuesday.—Was it Tuesday? Yes. I dined with them. By-the-by, Sparks was taken prisoner that morning."

"Sparks taken prisoner! Poor fellow. I am sincerely sorry. How did it happen, Maurice?"

"Very simply. Sparks had a forage *patrol* toward Vieda, and set out early in the morning with his party. It seemed that they succeeded perfectly, and were returning to the lines, when poor Sparks, always susceptible where the sex are concerned, saw, or thought he saw, a lattice gently open as he rode from the village, and a very taper finger make a signal to him. Dropping a little behind the rest, he waited till his men had debouched upon the road, when, riding quietly up, he coughed a couple of times to attract the fair unknown—a handkerchief waved from the lattice in reply, which was speedily closed, and our valiant Cornet accordingly dismounted and entered the house.

"The remainder of the adventure is soon told; for, in a few seconds after, two men on one horse were seen galloping at top speed toward the French lines,—the foremost being a French officer of the 4th Cuirassiers; the gentleman with his face to the tail, our friend Sparks; the lovely unknown being a *vieille moustache* of Loison's corps, who had been wounded in a skirmish some days before, and lay waiting an opportunity of rejoining his party. One of our prisoners knew this fellow well; he had been promoted from the ranks, and was a Hercules for feats of strength; so that, after all, Sparks could not help himself."

"Well, I'm really sorry; but, as you say, Sparks's tender nature is always the ruin of him."

"Of him! ay, and of you—and of Power—and of myself—of all of us. Isn't it the sweet creatures that make fools of us from Father Adam down to Maurice Quill, neither sparing age nor rank in the service, half-pay, nor the Veteran Battalion—it's all one? Pass the jug, there. O'Shaughnessy—"

"Ah, by-the-by, how's the Major?"

"Charmingly; only a little bit in a scrape just now. Sir Arthur—Lord Wellington, I mean—had him up for his fellows being caught pillaging, and gave him a devil of a rowing a few days ago.

"'Very disorderly corps yours, Major O'Shaughnessy,' said the General; 'more men up for punishment than any regiment in the service.'

"Shaugh muttered something; but his voice was lost in a loud cock-a-doo-do-doo, that some bold chanticleer set up at the moment.

"'If the officers do their duty, Major O'Shaughnessy, these acts of insubordination do not occur.'

"'Cock-a-doo-do-doo,' was the reply. Some of the staff found it hard not to laugh; but the General went on:

"'If, therefore, the practice does not cease, I'll draft the men into West India regiments.'

"'Cock-a-doo-do-doo.'

"'And if any articles pillaged from the inhabitants are detected in the quarters, or about the person of the troops—'

"'Cock-a-doo-do-*doo*,' screamed louder here than ever.

"'Damn that cock. Where is it?'

"There was a general look around on all sides, which seemed in vain; when a tremendous repetition of the cry resounded from O'Shaughnessy's coat pocket; thus detecting the valiant Major himself in the very practice of his corps. There was no standing this: every one burst out into a peal of laughing; and Lord Wellington himself could not resist, but turned away, muttering to himself as he went, 'Damned robbers—every man of them!' while a final war-note from the Major's pocket closed the interview."

"Confound you, Maurice, you've always some villanous narrative or other. You never crossed a street for shelter without making something out of it."

"True this time, as sure as my name's Maurice; but the bowl is empty."

"Never mind, here comes its successor. How long can you stay amongst us?"

"A few days at most. Just took a run off to see the sights; I was all over Lisbon this morning: saw the Inquisition and the cells, and the place where they tried the fellows—the kind of grand jury room, with the great picture of Adam and Eve at the end of it. What a beautiful creature she is! hair down to her waist, and such eyes! 'Ah, ye darling!' said I to myself, 'small blame to him for what he did. Wouldn't I ate every crab in the garden, if ye asked me!'"

"I must certainly go see her, Maurice. Is she very Portuguese in her style?"

"Devil a bit of it. She might be a Limerick woman, with elegant brown hair, and blue eyes, and a skin like snow."

"Come, come, they've pretty girls in Lisbon too, Doctor."

"Yes, faith," said Power, "that they have."

"Nothing like Ireland, boys; not a bit of it; they're the girls for my money; and where's the man can resist them? From St. Patrick, that had to go live in the Wicklow mountains—"

"St. Kevin, you mean, Doctor."

"Sure it's all the same, they were twins. I made a neat little song about them one evening last week—the women, I mean."

"Let us have it, Maurice; let us have it, old fellow. What's the measure?"

"Short measure: four little verses, devil a more."

"But the time, I mean?"

"Whenever you like to sing it; here it is."

THE GIRLS OF THE WEST.

Air—"Teddy, ye Gander."

(*With feeling; but not too slow.*)

"You may talk, if you please,
Of the brown Portuguese,
But, wherever you roam, wherever you roam,
You nothing will meet,
Half so lovely or sweet,
As the girls at home, the girls at home.

"Their eyes are not sloes,
Nor so long is their nose,
But, between me and you, between me and you,
They are just as alarming,
And ten times more charming,
With hazel and blue, with hazel and blue.

"They don't ogle a man,
O'er the top of their fan,
'Till his heart's in a flame, his heart's in a flame;
But though bashful and shy,
They've a look in their eye,
That just comes to the same, just comes to the same.

"No mantillas they sport,
But a petticoat short,
Shows an ankle the best, an ankle the best,
And a leg—but, O murther!
I dare not go further,
So here's to the West; so here's to the West."

"Now that really is a sweet little thing. Moore's, isn't it?"

"Not a bit of it; my own muse, every word of it."

"And the music?" said I.

"My own, too. Too much spice in that bowl; that's an invariable error in your devisers of drink, to suppose that the tipple you start with can please your palate to the last; they forget that as we advance either in years or lush, our tastes simplify."

"*Nous revenons à nos premières amours.* Isn't that it?"

"No, not exactly, for we go even further; for if you mark the progression of a sensible man's fluids, you'll find what an emblem of life it presents to you. What is his initiatory glass of 'Chablis' that he throws down with his oysters, but the budding expectancy of boyhood—the appetizing sense of pleasure to come; then follows the sherry with his soup, that warming glow which strength and vigor in all their consciousness impart, as a glimpse of life is opening before him. Then youth

succeeds — buoyant, wild, tempestuous youth—foaming and sparkling, like the bright champagne, whose stormy surface subsides into a myriad of bright stars."

"*Œil de perdrix.*"

"Not a bit of it; woman's own eye; brilliant, sparkling, life-giving—"

"Devil take the fellow, he's getting poetical."

"Ah, Fred! if that could only last; but one must come to the burgundies with his maturer years. Your first glass of hermitage is the algebraic sign for five-and-thirty—the glorious burst is over; the pace is still good, to be sure, but the great enthusiasm is past. You can afford to look forward, but, confound it, you've a long way to look back also."

"I say, Charley, our friend has contrived to finish the bishop during his disquisition; the bowl's quite empty."

"You don't say so, Fred. To be sure, how a man does forget himself in abstract speculations; but let us have a little more, I've not concluded my homily."

"Not a glass, Maurice; it's already past nine; we are all pledged to the masquerade, and before we've dressed and got there, 'twill be late enough."

"But I'm not disguised yet, my boy, nor half."

"Well, they must take you *au naturel*, as our countrymen do their potatoes."

"Yes, Doctor, Fred's right; we had better start."

"Well, I can't help it; I've recorded my opposition to the motion, but I must submit; and now that I'm on my legs, explain to me what's that very dull-looking old lamp, up there?"

"That's the moon, man; the full moon."

"Well, I've no objection; I'm full too; so come along, lads."

CHAPTER LXXXV.

THE MASQUERADE.

To form one's impression of a masked ball from the attempts at this mode of entertainment in our country, is but to conceive a most imperfect and erroneous notion. With us, the first *coup d'œil* is everything; the nuns, the shepherdesses, the Turks, sailors, eastern princes, watchmen, moonshees, milestones, devils, and Quakers, are all very well in their way as they pass *in the* review before us, but when we come *to mix in* the crowd, we discover that, except the turban and the cowl, the crook and the broadbrim, no further disguise is attempted or thought of. The nun, forgetting her vow and her vestments, is flirting with the devil; the watchman, a very fastidious elegant, is ogling the fishwomen through his glass, while the Quaker is performing a *pas seul* Alberti might be proud of in a quadrille of riotous Turks and half-tipsy Hindoos; in fact, the whole wit of the scene consists in absurd associations. Apart from this, the actors have rarely any claims upon your attention; for even supposing a person clever enough to sustain his character, whatever it be, you must also supply the other personages of the drama, or, in stage phrase, he'll have nothing to "play up to." What would be Bardolph without Pistol? what Sir Lucius O'Trigger without Acres? It is the relief which throws out the disparities and contradictions of life that afford us most amusement; hence it is, that one swallow can no more make a summer, than one well-sustained character can give life to a masquerade. Without such sympathies, such points of contact, all the leading features of the individual, making him act and be acted upon, are lost; the characters being mere parallel lines, which, however near they approach, never bisect or cross each other.

This is not the case abroad: the domino, which serves for mere concealment, is almost the only dress assumed, and the real disguise is therefore thrown from necessity upon the talents, whatever they be, of the wearer. It is no longer a question of a beard or a spangled mantle, a Polish dress or a pasteboard nose; the mutation of voice, the assumption of a different manner, walk, gesture, and mode of expression, are all necessary, and no small tact is required to effect this successfully.

I may be pardoned this little digression, as it serves to explain in some measure how I felt on entering the splendidly lit up *salons* of the villa, crowded with hundreds of figures in all the varied costumes of a carnival. The sounds of laughter, mingled with the crash of the music; the hurrying hither and thither of servants with refreshments; the crowds gathered around fortune-tellers, whose predictions threw the parties at each moment into shouts of merriment; the eager following of some disappointed domino, interrogating every one to find out a lost mask. For some time I stood an astonished spectator at the kind of secret intelligence which seemed to pervade the whole assemblage, when suddenly a mask, who for some time had been standing beside me, whispered in French,

"If you pass your time in this manner, you must not feel surprised if your place be occupied."

I turned hastily round, but she was gone. She, I say, for the voice was clearly a woman's; her pink domino could be no guide, for hundreds of the same color passed me every instant; the meaning of the allusion I had little doubt of. I turned to speak to Power, but he was gone; and, for the first moment of my life, the bitterness of rivalry crossed my mind. It was true I had resigned all pretensions in his favor; my last meeting with Lucy had been merely to justify my own character against an impression that weighed heavily on me; still I thought he might have waited; another day and I should be far away, neither to witness nor grieve over his successes.

"You still hesitate," whispered some one near me.

I wheeled round suddenly, but could not detect the speaker, and was again relapsing into my own musings, when the same voice repeated,

"The white domino with the blue cape. Adieu."

Without waiting to reflect upon the singularity of the occurrence, I now hurried along through the dense crowd, searching on every side for the domino.

"Isn't that O'Malley?" said an Englishman to his friend.

"Yes," replied the other; "the very man we want. O'Malley, find a partner; we have been searching a vis-à-vis this ten minutes."

The speaker was an officer I had met at Sir George Dashwood's.

"How did you discover me?" said I, suddenly.

"Not a very difficult thing, if you carry your mask in your hand that way," was the answer.

And I now perceived that in the distraction of my thoughts I had been carrying my mask in this manner since my coming into the room.

"There now, what say you to the blue domino? I saw her foot, and a girl with such an instep must be a waltzer."

I looked round, a confused effort at memory passing across my mind; my eyes fell at the instant upon the embroidered sleeve of the domino, where a rosebud worked in silver at once reminded me of Catrina's secret. "Ah!" thought I, "la Senhora herself!" She was leaning upon the arm of a tall and portly figure in black; who this was I knew not, nor sought to discover, but at once advancing toward Donna Inez asked her to waltz.

Without replying to me she turned toward her companion, who seemed as it were to press her acceptance of my offer; she hesitated, however, for an instant, and, courtesying deeply, declined it. "Well," thought I, "she at least has not recognized me."

"And yet, Senhora," said I, half jestingly, "I *have* seen you join a bolero before now."

"You evidently mistake me," was the reply, but in a voice so well feigned as almost to convince me she was right.

"Nay, more," said I, "under your own fair auspices did I myself first adventure one."

"Still in error, believe me; I am not known to you."

"And yet I have a talisman to refresh your memory, should you dare me further."

At this instant my hand was grasped warmly by a passing mask. I turned round rapidly, and Power whispered in my ear,

"Yours forever, Charley; you've made my fortune."

As he hurried on I could perceive that he supported a lady on his arm, and that she wore a loose white domino with a deep blue cape. In a second all thought of Inez was forgotten, and anxious only to conceal my emotion, I turned away and mingled in the crowd. Lost to all around me, I wandered carelessly, heedlessly on, neither noticing the glittering throng around, nor feeling a thought in common with the gay and joyous spirits that flitted by. The night wore on, my melancholy and depression growing ever deeper, yet so spellbound was I that I could not leave the place. A secret sense that it was the last time we were to meet had gained entire possession of me, and I longed to speak a few words ere we parted forever.

I was leaning at a window which looked out upon the court-yard, when suddenly the tramp of horses attracted my attention, and I saw by the clear moonlight a group of mounted men, whose long cloaks and tall helmets announced dragoons, standing around the porch. At the same moment the door of the salon opened, and an officer in undress, splashed and travel-stained, entered. Making his way rapidly through the crowd, he followed the servant, who introduced him toward the supper-room. Thither the dense mass now pressed to learn the meaning of the singular apparition, while my own curiosity, not less excited, led me toward the door; as I crossed

the hall, however, my progress was interrupted by a group of persons, among whom I saw an aide-de-camp of Lord Wellington's staff, narrating, as it were, some piece of newly-arrived intelligence. I had no time for further inquiry, when a door opened near me, and Sir George Dashwood, accompanied by several general officers, came forth, the officer I had first seen enter the ball-room along with them. Every one was by this unmasked, and eagerly looking to hear what had occurred.

"Then, Dashwood, you'll send off an orderly at once?" said an old general officer beside me.

"This instant, my Lord. I'll dispatch an aide-de-camp. The troops shall be in marching order before noon. Oh, here's the man I want! O'Malley, come here. Mount your horse and dash into town. Send for Brotherton and M'Gregor to quarters, and announce the news as quickly as possible."

"But what am I to announce, Sir George?"

"That the French are in retreat.—Massena in retreat, my lad."

A tremendous cheer at this instant burst from the hundreds in the salon, who now heard the glorious tidings. Another cheer and another followed—ten thousand vivas rose amid the crash of the band, as it broke into a patriotic war chant. Such a scene of enthusiasm and excitement I never witnessed. Some wept with joy. Others threw themselves into their friends' arms.

"They're all mad, every mother's son of them!" said Maurice Quill, as he elbowed his way through the mass; "and here's an old vestal won't leave my arm. She has already embraced me three times, and we've finished a flask of Malaga between us."

"Come, O'Malley, are you ready for the road?"

My horse was by this time standing saddled at the front. I sprang at once to the saddle, and, without waiting for a second order, set out for Lisbon. Ten minutes had scarce elapsed—the very shouts of joy of the delighted city were still ringing in my ears—when I was once again back at the villa. As I mounted the steps into the hall, a carriage drew up: it was Sir George Dashwood's; he came forward — his daughter leaning upon his arm.

"Why, O'Malley, I thought you had gone."

"I have returned, Sir George. Colonel *Brotherton* is in waiting, and the staff *also*. I have received orders to set out for Benejos, where the 14th are stationed, and have merely delayed to say adieu."

"Adieu, my dear boy, and God bless you!" said the warm-hearted old man, as he pressed my hand between both his. "Lucy, here's your old friend about to leave; come and say good-by."

Miss Dashwood had stopped behind to adjust her shawl. I flew to her assistance. "Adieu, Miss Dashwood, and forever!" said I, in a broken voice, as I took her hand in mine. "This is not your domino," said I, eagerly, as a blue silk one peeped from beneath her mantle; "and the sleeve, too—did you wear this?" She blushed slightly, and assented.

"I changed with the Senhora, who wore mine all the evening."

"And Power, then, was not your partner?"

"I should think not—for I never danced."

"Lucy, my love, are you ready? Come, be quick."

"Good-by, Mr. O'Malley, and *au revoir, n'est-ce pas?*"

I drew her glove from her hand as she spoke, and, pressing my lips upon her fingers, placed her within the carriage. "Adieu, and *au revoir!*" said I; the carriage turned away, and a white glove was all that remained to me of Lucy Dashwood!

The carriage had turned the angle of the road, and its retiring sounds were growing gradually fainter, ere I recovered myself sufficiently to know where I stood. One absorbing thought alone possessed me. Lucy was not lost to me forever; Power was not my rival in that quarter—that was enough for me. I needed no more to nerve my arm and steel my heart. As I reflected thus, the long loud blast of a trumpet broke upon the silence of the night, and admonished me to depart. I hurried to my room to make my few preparations for the road, but Mike had already anticipated everything here, and all was in readiness.

But one thing now remained—to make my adieu to the Senhora. With this intent, I descended a narrow winding stair which led from my dressing-room, and opened by a little terrace upon the flower-garden beside her apartments.

As I crossed the graveled alley, I could not but think of the last time I had been there. It was on the eve of departure for the Douro. I recalled the few and fleeting moments of our leave-taking, and a thought flashed upon me—what, if she cared for me!—what, if, half in coquetry,

half in reality, her heart was mixed up in those passages which daily association gives rise to?

I could not altogether acquit myself of all desire to make her believe me her admirer; nay, more, with the indolent *abandon* of my country, I had fallen into a thousand little schemes to cheat the long hours away, which having no other object than the happiness of the moment, might yet color all her after-life with sorrow.

Let no one rashly pronounce me a coxcomb, vain and pretentious, for all this. In my inmost heart I had no feeling of selfishness mingled with the consideration. It was from no sense of my own merits, no calculation of my own chances of success, that I thought thus. Fortunately, at eighteen one's heart is uncontaminated with such an alloy of vanity. The first emotions of youth are pure and holy things, tempering our fiercer passions, and calming the rude effervescence of our boyish spirit; and when we strive to please, and hope to win affection, we insensibly fashion ourselves to nobler and higher thoughts, catching from the source of our devotion a portion of that charm that idealizes daily life, and makes our path in it a glorious and a bright one.

Who would not exchange all the triumph of his later days, the proudest moments of successful ambition, the richest trophies of hard-won daring, for the short and vivid flash that first shot through his heart and told him he was loved? It is the opening consciousness of life, the first sense of power that makes of the mere boy a man—a man in all his daring and his pride—and hence it is that in early life we feel ever prone to indulge those fancied attachments which elevate and raise us in our own esteem. Such was the frame of my mind as I entered the little boudoir, where once before I had ventured on a similar errand.

As I closed the sash-door behind me, the gray dawn of breaking day scarcely permitted my seeing anything around me, and I felt my way toward the door of an adjoining room, where I supposed it was likely I should find the Senhora. As I proceeded thus with cautious step and beating heart, I thought I heard a sound near me. I stopped and listened, and was about again to move on, when a half-stifled sob fell upon my ear. Slowly and silently guiding my steps toward the sounds, I reached a sofa, when, my eyes growing by degrees more accustomed to the faint light, I could detect a figure which, at a glance, I recognized as Donna Inez. A cashmere shawl was loosely thrown round her, and her face was buried in her hands. As she lay, to all seeming, still and insensible before me, her beautiful hair fell heavily upon her back and across her arm, and her whole attitude denoted the very abandonment of grief. A short convulsive shudder, which slightly shook her frame, alone gave evidence of life, except when a sob, barely audible in the death-like silence, escaped her.

I knelt silently down beside her, and, gently withdrawing her hand, placed it within mine. A dreadful feeling of self-condemnation shot through me as I felt the gentle pressure of her taper fingers, which rested without a struggle in my grasp. My tears fell hot and fast upon that pale hand, as I bent in sadness over it, unable to utter a word. A rush of conflicting thoughts passed through my brain, and I knew not what to do. I now had no doubt upon my mind that she loved me, and that her present affliction was caused by my approaching departure.

"Dearest Inez!" I stammered out at length, as I pressed her hands to my lips; "dearest Inez!"—a faint sob, and a slight pressure of her hand, was the only reply. "I have come to say good-by," continued I, gaining a little courage as I spoke; "a long good-by, too, in all likelihood. You have heard that we are ordered away,—there, don't sob, dearest, and, believe me, I had wished ere we parted to have spoken to you calmly and openly; but, alas! I cannot,—I scarcely know what I say."

"You will not forget me?" said she, in a low voice, that sank into my very heart. "You will not forget me?" As she spoke, her hand dropped heavily upon my shoulder, and her rich luxuriant hair fell upon my cheek. What a devil of a thing is proximity to a downy cheek and a black eyelash, more especially when they belong to one whom you are disposed to believe not indifferent to you! What I did at this precise moment there is no necessity for recording, even had not an adage interdicted such confessions, nor can I now remember what I said; but I can well recollect how, gradually warming with my subject, I entered into a kind of half-declaration of attachment, intended most honestly to be a mere *exposé* of my own unworthiness to win her favor, and my resolution to leave Lisbon and its neighborhood forever.

Let not any one blame me rashly if he has not experienced the difficulty of my position. The impetus of love-making is like the ardor of a fox-hunt. You care little that the six-bar gate before you is

the boundary of another gentleman's preserves, or the fence of his pleasure-ground. You go slap along at a smashing pace, with your head up, and your hand low, clearing all before you, the opposing difficulties to your progress giving half the zest, because all the danger to your career. So it is with love; the gambling spirit urges one ever onward, and the chance of failure is a reason for pursuit, where no other argument exists.

"And you do love me?" said the Senhora, with a soft, low whisper, that most unaccountably suggested anything but comfort to me.

"Love you, Inez? By this kiss—I'm in an infernal scrape!" said I, muttering this last half of my sentence to myself.

"And you'll never be jealous again?"

"Never, by all that's lovely!—your own sweet lips. That's the very last thing to reproach me with."

"And you promise me not to mind that foolish boy? For, after all, you know, it was mere flirtation—if even that."

"I'll never think of him again," said I, while my brain was burning to make out her meaning. "But, dearest, there goes the trumpet-call—"

"And, as for Pedro Mascarenhas, I never liked him."

"Are you quite sure, Inez?"

"I swear it!—so no more of him. Gonzales Cordenza—I've broke with him long since. So that you see, dearest Frederic—"

"Frederic!" said I, starting almost to my feet with amazement, while she continued:

"I'm your own—all your own!"

"Oh! the coquette, the heartless jilt!" groaned I, half aloud. "And O'Malley, Inez, poor Charley!—what of him?"

"Poor thing! I can't help him. But he's such a puppy, the lesson may do him good."

"But perhaps he loved you, Inez?"

"To be sure he did; I wished him to do so,—I can't bear not to be loved. But, Frederic, tell me, may I trust you—will you keep faithful to me?"

"Sweetest Inez! by this last kiss I swear, that such as I kneel before you now, you'll ever find me."

A foot upon the gravel-walk without, now called me to my feet—I sprang toward the door, and before Inez had lifted her head from the sofa, I had reached the garden. A figure muffled in a cavalry cloak passed near me, but without noticing me, and the next moment I had cleared the paling, and was hurrying toward the stable where I had ordered Mike to be in waiting.

The faint streak of dull pink which announces the coming day, stretched beneath the dark clouds of the night, and the chill air of the morning was already stirring in the leaves.

As I passed along by a low beech hedge which skirted the avenue, I was struck by the sound of voices near me. I stopped to listen, and soon detected in one of the speakers my friend Mickey Free; of the other I was not long in ignorance.

"Love you, is it—bathershin? It's worship you—adore you, my darling—that's the word—there, acushla, don't cry—dry your eyes—oh, murther, it's a cruel thing to tear one's self away from the best of living, with the run of the house in drink and kissing. Bad luck to it for campaigning, anyway, I never liked it!"

Catrina's reply—for it was she—I could not gather; but Mike resumed:

"Ay, just so, sore bones and wet grass, accadenté, and half rations. Oh, that I ever saw the day when I took to it! Listen to me now, honey; here it is, on my knees I am before you, and troth it's not more nor three, maybe four, young women I'd say the like to; bad scran to me if I wouldn't marry you out of a face this blessed morning just as soon as I'd look at ye. Arrah, there now, don't be screeching and bawling; what'll the neighbors think of us, and my own heart's destroyed with grief entirely."

Poor Catrina's voice returned an inaudible answer, and not wishing any longer to play the eavesdropper, I continued my path toward the stable. The distant noises from the city announced a state of movement and preparation, and more than one orderly passed the road near me at a gallop. As I turned into the wide courtyard, Mike, breathless and flurried with running, overtook me.

"Are the horses ready, Mike?" said I; "we must start this instant."

"They've just finished a peck of oats apiece, and faix that same may be a stranger to them this day six months."

"And the baggage, too?"

"On the cars, with the staff and the light brigade. It was down there I was now, to see all was right."

"Oh, I'm quite aware; and now bring out the cattle. I hope Catrina received your little consolations well. That seems a very sad affair."

"Murder, real murder, devil a less! It's no matter where you go, from Clonmel to Chayney, it's all one; they've a way of

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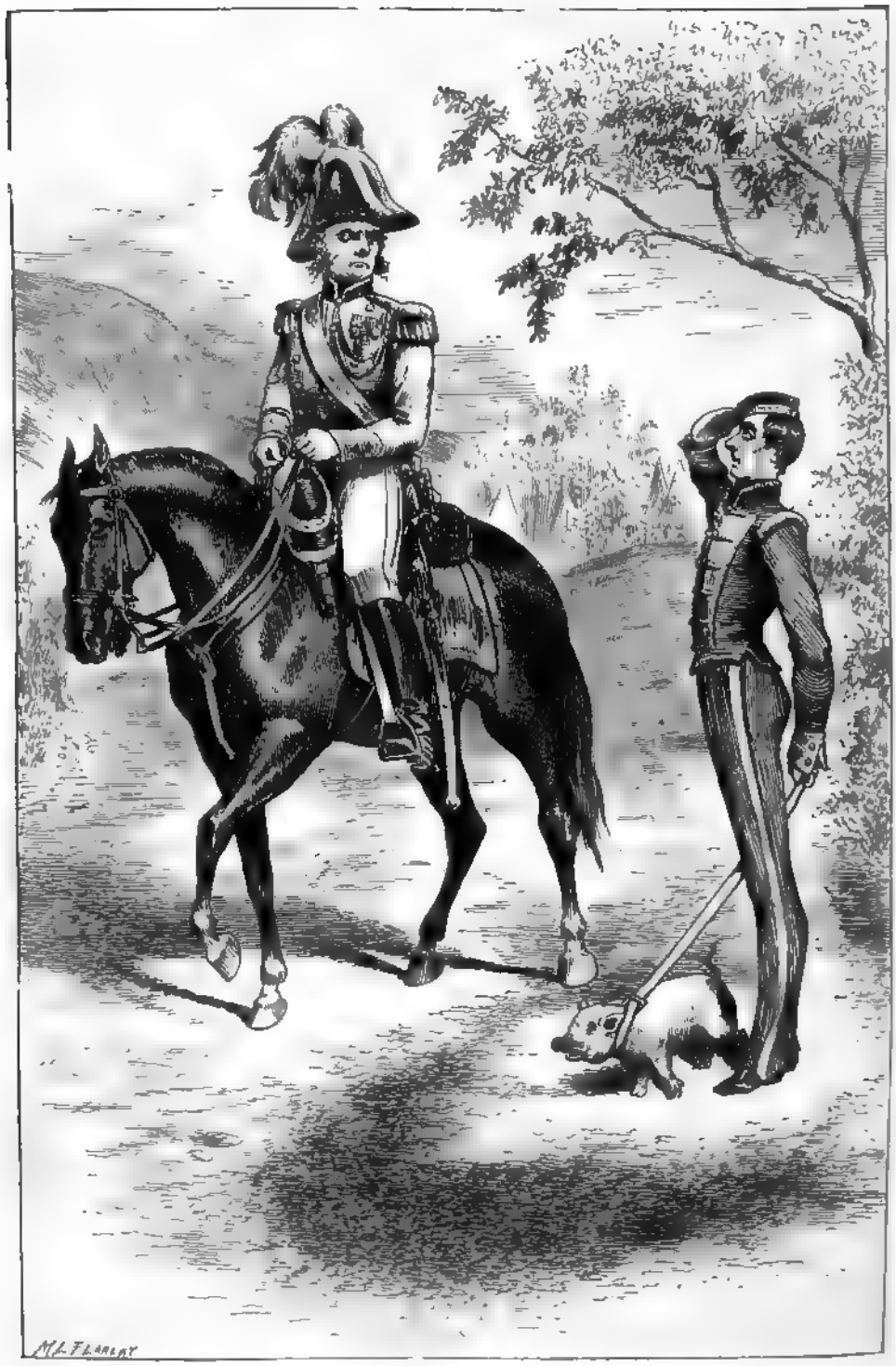


"'A BONEEN, SIR,' SAYS I, 'ISN'T HE A FINE CRAYTURE?—AV HE WASN'T SO TROUBLESOME.'" (P. 891.)

getting round you. Upon my soul it's like the pigs they are."

"Like pigs, Mike? That appears a strange compliment you've selected to pay them."

"Ay, just like the pigs, no less. Maybe you never heard what happened to myself up at Moronha?"

"Look to that girth there. Well, go on."

"I was coming along one morning, just as day was beginning to break, when I sees a slip of a pig trotting before me, with nobody near him; but as the road was lonely, and myself rather down in heart, I thought, Musha! but yer fine company, anyhow, av a body could only keep you with him. But, ye see, a pig—saving your presence—is a baste not easily flattered, so I didn't waste time and blarney upon him, but I took off my belt, and put it round its neck as neat as need be; but, as the devil's luck would have it, I didn't go half an hour when a horse came galloping up behind me. I turned round, and, by the blessed light, it was Sir Dinny himself was on it!"

"Sir Denis Pack?"

"Yes, bad luck to his hook nose. 'What are you doing there, my fine fellow?' says he. 'What's that you have dragging there behind you?'

"'A bouceu, sir,' says I. 'Isn't he a fine crayture?—av he wasn't so troublesome.'

"'Troublesome, troublesome—what do you mean?'

"'Just so,' says I. 'Isn't he parsecuting the life out of me the whole morning, following me about everywhere I go? Contrary bastes they always was.'

"'I advise you to try and part company, my friend, notwithstanding,' says he; 'or maybe it's the same end you'll be coming to, and not long either.' And faix, I took his advice; and ye see, Mister Charles, it's just as I was saying, they're like the women, the least thing in life is enough to bring them after us, *av ye only put the 'comether'* upon them."

"And now adieu to the Villa Nuova," said I, as I rode slowly down the avenue, turning ever and anon in my saddle to look back on each well-known spot.

A heavy sigh from Mike responded to my words.

"A long, a last farewell!" said I, waving my hand toward the trellised walls, now half hidden by the trees; and, as I spoke, that heaviness of the heart came over me that seems inseparable from leave-taking. The hour of parting seems like a warning to us, that all our enjoyments and pleasures here are destined to a short and merely fleeting existence; and, as each scene of life passes away never to return, we are made to feel that youth and hope are passing with them, and that, although the fair world be as bright, and its pleasures as rich in abundance, our capacity of enjoyment is daily, hourly diminishing; and while all around us smiles in beauty and happiness, that we, alas! are not what we were.

Such was the tenor of my thoughts as I reached the road, when they were suddenly interrupted by my man Mike, whose meditations were following a somewhat similar channel, though at last inclining to different conclusions. He coughed a couple of times as if to attract my attention, and then, as it were half thinking aloud, he muttered:

"I wonder if we treated the young ladies well, any how, Mister Charles, for, faix, I've my doubts on it."

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

THE LINES.

WHEN we reached Lescas, we found that an officer of Lord Wellington's staff had just arrived from the lines, and was occupied in making known the general order from head-quarters; which set forth with customary brevity, that the French armies, under the command of Massena, had retired from their position, and were in full retreat; the second and third corps, which had been stationed at Villa Franca, having marched during the night of the 15th, in the direction of Manal. The officers in command of divisions were ordered to repair instantly to Pero Negro, to consult upon a forward movement, Admiral Berkeley being written to, to provide launches to pass over General Hill's, or any other corps which might be selected, to the left bank of the Tagus. All was now excitement, heightened by the unexpected nature of an occurrence which not even speculation had calculated upon. It was but a few days before, and the news had reached Torres Vedras, that a powerful reinforcement was in march to join Massena's army, and their advanced guard had actually reached Santarem. The confident expectation was, therefore, that an attack upon the lines was meditated. Now, however, this prospect existed no longer; for scarcely had the heavy mists of the lowering day disap-

peared, when the vast plain, so lately peopled by the thickened ranks and dark masses of a great army, was seen in its whole extent deserted and untenanted.

The smoldering fires of the pickets alone marked where the troops had been posted, but not a man of that immense force was to be seen. General Fane, who had been dispatched with a brigade of Portuguese cavalry and some artillery, hung upon the rear of the retiring army, and from him we learned that the enemy were continuing their retreat northward, having occupied Santarem with a strong force to cover the movement. Craufurd was ordered to the front with the light division, the whole army following in the same direction, except Hill's corps, which, crossing the river at Velada, was intended to harass the enemy's flank, and assist our future operations.

Such, in brief, was the state of affairs when I reached Villa Franca toward noon, and received orders to join my regiment, then forming part of Sir Stapleton Cotton's brigade.

It must be felt, to be thoroughly appreciated, the enthusiastic pleasure with which one greets his old corps after some months of separation; the bounding ecstasy with which the weary eye rests on the old familiar faces, dear by every association of affection and brotherhood; the anxious look for this one, and for that; the thrill of delight sent through the heart as the well-remembered march swells upon the ear; the very notes of that rough voice, which we have heard amid the crash of battle and the rolling of artillery, speaks softly to our senses, like a father's welcome; from the well-tattered flag that waves above us, to the proud steed of the war-worn trumpeter—each has a niche in our affection.

If ever there was a corps calculated to increase and foster these sentiments, the 14th Light Dragoons was such. The warm affection, the truly heartfelt regard, which existed among my brother officers, made of our mess a happy home. Our veteran Colonel, grown gray in campaigning, was like a father to us; while the senior officers, tempering the warm blood of impetuous youth with their hard-won experience, threw a charm of peace and tranquility over all our intercourse that made us happy when together, and taught us to feel that, whether seated around the watch-fire or charging amid the squadrons of the enemy, we were surrounded by those *devoted* heart and soul to aid us.

Gallant Fourteenth!—ever first in every gay scheme of youthful jollity, as foremost in the van to meet the foe—how happy am I to recall the memory of your bright looks and bold hearts!—of your manly daring and your bold frankness—of your merry voices, as I have heard them in the battle or in the bivouac! Alas, and alas! that I should indulge such recollections alone! How few—how very few—are left of those with whom I trod the early steps of life! whose bold cheer I have heard above the clashing sabres of the enemy—whose broken voice I have listened to above the grave of a comrade! The dark pines of the Pyrenees wave above some, the burning sands of India cover others, and the wide plains of Salamanca are now your abiding-place.

"Here comes O'Malley!" shouted a well-known voice as I rode down the little slope, at the foot of which a group of officers were standing beside their horses.

"Welcome, thou man of Galway!" cried Hampden; "delighted to have you once more amongst us. How confoundedly well the fellow is looking!"

"Lisbon beef seems better prog than commissariat biscuit!" said another.

"A' weel, Charley?" said my friend, the Scotch Doctor; "how's a' wi' ye, man? Ye seem to thrive on your mishaps! How cam' ye by that braw beastie ye're mounted on?"

"A present, Doctor; the gift of a very warm friend."

"I hope you invited him to the mess, O'Malley! For, by Jove, our stables stand in need of his kind offices! There he goes! Look at him! What a slashing pace for a heavy fellow!" This observation was made with reference to a well-known officer on the commander-in-chief's staff, whose weight—some two and twenty stone—never was any impediment to his bold riding.

"Egad, O'Malley, you'll soon be as pretty a light-weight as our friend yonder. Ah! there's a storm going on there! Here comes the Colonel!"

"Well, O'Malley, are you come back to us? Happy to see you, boy!—hope we shall not lose you again in a hurry!—We can't spare the scape-graces! There's plenty of skirmishing going on!—Craufurd always asks for the scapegraces for the pickets!"

I shook my gallant Colonel's hand, while I acknowledged, as best I might, his ambiguous compliment.

"I say, lads," resumed the Colonel, "squad your men and form on the road! Lord Wellington's coming down this way

o have a look at you! O'Malley, I have leneral Craufurd's orders to offer you your ld appointment on his staff; without you prefer remaining with the regiment!"

"I can never be sufficiently grateful, sir, o the General; but, in fact—I think—hat is, I believe—"

"You'd rather be among your own fellows. Out with it, boy! I like you all the better! but come, we mustn't let the General know that; so that I shall forget to tell you all about it. Eh? isn't that best? But join your troop now; I hear the staff coming this way."

As he spoke, a crowd of horsemen were seen advancing toward us at a sharp trot; their waving plumes and gorgeous aiguilettes denoting their rank as generals of division. In the midst, as they came nearer, I could distinguish one whom, once seen, there was no forgetting; his plain blue frock and gray trowsers unstrapped beneath his boots, not a little unlike the trim accuracy of costume around him. As he rode to the head of the leading squadron, the staff fell back and he stood alone before us; for a second there was a dead silence, but the next instant—by what impulse tell who can—one tremendous cheer burst from the entire regiment. It was like the act of one man; so sudden, so spontaneous. While every cheek glowed, and every eye sparkled with enthusiasm, he alone seemed cool and unexcited as, gently raising his hand, he motioned them to silence.

"Fourteenth, you are to be where you always desire to be — in the advanced guard of the army. I have nothing to say on the subject of your conduct in the field. I know *you*; but, if in pursuit of the enemy, I hear of any misconduct toward the people of the country, or any transgression of the general orders regarding pillage, by G—, I'll punish you as severely as the worst corps in the service, and you know *me*."

"Oh! tear an ages, listen to that; and there's to be no plunder after all!" said Mickey Free; and for an instant the most I could do was not to burst into a fit of laughter. The word "Forward!" was given at the moment, and we moved past in close column, while that penetrating eye, which seemed to read our very thoughts, scanned us from one end of the line to the other.

"I say, Charley," said the Captain of my troop in a whisper—"I say, that confounded cheer we gave got us that lesson; he can't stand that kind of thing."

"By Jove! I never felt more disposed than to repeat it," said I.

"No, no, my boy, we'll give him the honors, nine times nine; but wait till evening. Look at old Merivale there. I'll swear he's saying something devilish civil to him. Do you see the old fellow's happy look?"

And so it was; the bronzed, hard-cast features of the veteran soldier were softened into an expression of almost boyish delight, as he sat, bare-headed, bowing to his very saddle, while Lord Wellington was speaking.

As I looked, my heart throbbed painfully against my side, my breath came quick, and I muttered to myself, "What would I not give to be in his place now!"

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

THE RETREAT OF THE FRENCH.

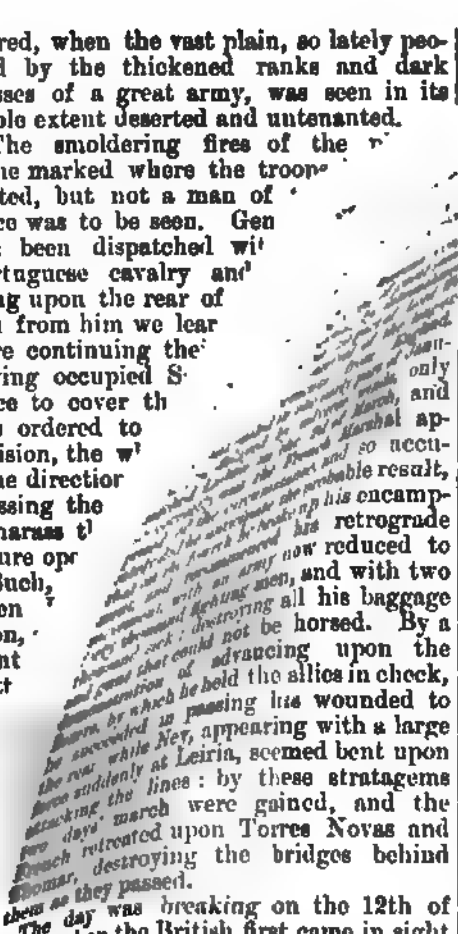
It is not my intention, were I even adequate to the task, to trace with anything like accuracy the events of the war at this period. In fact, to those who, like myself, were performing a mere subaltern character, the daily movements of our own troops, not to speak of the continual changes of the enemy, were perfectly unknown, and an English newspaper was more ardently longed for in the Peninsula than by the most eager crowd of a London coffee-room; nay, the results of the very engagements we were ourselves concerned in, more than once, first reached us through the press of our own country. It is easy enough to understand this. The officer in command of the regiment, and, how much more, the captain of a troop, or the subaltern under him, knows nothing beyond the sphere of his own immediate duty: by the success or failure of his own party his knowledge is bounded, but how far he or his may influence the fortune of the day, or of what is taking place elsewhere, he is totally ignorant; and an old Fourteenth man did not badly explain his ideas on the matter, who described Busaco as "a great noise and a great smoke, booming artillery and rattling small-arms, infernal confusion, and, to all seeming, incessant blundering, orders and counter-orders, ending with a crushing charge, when, not being hurt himself nor having hurt anybody, he felt much pleased to learn that they had gained a victory." It is then sufficient for all the purposes of my narrative, when I mention that Massena continued his retreat by Santarem and Thomar, followed by the allied army, who, however desirous of pressing upon the rear

peared, when the vast plain, so lately peopled by the thickened ranks and dark masses of a great army, was seen in its whole extent deserted and untenanted.

The smoldering fires of the ... alone marked where the troops ... posted, but not a man of ... force was to be seen. Gen ... had been dispatched wi ... Portuguese cavalry and ... hung upon the rear of ... and from him we lear ... were continuing the ... having occupied S ... force to cover th ... was ordered to ... division, the w ... same directior ... crossing the ... to harass t ... future ope ...

Such, ... when ... noon, ... ment ... Cott ...

I ... pr ... w ... r ...



... gay scheme ... immediately ordered up, ... in the ... ond and Ninety-fourth, ... of the Forty-third were led ... wooded slopes upon the French ... ton simultaneously attacked the ... in less than an hour, both were ... al, and Ney's position was laid ... his skirmishers, however, continued ... hold their ground in front, and La Fer... ère, a colonel of hussars, dashing boldly forward at this very moment, carried off fourteen prisoners from the very front of our line. Deceived by the confidence of the enemy, Lord Wellington now prepared for an attack in force. The infantry were therefore formed into line, and, at the signal of three shots fired from the center, began their foremost movement.

Bending up a gentle curve, the whole plain glistened with the glancing bayonets, and the troops marched majestically onward; while the light artillery and the cavalry bounding forward from the left and center rushed eagerly toward the foe. One deafening discharge from the French guns opened at the moment, with a general volley of small-arms. The smoke for an instant obscured everything; and when that cleared away no enemy was to be seen.

The British pressed madly on, like heated bloodhounds; but, when they descended the slope, the village of Redinha was in flames, and the French in full retreat beyond it; a single howitzer seemed our only trophy, and even this we were not destined to boast of, for from the midst of the crashing flame and dense smoke of the burning village, a troop of dragoons rushed forward, and, charging our infantry, carried it off. The struggle, though but for a moment, cost them dear: twenty of their comrades lay dead upon the spot; but they were resolute and determined, and the officer who led them on, fighting hand to hand with a soldier of the Forty-second, cheered them as they retired. His gallant bearing, and his coat covered with decorations, bespoke him one of note, and well it might; he who thus periled his life to maintain the courage of his soldiers at the commencement of a retreat was no other than Ney himself, *le plus brave des braves*. The British pressed hotly on, and the light troops crossed the river almost at the same time with the French. Ney, however, fell back upon Condeixa, where his main body was posted, and all further pursuit was for the present abandoned.

At Casa Noval and at Foz d'Aronce the allies were successful; but the French still continued to retire, burning the towns and

The day was breaking on the 12th of March, when the British first came in sight of the retiring enemy. We were then ordered to the front, and, broken up into small parties, threw out our skirmishers. The French chasseurs, usually not indisposed to accept this species of encounter, showed now less of inclination than usual, and either retreated before us, or hovered in masses to check our advance; in this way the morning was passed, when toward noon we perceived that the enemy was drawn up in battle array, occupying the height above the village of Redinha. This little straggling village is situated in a hollow, traversed by a narrow causeway, which opens by a long and dangerous defile upon a bridge; on either side of which a dense wood afforded a shelter for light troops, while upon the commanding eminence above a battery of heavy guns was seen in position.

In front of the village a brigade of artillery and a division of infantry were drawn up so skillfully as to give the appearance of a considerable force, so that, when Lord Wellington came up, he spent some time in examining the enemy's position. Ere-

villages in their rear, and devastating the country along the whole line of march by every expedient of cruelty the heart of man has ever conceived. In the words of one whose descriptions, however fraught with the most wonderful power of painting, are equally marked by truth—"Every horror that could make war hideous attended this dreadful march. Distress, conflagration, death in all modes—from wounds, from fatigue, from water, from the flames, from starvation—vengeance, unlimited vengeance—was on every side." The country was a desert!

Such was the exhaustion of the allies, who suffered even greater privations than the enemy, that they halted upon the 16th, unable to proceed farther, and the river Ceira, swollen and unfordable, flowed between the rival armies.

The repose of even one day was a most grateful interruption to the harassing career we had pursued for some time past; and it seemed that my comrades felt, like myself, that such an opportunity was by no means to be neglected; but, while I am devoting so much space, and trespassing on my reader's patience thus far with narrative of flood and field, let me steal a chapter for what will sometimes seem a scarcely less congenial topic, and bring back the recollection of a glorious night in the Peninsula.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

PATRICK'S DAY IN THE PENINSULA.

THE *réveil* had not yet sounded, when I felt my shoulder shaken gently as I lay wrapped up in my cloak beneath a prickly pear-tree.

"Lieutenant O'Malley, sir; a letter, sir; a bit of a note, your honor," said a voice that bespoke the bearer and myself were countrymen. I opened it, and, with difficulty, by the uncertain light, read as follows:

"DEAR CHARLEY,—As Lord Wellington, like a good Irishman as he is, wouldn't spoil Patrick's Day by marching, we've got a little dinner at our quarters to celebrate the holy times, as my uncle would call it. Maurice, Phil Grady, and some regular trumps, will all come; so don't disappoint us. I've been making punch all night, and Casey, who has a knack at pastry, has made a goose-pie as big as a portmanteau. Sharp seven, after parade. The second battalion of the Fusiliers are quartered at Melanté, and we are next them. Bring any of yours worth their liquor. Power is, I know, absent with the staff; perhaps the Scotch Doctor would come,—try him. Carry over a little mustard with you, if there be such in your parts. Yours,

"D. O'SHAUGHNESSY.

"Patrick's Day, and raining like blazes."

Seeing that the bearer expected an answer, I scrawled the words "I'm there" with my pencil on the back of the note, and again turned myself round to sleep. My slumbers were, however, soon interrupted once more; for the bugles of the light infantry, and the hoarse trumpet of the cavalry, sounded the call, and I found to my surprise that, though halted, we were by no means destined to a day of idleness. Dragoons were already mounted, carrying orders hither and thither, and staff-officers were galloping right and left. A general order commanded an inspection of the troops, and within less than an hour from daybreak the whole army was drawn up under arms. A thin, drizzling rain continued to fall during the early part of the day, but the sun gradually dispelled the heavy vapor; and, as the bright verdure glittered in its beams, sending up all the perfumes of a southern clime, I thought I had never seen a more lovely morning. The staff were stationed upon a little knoll beside the river, round the base of which the troops defiled, at first in orderly, then in quick time, the bands playing, and the colors flying. In the same brigade with us the Eighty-eighth came, and, as they neared the Commander-in-Chief, their quick-step was suddenly stopped, and, after a pause of a few seconds, the band struck up "St. Patrick's Day," the notes were caught up by the other Irish regiments, and, amid one prolonged cheer from the whole line, the gallant fellows moved past.

The grenadier company were drawn up beside the road, and I was not long in detecting my friend O'Shaughnessy, who wore a tremendous shamrock in his shako.

"Left face, wheel! quick march! Don't forget the mustard!" said the bold Major; and a loud roar of laughing from my brother officers followed him off the ground. I soon explained the injunction, and, having invited some three or four to accompany me to the dinner, waited with all patience for the conclusion of the parade.

The sun was setting as I mounted, and, joined by Hampden, Baker, the Doctor, and another, set out for O'Shaughnessy's

quarters. As we rode along, we were continually falling in with others bent upon the same errand as ourselves, and ere we arrived at Melanté our party was some thirty strong; and truly a most extraordinary procession did we form. Few of the invited came without some contribution to the general stock; and while a staff-officer flourished a ham, a smart hussar might be seen with a plucked turkey, trussed for roasting; most carried bottles, as the consumption of fluid was likely to be considerable; and one fat old major jogged along on a broken-winded pony, with a basket of potatoes on his arm. Good-fellowship was the order of the day, and certainly a more jovial squadron seldom was met together than ours. As we turned the angle of a rising ground, a hearty cheer greeted us, and we beheld in front of an old ordnance marquee a party of some fifty fellows engaged in all the pleasing duties of the *cuisine*. Maurice, conspicuous above all, with a white apron, and a ladle in his hand, was running hither and thither, advising, admonishing, instructing, and occasionally imprecating. Ceasing for a second his functions, he gave us a cheer and a yell like that of an Indian savage, and then resumed his duties beside a huge boiler, which, from the frequency of his explorations into its contents, we judged to be punch.

"Charley, my son, I've a place for you; don't forget. Where's my learned brother?—haven't you brought him with you? Ah, Doctor, how goes it?"

"Nae that bad, Master Quell: a' things considered, we've had an awfu' time of it lately."

"You know my friend Hampden, Maurice. Let me introduce Mr. Baker—Mr. Maurice Quill. Where's the Major?"

"Here I am, my darling, and delighted to see you. Some of yours, O'Malley, ain't they? Proud to have you, gentlemen. Charley, we are obliged to have several tables; but you are to be beside Maurice, so take your friends with you. There goes the 'Roast Beef;' my heart warms to that old tune."

Amid a hurried recognition, and shaking of hands on every side, I elbowed my way into the tent, and soon reached a corner, where, at a table for eight, I found Maurice seated at one end; a huge, purple-faced old major, whom he presented to us as Bob Mahon, occupied the other. O'Shaughnessy presided at the table next to us, but near enough to join in all the conviviality of ours.

One must have lived for some months upon hard biscuit and harder beef to relish as we did the fare before us, and to form an estimate of our satisfaction. If the reader cannot fancy Van Amburgh's lions in red coats and epaulettes, he must be content to lose the effect of the picture. A turkey rarely fed more than two people, and few were abstemious enough to be satisfied with one chicken. The order of the viands, too, observed no common routine, each party being happy to get what he could, and satisfied to follow up his pudding with fish, or his tart with a sausage. Sherry, champagne, London porter, Malaga, and even, I believe, Harvey's sauce, were hobnobbed in, while hot punch, in teacups or tin vessels, was unsparingly distributed on all sides. Achilles himself, they say, got tired of eating, and though he consumed something like a prize ox to his own cheek, he at length had to call for cheese, so that we at last gave in, and, having cleared away the broken tumbrels and baggage-carts of our army, cleared for a general action.

"Now, lads!" cried the Major, "I'm not going to lose your time and mine by speaking; but there are a couple of toasts I must insist upon your drinking with all the honors; and, as I like dispatch, we'll couple them. It so happens that our old island boasts of two of the finest fellows that ever wore Russia ducks. None of your nonsensical geniuses, like poets or painters, or anything like that; but downright, straightforward, no-humbug sort of devil-may-care and bad-luck-to-you kind of chaps—real Irishmen! Now, it's a strange thing that they both had such an antipathy to vermin, they spent their life in hunting them down and destroying them; and whether they met toads at home, or Johnny Crapaud abroad, it was all one. (Cheers.) Just so, boys; they made them leave that; but I see you are impatient, so I'll not delay you, but fill to the brim, and, with the best cheer in your body, drink with me the two greatest Irishmen that ever lived, 'St. Patrick and Lord Wellington.'"

The Englishmen laughed long and loud, while we cheered with an energy that satisfied even the Major.

"Who is to give us the chant? Who is to sing St. Patrick?" cried Maurice. "Come, Bob, out with it."

"I'm four tumblers too low for that yet," growled out the Major.

"Well, then, Charley, be you the man; or why not Dennis himself? Come, Dennis, we cannot better begin our evening than with a song; let us have our old friend 'Larry M'Hale.'"

"Larry M'Hale!" resounded from all parts of the room, while O'Shaughnessy rose once more to his legs.

"Faith, boys, I'm always ready to follow your lead; but what analogy can exist between 'Lary M'Hale' and the toast we have just drunk I can't see for the life of me; not but Larry would have made a strapping light company man had he joined the army."

"The song, the song!" cried several voices.

"Well, if you will have it, here goes."

LARRY M'HALE.

Air—"It's a bit of a thing," etc.

"Oh! Larry M'Hale he had little to fear,
And never could want when the crops didn't fail.
He'd a house and demesne and eight hundred a year,
And the heart for to spend it had Larry M'Hale!
The soul of a party,—the life of a feast,
And an illigant song he could sing, I'll be bail;
He would ride with the rector, and drink with the priest,
Oh! the broth of a boy was old Larry M'Hale.

"It's little he cared for the judge or recorder,
His house was as big and as strong as a jail;
With a cruel four-pounder he kept in great order,
He'd murder the country, would Larry M'Hale,
He'd a bunderbuss too; of horse-pistols a pair;
But his favorite weapon was always a flail:
I wish you could see how he'd empty a fair,
For he handled it neatly, did Larry M'Hale.

"His ancestors were kings before Moses was born,
His mother descended from great Grana Uaile;
He laughed all the Blakes and the Frenches to scorn;
They were mushroons compared to old Larry M'Hale.
He sat down every day to a beautiful dinner,
With cousins and uncles enough for a tail;
And, though loaded with debt, oh! the devil a thinner,
Could law or the sheriff make Larry M'Hale.

"With a larder supplied and a cellar well stored,
None lived half so well, from Fair-Head to Kinsale,
As he piously said, 'I've a plentiful board,
And the Lord he is good to old Larry M'Hale.'
So fill up your glass, and a high bumper give him,
It's little we'd care for the tithes or repale;
For ould Erin would be a fine country to live in,
If we only had plenty like Larry M'Hale."

"Very singular style of person your friend Mr. M'Hale," lisped a spoony-looking Cornet at the end of the table.

"Not in the country he belongs to, I assure you," said Maurice; "but I presume you were never in Ireland."

"You are mistaken there," resumed the other; "I was in Ireland, though I confess not for a long time."

"If I might be so bold," cried Maurice, "how long?"

"Half an hour, by a stop-watch," said the other, pulling up his stock; "and I had quite enough of it in that time."

"Pray give us your experiences," cried out Bob Mahon. "They should be interesting, considering your opportunities."

"You are right," said the Cornet; "they were so; and, as they illustrate a feature in your amiable country, you shall have them."

A general knocking upon the table announced the impatience of the company, and when silence was restored the Cornet began:

"When the *Bermuda* transport sailed from Portsmouth for Lisbon, I happened to make one of some four hundred interesting individuals who, before they became food for powder, were destined to try their constitutions on pickled pork. The second day after our sailing, the winds became adverse; it blew a hurricame from every corner of the compass but the one it ought, and the good ship, that should have been standing straight for the Bay of Biscay, was scudding away under a double-reefed topsail toward the coast of Labrador. For six days we experienced every seamaneuver that usually preludes a shipwreck, and at length, when, what from sea-sickness and fear, we had become utterly indifferent to the result, the storm abated, the sea went down, and we found ourselves lying comfortably in the harbor of Cork, with a strange suspicion on our minds that the frightful scenes of the past week had been nothing but a dream.

"'Come, Mr. Medlicot,' said the Skipper to me, 'we shall be here for a couple of days to refit; had you not better go ashore and see the country?'

"I sprang to my legs with delight; visions of cowslips, larks, daisies, and mutton-chops floated before my excited imagination, and in ten minutes I found myself standing at that pleasant little inn at Cove which, opposite Spike Island, rejoices in the name of the Goat and Garters.

"'Breakfast, waiter,' said I; 'a beef-steak—fresh beef, mark ye; fresh eggs, bread, milk, and butter, all fresh.—No more hard tack,' thought I; 'no salt butter, but a genuine land breakfast.'

"'Up-stairs, No. 4, sir,' said the waiter, as he flourished a dirty napkin, indicating the way.

"Up-stairs I went, and in due time the

appetizing little meal made its appearance. Never did a minor's eye revel over his broad acres with more complacent enjoyment than did mine skim over the mutton and the muffin, the teapot, the trout, and the deviled kidney, so invitingly spread out before me. 'Yes,' thought I, as I smacked my lips, 'this is the reward of virtue; pickled pork is a probationary state that admirably fits us for future enjoyments.' I arranged my napkin upon my knee, seized my knife and fork, and proceeded with most critical acumen to bisect a beefsteak. Scarcely, however, had I touched it, when, with a loud crash, the plate smashed beneath it, and the gravy ran piteously across the cloth. Before I had time to account for the phenomenon, the door opened hastily, and the waiter rushed into the room, his face beaming with smiles, while he rubbed his hands in an ecstasy of delight.

"'It's all over, sir,' said he; 'glory be to God! it's all done.'

"'What's over? what's done?' inquired I, with impatience.

"'Mr. M'Mahon is satisfied,' replied he, 'and so is the other gentleman.'

"'Who and what the devil do you mean?'

"'It's over, sir, I say,' replied the waiter again; 'he fired in the air.'

"'Fired in the air! Was there a duel in the room below stairs?'

"'Yes, sir,' said the waiter, with a benign smile.

"'That will do,' said I, as, seizing my hat, I rushed out of the house, and, hurrying to the beach, took a boat for the ship. Exactly half an hour had elapsed since my landing, but even those short thirty minutes had fully as many reasons that, although there may be few more amusing, there are some safer places to live in than the Green Isle."

A general burst of laughter followed the Cornet's story, which was heightened in its effect by the gravity with which he told it.

"And, after all," said Maurice Quill, "now that people have given up making fortunes for the insurance companies, by living to the age of Methuselah, there's nothing like being an Irishman. In what other part of the habitable globe can you cram so much of adventure into one year? Where can you be so often in love, in liquor, or in debt? and where can you get so merrily out of the three? Where are promises to marry and promises to pay treated with the same gentlemanlike forbearance? and where, when you have lost your heart and your fortune, are people found so ready to comfort you in your reverses? Yes," said Maurice, as he filled his glass up to the brim, and eyed it lusciously for a moment — "yes, darling, here's your health; the only girl I ever loved—in that part of the country, I mean. Give her a bumper, lads, and I'll give you a chant!"

"Name! name! name!" shouted several voices from different parts of the table.

"Mary Draper!" said Maurice, filling his glass once more, while the name was re-echoed by every lip at table.

"The song! the song!"

"Faith, I hope I haven't forgotten it," quoth Maurice. "No; here it is."

So saying, after a couple of efforts to assure the pitch of his voice, the worthy Doctor began the following words to that very popular melody, "Nancy Dawson:"

MARY DRAPER.

Air—"Nancy Dawson."

"Don't talk to me of London dames,
Nor rave about your foreign flames,
That never lived,—except in dramas,
Nor shone, except on paper;
I'll sing you 'bout a girl I knew,
Who lived in Ballywhacmacrew,
And, let me tell you, mighty few
Could equal Mary Draper.

"Her cheeks were red, her eyes were blue,
Her hair was brown, of deepest hue,
Her foot was small, and neat to view,
Her waist was slight and taper;
Her voice was music to your ear,
A lovely brogue, so rich and clear,
Oh, the like I ne'er again shall hear
As from sweet Mary Draper.

"She'd ride a wall, she'd drive a team,
Or with a fly she'd whip a stream,
Or maybe sing you 'Rousseau's Dream,'
For nothing could escape her;
I've seen her, too—upon my word—
At sixty yards bring down her bird,
Oh! she charmed all the Forth-third,
Did lovely Mary Draper.

"And at the spring assizes' ball,
The junior bar would one and all
For all her fav'rite dances call,
And Harry Deane would caper;
Lord Clare would then forget his lore,
King's Counsel, voting law a bore,
Were proud to figure on the floor,
For love of Mary Draper.

"The parson, priest, sub-sheriff too,
Were all her slaves, and so would you,
If you had only but one view,
Of such a face and shape, or
Her pretty ankles—but, ohone,
It's only west of old Athlone
Such girls were found—and now they're gone—
So here's to Mary Draper!"

"So here's to Mary Draper!" sang out every voice, in such efforts to catch the tune as pleased the taste of the motley assembly.

"For Mary Draper and Co. I thank you," said Maurice. "Quill drinks to Dennis," added he, in a grave tone, as he nodded to O'Shaughnessy. "Yes, Shaugh, few men better than ourselves know these matters; and few have had more experience of the three perils of Irishmen—love, liquor, and the law of arrest."

"It's little the latter has ever troubled my father's son," replied O'Shaughnessy; "our family have been writ-proof for centuries, and he'd have been a bold man who would have ventured with an original or a true copy within the precincts of Killinahoula."

"Your father had a touch of Larry M'Hale in him," said I, "apparently."

"Exactly so," replied Dennis; "not but they caught him at last; and a scurvy trick it was, and well worthy of him who did it! Yes," said he, with a sigh, "it is only another among the many instances where the better features of our nationality have been used by our enemies as instruments for our destruction; and, should we seek for the causes of unhappiness in our wretched country, we should find them rather in our virtues than in our vices, and in the bright rather than in the darker phases of our character."

"Metaphysics, by Jove!" cried Quill; "but all true at the same time. There was a messmate of mine in the *Roscommon*, who never paid car-hire in his life. 'Head or harp, Paddy!' he would cry. 'Two tenpennies, or nothing.' 'Harp! for the honor of ould Ireland,' was the invariable response, and my friend was equally sure to make head come uppermost; and, upon my soul, they seem to know the trick at the Home Office."

"That must have been the same fellow that took my father," cried O'Shaughnessy, with energy.

"Let us hear the story, Dennis," said I.

"Yes," said Maurice, "for the benefit of self and fellows, let us hear the stratagem!"

"The way of it was this," resumed O'Shaughnessy; "my father, who, for reasons registered in the King's Bench, spent a great many years of his life in that part of Ireland geographically known as lying west of the law, was obliged, for certain reasons of family, to come up to Dublin. This he proceeded to do with due caution. Two trusty servants formed an advanced guard, and patrolled the country for at least five miles in advance; after them came a skirmishing body of a few tenants, who, for the consideration of never paying rent, whould have charged the whole Court of Chancery, if needful. My father himself, in an old chaise victualed like a fortress, brought up the rear; and, as I said before, he were a bold man who would have attempted to have laid siege to him. As the column advanced into the enemy's country, they assumed a closer order, the patrol and the picket falling back upon the main body; and in this way they reached that most interresting city called Kilbeggan. What a fortunate thing it is for us in Ireland that we can see so much of the world without foreign travel, and that any gentleman for six-and-eightpence can leave Dublin in the morning, and visit Timbuctoo against dinner-time! Don't stare! it's truth I'm telling; for dirt, misery, smoke, unaffected behavior, and black faces, I'll back Kilbeggan against all Africa. Free-and-easy, pleasant people ye are, with a skin as begrimed and as rugged as your own potatoes! But, to resume. The sun was just rising in a delicious morning of June, when my father—whose loyal antipathies I have mentioned made him also an early riser—was preparing for the road. A stout escort of his followers were as usual under arms to see him safe in the chaise, the passage to and from which every day being the critical moment of my father's life.

"'It's all right, your honor,' said his own man, as, armed with a blunderbuss, he opened the bedroom door.

"'Time enough, Tim,' said my father; 'close the door, for I haven't finished my breakfast.'

"Now, the real truth was, that my father's attention was at that moment withdrawn from his own concerns, by a scene which was taking place in a field beneath his window.

"But a few minutes before, a hack-chaise had stopped upon the roadside, out of which sprang three gentlemen, who, proceeding into the field, seemed bent upon something, which, whether a survey or a duel, my father could not make out. He was not long, however, to remain in ignorance. One, with an easy, lounging gait, strode toward a distant corner; another took an opposite direction; while a third, a short, pursy gentleman, in a red handkerchief and rabbit-skin waistcoat, proceeded to open a mahogany box, which, to the critical eyes of my respected father, was agreeably suggestive of bloodshed and murder.

"'A duel, by Jupiter!' said my father, rubbing his hands. 'What a heavenly morning the scoundrels have! not a leaf stirring, and a sod like a billiard-table!'

"Meanwhile, the little man who officiated as second, it would appear, to *both* parties, bustled about with an activity little congenial to his shape; and, what between snapping the pistols, examining the flints, and ramming down the charges, had got himself into a sufficient perspiration before he commenced to measure out the ground.

"'Short distance and no quarter!' shouted one of the combatants, from the corner of the field.

"'Across a handkerchief, if you like!' roared the other.

"'Gentlemen, every inch of them!' responded my father.

"'Twelve paces!' cried the little man. 'No more and no less. Don't forget that I am alone in this business!'

"'A very true remark!' observed my father; 'and an awkward predicament yours will be if they are not both shot!'

"By this time the combatants had taken their places, and the little man, having delivered the pistols, was leisurely retiring to give the word. My father, however, whose critical eye was never at fault, detected a circumstance which promised an immense advantage to one at the expense of the other; in fact, one of the parties was so placed with his back to the sun, that his shadow extended in a straight line to the very foot of his antagonist.

"'Unfair, unfair!' cried my father, opening the window as he spoke, and addressing himself to him of the rabbit-skin. 'I crave your pardon for the interruption,' said he; 'but I feel bound to observe that that gentleman's shadow is likely to make a shade of him.'

"'And so it is,' observed the short man; 'a thousand thanks for your kindness; but the truth is, I am totally unaccustomed to this kind of thing, and the affair will not admit of delay.'

"'Not an hour!' said one.

"'Not five minutes!' growled the other of the combatants.

"'Put them up north and south!' said my father.

"'Is it thus?'

"'Exactly so. But now again, the gentleman in the brown coat is covered with the ash-tree.'

"'And so he is!' said rabbit-skin, wiping his forehead with agitation.

"'Move them a little to the left,' said he.

"'That brings me upon an eminence,' said the gentleman in blue. 'I'll be d—d if I be made a cock-shot of!'

"'What an awkward little thief it is in the hairy waistcoat!' said my father; 'he's lucky if he don't get shot himself!'

"'May I never, if I'm not sick of you both!' ejaculated rabbit-skin, in a passion. 'I've moved you round every point of the compass, and the devil a nearer we are than ever.'

"'Give us the word,' said one.

"'The word!'

"'Downright murder,' said my father.

"'I don't care,' said the little man; 'we shall be here till doomsday.'

"'I can't permit this,' said my father; 'allow me.' So saying, he stepped upon the window-sill and leaped down into the field.

"'Before I can accept of your politeness,' said he of the rabbit-skin, 'may I beg to know your name and position in society?'

"'Nothing more reasonable,' said my father. 'I'm Miles O'Shaughnessy, Colonel of the Royal Raspers: here is my card.'

"The piece of pasteboard was complacently handed from one to the other of the party, who saluted my father with a smile of most courteous benignity.

"'Colonel O'Shaughnessy,' said one.

"'Miles O'Shaughnessy,' said the other.

"'Of Killinahoula Castle,' said the third.

"'At your service,' said my father, bowing as he presented his snuff-box; 'and now to business, if you please; for my time also is limited.'

"'Very true,' observed he of the rabbit-skin, 'and, as you observe, now to business; in virtue of which, Colonel Miles O'Shaughnessy, I hereby arrest you in the King's name. Here is the writ: it's at the suit of Barnaby Kelly, of Loughrea, for the sum of 1482*l.* 19*s.* 7½*d.*, which—'

"Before he could conclude the sentence, my father discharged one obligation, by implanting his closed knuckles in his face. The blow, well aimed and well intentioned, sent the little fellow summersetting like a sugar hogshead. But, alas! it was of no use; the others, strong and able-bodied, fell both upon him, and after a desperate struggle succeeded in getting him down. To tie his hands, and convey him to the chaise, was the work of a few moments; and, as my father drove by the inn, the last object which caught his view was a bloody encounter between his own people and the myrmidons of the law, who, in great numbers, had laid siege to the house

during his capture. Thus was my father taken; and thus, in reward for yielding to a virtuous weakness in his character, was he consigned to the ignominious durance of a prison. Was I not right, then, in saying that such is the melancholy position of our country, the most beautiful traits in our character are converted into the elements of our ruin?"

"I dinna think ye ha'e made out your case, Major," said the Scotch Doctor, who felt sorely puzzled at my friend's logic. "If your faether had na gi'en the bond—"

"There is no saying what he wouldn't have done to the bailiffs," interrupted Dennis, who was following up a very different train of reasoning.

"I fear me, Doctor," observed Quill, "you are much behind us in Scotland. Not but that some of your chieftains are respectable men, and wouldn't get on badly even in Galway."

"I thank ye muckle for the compliment," said the Doctor, dryly; "but I ha'e my doubts they'd think it ane, and they're crusty carls that's no' ower safe to meddle wi'."

"I'd as soon propose a hand of spoiled five to the Pope of Rome, as a joke to one of them," returned Maurice.

"Maybe ye are na wrang there, Maister Quell."

"Well," cried Hampden, "if I may be allowed an opinion, I can safely aver I know no quarters like Scotland. Edinburgh beyond anything or anywhere I was ever placed in."

"Always after Dublin," interposed Maurice; while a general chorus of voices re-echoed the sentiment.

"You are certainly a strong majority," said my friend, "against me; but still I recant not my original opinion. Edinburgh before the world. For a hospitality that never tires; for pleasant fellows that improve every day of your acquaintance; for pretty girls that make you long for a repeal of the canon about being only singly blessed, and lead you to long for a score of them, Edinburgh, I say again, before the world."

"Their ankles are devilish thick," whispered Maurice.

"A calumny, a base calumny!"

"And then they drink—"

"Oh—"

"Yes; they drink very strong tea."

"Shall we ha'e a glass o' sherry together, Hampden?" said the Scotch Doctor, willing to acknowledge his defense of auld Reekie.

"And we'll take O'Malley in," said Hampden; "he looks imploringly."

"And now to return to the charge," quoth Maurice. "In what particular dare ye contend the palm with Dublin? We'll not speak of beauty. I can't suffer any such profane turn in the conversation as to dispute the superiority of Irishwomen's lips, eyes, noses, and eyebrows, to anything under heaven. We'll not talk of gay fellows; egad, we needn't. I'll give you the garrison—a decent present; and I'll back the Irish bar for more genuine drollery, more wit, more epigram, more ready sparkling fun, than the whole rest of the empire—ay, and all her colonies—can boast of."

"They are nae remarkable for passing the bottle, if they resemble their very gifted advocate," observed the Scotchman.

"But they are for filling and emptying both, making its current, as it glides by, like a rich stream glittering in the sunbeams, with the sparkling luster of their wit. Lord, how I'm blown! Fill my pannikin, Charley. There's no subduing a Scot. Talk with him, drink with him, fight with him, and he'll always have the last of it: there's only one way of concluding the treaty—"

"And that is—"

"Blarney him. Lord bless you, he can't stand it. Tell him Holyrood's like Versailles, and the Trossach's finer than Mont Blanc; that Geordie Buchanan was Homer, and the Canongate, Herculaneum,—then ye have him on the hip. Now ye never can humbug an Irishman that way; he'll know you're quizzing him when you praise his country."

"Ye are right, Hampden," said the Scotch Doctor, in reply to some observation. "We are vara primitive in the hielands, and we keep to our ain national customs in dress and everything; and we are vara slow to learn; and even when we try we are nae ower successfu' in our imitations, which sometimes cost us dearly enough. Ye may have heard, maybe, of the M'Nab o' that ilk, and what happened him with the King's equerry?"

"I am not quite certain," said Hampden, "if I ever heard the story."

"It's nae muckle of a story; but the way of it was this:—When Montrose came back from London, he brought with him a few Englishers to show them the Highlands, and let them see something of deer-stalking; among the rest, a certain Sir George Sowerby, an aide-de-camp or an equerry of the Prince. He was a vara fine gentleman, that never loaded his ain gun, and a'most thought it too much trouble to pull the trigger. He went out every morning to shoot with his hair curled like a woman,

and dressed like a dancing-master. Now, there happened to be at the same time at the castle the Laird o' M'Nab; he was a kind of cousin of the Montrose, and a rough old tyke of the true hieland breed, wha' thought that the head of a clan was fully equal to any king or prince. He sat opposite to Sir George at dinner the day of his arrival, and could not conceal his surprise at the many new-fangled ways of feeding himself the Englisher adopted. He ate his saumon wi' his fork in ae hand, and a bittock of bread in the other; he would na' touch the whisky; helped himself to a cutlet wi' his fingers; but, what was maist extraordinary of all, he wore a pair of braw white gloves during the whole time o' dinner; and, when they came to tak' away the cloth, he drew them off with a great air, and threw them into the middle of it, and then, leisurely taking anither pair off a silver salver which his ain man presented, he pat them on for the dessert. The M'Nab, who, although an auld-fashioned carl, was aye fond of bringing something new hame to his friends, remarked the Englisher's proceeding with great care, and the next day he appeared at dinner wi' a huge pair of hieland mittens, which he wore to the astonishment of all and the amusement of most, through the whole three courses, and, exactly as the Englishman changed his gloves, the M'Nab produced a fresh pair of goat's wool, four times as large as the first, which, drawing on with prodigious gravity, he threw the others into the middle of the cloth, remarking, as he did so,

"'Ye see, Captain, we are never ower auld to learn.'

"All propriety was now at an end, and a hearty burst of laughter from one end of the table to the other convulsed the whole company; the M'Nab and the Englishman being the only persons who did not join in it, but sat glowering at each other like twa tigers; and, indeed, it needed a' the Montrose's interference that they had na' quarreled upon it in the morning."

"The M'Nab was a man after my own heart," said Maurice; "there was something very Irish in the lesson he gave the Englishman."

"I'd rather ye'd told him that than me," said the Doctor, dryly; "he would na hae thanked ye for mistaking him for ane of your countrymen."

"Come, Doctor!" said Dennis, "could not ye give us a stave? Have ye nothing that smacks of the brown fern and the *blue lakes* in your memory?"

"*I* have na a sang in my mind just noo except Johnny Cope; which maybe might na be ower pleasant for the Englishers to listen to."

"I never heard a Scotch song worth sixpence," quoth Maurice, who seemed bent on provoking the Doctor's ire. "They contain nothing save some puling sentimentality about lasses with lint-white locks, or some absurd laudations of the Barley Bree."

"Hear till him! hear till him!" said the Doctor, reddening with impatience.

"Show me anything," said Maurice, "like the Cruiskeen Lawn or the Jug of Punch; but who can blame them, after all? You can't expect much from a people with an imagination as naked as their own knees."

"Maurice! Maurice!" cried O'Shaughnessy, reprovingly, who saw that he was pushing the other's endurance beyond all bounds.

"I mind weel," said the Scotchman, "what happened to ane o' your countrymen wha took upon him to jest as you are doing now. It was to Laurie Cameron he did it."

"And what said the redoubted Laurie in reply?"

"He did na say muckle, but he did something."

"And what might it be?" inquired Maurice.

"He threw him ower the brig of Ayr into the water, and he was drowned."

"And did Laurie come to no harm about the matter?"

"Ay! they tried him for it, and found him guilty; but when they asked him what he had to say in his defense, he merely replied, 'When the carl sneered about Scotland, I did na suspect that he did na ken how to swim;' and so the end of it was, they did naething to Laurie."

"Cool that, certainly," said I.

"I prefer your friend with the mittens, I confess," said Maurice; "though I'm sure both were most agreeable companions. But come, Doctor, couldn't you give us,

"Sit ye down, my heartie, and gie us a crack,
Let the wind tak the care o' the world on his back."

"You maunna attempt English poethry, my freend Quell; for it must be confessed ye've a damnable accent of your ain."

"Milesian-Phœnician-Corkacian; nothing more, my boy; and a coaxing kind of recitative it is, after all. Don't tell me of your soft Etruscan—your plethoric *Hoch-Deutsch*—your flattering French. To woo

and win the girl of your heart, give me a rich brogue and the least taste in life of blarney! There's nothing like it, believe me—every inflection of your voice suggesting some tender pressure of her soft hand or taper waist; every cadence falling on her gentle heart like a sea-breeze on a burning coast, or a soft sirocco over a rose-tree; and then think, my boys—and it is a fine thought after all—what a glorious gift that is, out of the reach of kings to give or to take, what neither depends upon the act of Union nor the *Habeas Corpus*. No! they may starve us—laugh at us—tax us—transport us. They may take our mountains, our valleys, and our bogs; but, bad luck to them, they can't steal our 'blarney;' that's the privilege one and indivisible with our identity; and while an Englishman raves of his liberty—a Scotchman of his oaten meal—blarney's *our* birthright, and a prettier portion I'd never ask to leave behind me to my sons. If I'd as large a family as the ould gentleman called Priam we used to hear of at school, it's the only inheritance I'd give them; and one comfort there would be besides—the legacy duty would be only a trifle. Charley, my son, I see you're listening to me, and nothing satisfies me more than to instruct aspiring youth; so never forget the old song,

"If at your ease, the girls you'd please,
And win them, like Kate Kearney,
There's but one way, I've heard them say,
Go kiss the 'Stone of Blarney.'"

"What do you say, Shaugh, if we drink it with all the honors?"

"But gently: do I hear a trumpet there?"

"Ah, there go the bugles. Can it be daybreak already?"

"How short the nights are at this season!" said Quill.

"What an infernal rumpus they're making! it's not possible the troops are to march so early."

"It wouldn't surprise me in the least," quoth Maurice; "there is no knowing what the Commander-in-Chief's not capable of: the reason's clear enough."

"And why, Maurice?"

"There's not a bit of blarney about him."

The *réveil* sang out from every brigade, and the drums beat to fall in, while Mike came galloping up at full speed to say that the bridge of boats was completed, and that the Twelfth were already ordered to cross. Not a moment was therefore to be lost; one parting cup we drained to our next meeting, and amid a hundred "good-byes" we mounted our horses. Poor Hampden's brains sadly confused by the wine and the laughing, he knew little of what was going on around him, and passed the entire time of our homeward ride in a vain endeavor to adapt Mary Draper to the air of Rule Britannia.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

FUENTES D'ONORO.

From this period the French continued their retreat, closely followed by the allied armies, and on the 5th of April Massena once more crossed the frontier into Spain, leaving thirty thousand of his bravest troops behind him, fourteen thousand of whom had fallen, or been taken prisoners: reinforcements, however, came rapidly pouring in. Two divisions of the ninth corps had already arrived, and Drouet, with eleven thousand infantry and cavalry, was preparing to march to his assistance. Thus strengthened, the French army marched toward the Portuguese frontier, and Lord Wellington, who had determined not to hazard much by his blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo, fell back upon the large table-land beyond the Turones and the Dos Casas, with his left at Fort Conception, and his right resting upon Fuentes d'Onoro. His position extended to about five miles; and here, although vastly inferior in numbers, yet relying upon the bravery of the troops, and the moral ascendancy acquired by their pursuit of the enemy, he finally resolved upon giving them battle.

Being sent with dispatches to Pack's brigade, which formed the blockading force at Almeida, I did not reach Fuentes d'Onoro until the evening of the 3d. The thundering of the guns which, even at the distance I was at, was plainly heard, announced that an attack had taken place, but it by no means prepared me for the scene which presented itself on my return.

The village of Fuentes d'Onoro, one of the most beautiful in Spain, is situated in a lovely valley, where all the charms of verdure so peculiar to the Peninsula seemed to have been scattered with a lavish hand. The citron and the arbutus, growing wild, sheltered every cottage door, and the olive and the laurel threw their shadows across the little rivulet which traversed the village. The houses, observing no uniform arrangement, stood wherever the caprice or the inclination of the builder

suggested, surrounded with little gardens, the inequality of the ground imparting a picturesque feature to even the lowliest hut, while, upon a craggy eminence above the rest, an ancient convent and a ruined chapel looked down upon the little peaceful hamlet with an air of tender protection.

Hitherto, this lovely spot had escaped all the ravages of war. The light division of our army had occupied it for months long; and every family was gratefully remembered by some one or other of our officers; and more than one of our wounded found in the kind and affectionate watching of these poor peasants the solace which sickness rarely meets with when far from home and country.

It was, then, with an anxious heart I pressed my horse forward into a gallop as the night drew near. The artillery had been distinctly heard during the day, and, while I burned with eagerness to know the result, I felt scarcely less anxious for the fate of that little hamlet whose name many a kind story had implanted in my memory. The moon was shining brightly as I passed the outpost, and, leading my horse by the bridle, descended the steep and rugged causeway to the village beneath me. The lanterns were moving rapidly to and fro; the measured tread of infantry at night—that ominous sound, which falls upon the heart so sadly—told me that they were burying the dead. The air was still and breathless; not a sound was stirring save the step of the soldiery, and the harsh clash of the shovel as it struck the earth. I felt sad, and sick at heart, and leaned against a tree: a nightingale concealed in the leaves was pouring forth its plaintive notes to the night air, and its low warble sounded like the dirge of the departed. Far beyond, in the plain, the French watch-fires were burning, and I could see from time to time the fatigue-parties moving in search of their wounded. At this moment the clock of the convent struck eleven, and a merry chime rang out, and was taken up by the echoes, till it melted away in the distance. Alas! where were those whose hearts were wont to feel cheered at that happy peal? whose infancy it had gladdened, whose old age it has hallowed? The fallen walls, the broken rooftrees, the ruin and desolation on every side, told too plainly that they had passed away forever! The smoking embers, the torn-up pathway, denoted the hard-fought struggle; and, as I passed along, I could see that every garden, where the cherry and the apple-blossom were even still perfuming the air, had now its sepulcher.

"Halt, there!" cried a hoarse voice in front. "You cannot pass this way—the Commander-in-Chief's quarters."

I looked up, and beheld a small but neat-looking cottage, which seemed to have suffered less than the others around. Lights were shining brightly from the windows, and I could even detect from time to time a figure muffled up in a cloak, passing to and fro across the window; while another, seated at a table, was occupied in writing. I turned into a narrow path which led into the little square of the village, and here, as I approached, the hum and murmur of voices announced a bivouac party. Stopping to ask what had been the result of the day, I learned that a tremendous attack had been made by the French in column upon the village, which was at first successful; but that afterward the Seventy-first and Seventy-ninth, marching down from the heights, had repulsed the enemy, and driven them beyond the Dos Casas. Five hundred had fallen in that fierce encounter, which was continued through every street and alley of the little hamlet. The gallant Highlanders now occupied the battle-field; and, hearing that the cavalry brigade was some miles distant, I willingly accepted their offer to share their bivouac, and passed the remainder of the night among them.

When day broke, our troops were under arms, but the enemy showed no disposition to renew the attack. We could perceive, however, from the road to the southward, by the long columns of dust, that reinforcements were still arriving; and learned during the morning, from a deserter, that Massena himself had come up, and Bessières also, with twelve hundred cavalry, and a battery of the Imperial Guard.

From the movements observable in the enemy, it was soon evident that the battle, though deferred, was not abandoned; and the march of a strong force toward the left of their position induced our Commander-in-Chief to dispatch the seventh division, under Houston, to occupy the height of Naval d'Aver—our extreme right—in support of which our brigade of cavalry marched as a covering force. The British position was thus unavoidably extended to the enormous length of seven miles, occupying a succession of small eminences, from the division at Fort Conception to the height of Naval d'Aver,—Fuentes d'Onoro forming nearly the center of the line.

It was evident, from the thickening combinations of the French, that a more dreadful battle was still in reserve for us;

and yet never did men look more anxiously for the morrow.

As for myself, I felt a species of exhilaration I had never before experienced; the events of the preceding day came dropping in upon me from every side, and at every new tale of gallantry or daring I felt my heart bounding with excited eagerness to win also my meed of honorable praise.

Craufurd, too, had recognized me in the kindest manner; and, while saying that he did not wish to withdraw me from my regiment on a day of battle, added that he would make use of me for the present on his staff. Thus was I engaged, from early in the morning till late in the evening, bringing orders and dispatches along the line. The troop-horse I rode—for I reserved my gray for the following day—was scarcely able to carry me along, as toward dusk I jogged along in the direction of Naval d'Aver. When I did reach our quarters, the fires were lighted, and around one of them I had the good fortune to find a party of the Fourteenth occupied in discussing a very appetizing little supper. The clatter of plates and the popping of champagne corks were most agreeable sounds. Indeed, the latter appeared to me so much too flattering an illusion, that I hesitated giving credit to my senses in the matter, when Baker called out,

"Come, Charley, sit down; you're just in the nick. Tom Marsden is giving us a benefit. You know Tom?"

And here he presented me in due form to that best of commissaries and most hospitable of horse-dealers.

"I can't introduce you to my friend on my right," continued Baker, "for my Spanish is only a skeleton battalion: but he's a trump—that I'll vouch for; never flinches his glass, and looks as though he enjoyed all our nonsense."

The Spaniard, who appeared to comprehend that he was alluded to, gravely saluted me with a low bow, and offered his glass to hobnob with me. I returned the courtesy with becoming ceremony, while Hampden whispered in my ear,

"A fine-looking fellow. You know who he is? Julian, the Guerilla chief."

I had heard much of both the strangers. Tom Marsden was a household word in every cavalry brigade, equally celebrated was his contracts and his claret. He knew every one, from Lord Wellington to the last-joined cornet; and, while upon a march, there was no piece of better fortune than to be asked to dine with him. So, in the very thick of a battle, Tom's critical eye was scanning the squadrons engaged, with an accuracy as to the number of fresh horses that would be required upon the morrow that nothing but long practice and infinite coolness could have conferred.

Of the Guerilla I need not speak. The bold feats he accomplished, the aid he rendered to the cause of his country, have made his name historical. Yet still, with all this, fatigue, more powerful than my curiosity, prevailed, and I sank into a heavy sleep upon the grass, while my merry companions kept up their revels till near morning. The last piece of consciousness I am sensible of was seeing Julian spreading his wide mantle over me as I lay, while I heard his deep voice whisper a kind wish for my repose.

CHAPTER XC.

THE BATTLE OF FUENTES D'ONORO.

So soundly did I sleep, that the tumult and confusion of the morning never awoke me; and the Guerilla, whose cavalry were stationed along the edge of the ravine near the heights of Echora, would not permit of my being roused before the last moment. Mike stood near me with my horses, and it was only when the squadrons were actually forming that I sprang to my feet and looked around me.

The day was just breaking; a thick mist lay upon the parched earth, and concealed everything a hundred yards from where we stood. From this dense vapor the cavalry defiled along the base of the hill, followed by the horse artillery and the Guards, disappearing again as they passed us, but proving, by the mass of troops now assembled, that our position was regarded as the probable point of attack.

While the troops continued to take up their position, the sun shone out, and a slight breeze blowing at the same moment, the heavy clouds moved past, and we beheld the magnificent panorama of the battle-field. Before us, at the distance of less than half a league, the French cavalry were drawn up in three strong columns: the Cuirassiers of the Guard, plainly distinguished by their steel cuirasses, flanked by the Polish Lancers and a strong hussar brigade; a powerful artillery train supported the left, and an infantry force occupied the entire space between the right and the rising ground opposite Poço Velho. Farther to the right again the column destined for the attack of Fuentes d'Onoro

were forming, and we could see that, profiting by their past experience, they were bent upon attacking the village with an overwhelming force.

For above two hours the French continued to maneuver, more than one alteration having taken place in their disposition; fresh battalions were moved toward the front, and gradually the whole of their cavalry was assembled on the extreme left in front of our position. Our people were ordered to breakfast where we stood; and a little after seven o'clock a staff officer came riding down the line, followed in a few moments after by General Craufurd, when no sooner was his well-known brown cob recognized by the troops, than a hearty cheer greeted him along the whole division.

"Thank ye, boys; thank ye, boys, with all my heart. No man feels more sensibly what that cheer means than I do. Guards! Lord Wellington relies upon your maintaining this position, which is essential to the safety of the whole line. You will be supported by the light division. I need say no more. If such troops cannot keep their ground, none can. Fourteenth, there's your place; the artillery and the Sixteenth are with you. They've the odds of us in numbers, lads; but it will tell all the better in the *Gazette*. I see they're moving; so fall in, now, fall in; and, Merivale, move to the front. Ramsey, prepare to open your fire on the attacking squadrons."

As he spoke, the low murmuring sound of distantly-moving cavalry crept along the earth, growing louder and louder, till at length we could detect the heavy tramp of the squadrons as they came on in a trot, our pace being merely a walk. While we thus advanced into the plain, the artillery unlimbered behind us, and the Spanish cavalry breaking into skirmishers dashed boldly to the front.

It was an exciting moment. The ground dipped between the two armies, so as to conceal the head of the advancing column of the French, and, as the Spanish skirmishers disappeared down the ridge, our beating hearts and straining eyes followed their last horseman.

"Halt! halt!" was passed from squadron to squadron, and the same instant the sharp ring of the pistol-shots and the clash of steel from the valley told us the battle had begun. We could hear the Guerilla war-cry mingle with the French shout, while the thickening crash of fire-arms implied a sharper conflict. Our fellows were already manifesting some impatience to press on, when a Spanish horseman appeared above the ridge—another followed, and another—and then pell-mell, broken and disordered, they fell back before the pursuing cavalry in flying masses; while the French, charging them hotly home, utterly routed and repulsed them.

The leading squadrons of the French now fell back upon their support; the column of attack thickened, and a thundering noise between their masses announced their brigade of light guns as they galloped to the front. It was then for the first time that I felt dispirited; far as my eye could stretch the dense mass of sabres extended, defiling from the distant hills and winding its slow length across the plain. I turned to look at our line, scarce one thousand strong, and could not help feeling that our hour was come: the feeling flashed vividly across my mind, but the next instant I felt my cheek redden with shame as I gazed upon the sparkling eyes and bold looks around me—the lips compressed, the hands knitted to their sabres; all were motionless, but burning to advance.

The French had halted on the brow of the hill to form, when Merivale came cantering up to us.

"Fourteenth, are you ready? Are you ready, lads?"

"Ready, sir! ready!" re-echoed along the line.

"Then push them home and charge! Charge!" cried he, raising his voice to a shout at the last word.

Heavens! what a crash was there! Our horses, in top condition, no sooner felt the spur than they bounded madly onward. The pace—for the distance did not exceed four hundred yards—was like racing. To resist the impetus of our approach was impossible; and without a shot fired, scarcely a sabre-cut exchanged, we actually rode down their advanced squadrons—hurling them headlong upon their supporting division, and rolling men and horses beneath us on every side. The French fell back upon their artillery; but, before they could succeed in opening their fire upon us, we had wheeled, and, carrying off about seventy prisoners, galloped back to our position with the loss of but two men in the affair. The whole thing was so sudden, so bold, and so successful, that I remember well, as we rode back, a hearty burst of laughter was ringing through the squadron at the ludricous display of horsemanship the French presented as they tumbled headlong down the hill; and I cannot help treasuring the recollection, for, from that moment, all thought of

anything short of victory completely quitted my mind, and many of my brother officers who had participated in my feelings at the commencement of the day, confessed to me afterward, that it was then for the first time they felt assured of beating the enemy.

While we slowly fell back to our position, the French were seen advancing in great force from the village of Almeida, to the attack of Poço Velho; they came on at a rapid pace, the artillery upon their front and flank, large masses of cavalry hovering around them. The attack upon the village was now opened by the large guns; and, amid the booming of the artillery and the crashing volleys of small fire-arms, rose the shout of the assailants, and the wild cry of the Guerilla cavalry, who had formed in front of the village. The French advanced firmly, driving back the pickets, and actually inundated the devoted village with a shower of grape; the blazing fires burst from the ignited roofs; and the black, dense smoke rising on high, seemed to rest like a pall over the little hamlet.

The conflict was now a tremendous one; our seventh division held the village with the bayonet; but the French continuing to pour in mass upon mass, drove them back with loss, and, at the end of an hour's hard fighting, took possession of the place.

The wood upon the left flank was now seen to swarm with light infantry, and the advancement of their whole left proved that they meditated to turn our flank; the space between the village and the hill of Naval d'Aver became thus the central position; and here the Guerilla force, led on by Julian Sanches, seemed to await the French with confidence. Soon, however, the cuirassiers came galloping to the spot, and, almost without exchanging a sabre-cut, the Guerillas fell back, and retired behind the Turones. This movement of Julian was more attributable to anger than to fear; for his favorite lieutenant, being mistaken for a French officer, was shot by a soldier of the Guards a few minutes before.

Montbrun pursued the Guerillas with some squadrons of horse, but they turned resolutely upon the French, and not till overwhelmed by numbers did they show any disposition to retreat.

The French, however, now threw forward their whole cavalry, and, driving back the English horse, succeeded in turning the right of the seventh division. The battle by this time was general. The staff officers who came up from the left informed us that Fuentes d'Onoro was attacked in force, Massena himself leading the assault in person; while thus for seven miles the fight was maintained hotly at intervals, it was evident that upon the maintenance of our position the fortune of the day depended. Hitherto we had been repulsed from the village and the wood; and the dark masses of infantry which were assembled upon our right, seemed to threaten the hill of Naval d'Aver with as sad a catastrophe.

Craufurd came now galloping up amongst us, his eye flashing fire, and his uniform splashed and covered with foam:

"Steady, Sixteenth, steady! Don't blow your horses! Have your fellows advanced, Malcolm?" said he, turning to an officer who stood beside him. "Ay, there they go!" pointing with his finger to the wood, where, as he spoke, the short ringing of the British rifle proclaimed the advance of that brigade. "Let the cavalry prepare to charge! And now, Ramsey, let us give it them home!"

Scarcely were the words spoken, when the squadrons were formed, and, in an instant after, the French light infantry were seen retreating from the wood, and flying in disorderly masses across the plain. Our squadrons riding down amongst them, actually cut them to atoms, while the light artillery, unlimbering, threw in a deadly discharge of grape-shot.

"To the right, Fourteenth, to the right!" cried General Stewart. "Have at their hussars!"

Whirling by them, we advanced at a gallop, and dashed toward the enemy, who, not less resolutely bent, came boldly forward to meet us. The shock was terrific! the leading squadrons on both sides went down almost to a man, and, all order being lost, the encounter became one of hand to hand.

The struggle was deadly; neither party would give way; and, while fortune now inclined hither and thither, Sir Charles Stewart singled out the French General Lamotte, and carried him off his prisoner. Meanwhile, Montbrun's cavalry and the cuirassiers came riding up, and, the retreat now sounding through our ranks, we were obliged to fall back upon the infantry. The French pursued us hotly; and so rapid was their movement, that, before Ramsey's brigade could limber up and away, their squadrons had surrounded him and captured his guns.

"Where is Ramsey?" cried Craufurd, as he galloped to the head of our division.

"Cut off—cut off! Taken, by G—! There he goes!" said he, pointing with his finger, as a dense cloud of mingled smoke and dust moved darkly across the plain. "Form into column once more!"

As he spoke, the dense mass before us seemed agitated by some mighty commotion; the flashing of blades, and the rattling of small-arms, mingled with shouts of triumph or defiance, burst forth, and the ominous cloud, lowering more darkly, seemed peopled by those in deadly strife. An English cheer pealed high above all other sounds; a second followed; the mass was rent asunder, and, like the forked lightning from a thunder-cloud, Ramsey rode forth at the head of his battery, the horses bounding madly, while the guns sprang behind them like things of no weight; the gunners leaped to their places, and, fighting hand to hand with the French cavalry, they flew across the plain.

"Nobly done, gallant Ramsey!" said a voice behind me. I turned at the sound: it was Lord Wellington who spoke. My eye fixed upon his stern features, I forgot all else,—when he suddenly recalled me to my recollection by saying,

"Follow your brigade, sir. Charge!"

In an instant I was with my people, who, intervening betwixt Ramsey and his pursuers, repulsed the enemy with loss, and carried off several prisoners. The French, however, came up in greater strength; overwhelming masses of cavalry came sweeping upon us, and we were obliged to retire behind the light division, which rapidly formed into squares to resist the cavalry. The seventh division, which was more advanced, were, however, too late for this movement, and, before they could effect their formation, the French were upon them. At this moment they owed their safety to the Chasseurs Britanniques, who poured in a flanking fire, so close, and with so deadly an aim, that their foes recoiled, beaten and bewildered.

Meanwhile, the French had become masters of Poço Velho; the formidable masses had nearly outflanked us on the right. The battle was lost, if we could not fall back upon our original position, and concentrate our force upon Fuentes d'Onoro. To effect this was a work of great difficulty; but no time was to be lost. The seventh division were ordered to cross the Turones, while Craufurd, forming the light division into squares, covered their retreat, and, supported by the cavalry, sustained the whole force of the enemy's attack.

Then was the moment to witness the cool and steady bravery of British infantry: the squares dotted across the enormous plain seemed as nothing amid that confused and flying multitude, composed of commissariat baggage, camp followers, peasants, and, finally, broken pickets and videttes arriving from the wood. A cloud of cavalry hovered and darkened around them; the Polish lancers shook their long spears, impatient of delay, and the wild huzzas burst momentarily from their squadrons as they waited for the word to attack. But the British stood firm and undaunted; and, although the enemy rode round their squares, Montbrun himself at their head, they never dared to charge them. Meanwhile, the seventh division fell back, as if on a parade, and, crossing the river, took up their ground at Frenada, pivoting upon the first division; the remainder of the line fell also back, and assumed a position at right angles with their former one, the cavalry forming in front, and holding the French in check during the movement. This was a splendid maneuver, and, when made in face of an overnumbering enemy, one unmatched during the whole war.

At sight of this new front the French stopped short, and opened a fire from their heavy guns. The British batteries replied with vigor, and silenced the enemy's cannon. The cavalry drew out of range, and the infantry gradually fell back to their former position. While this was going on, the attack upon Fuentes d'Onoro was continued with unabated vigor. The three British regiments in the lower town were pierced by the French tirailleurs, who poured upon them in overwhelming numbers; the Seventy-ninth were broken, ten companies taken, and Cameron, their colonel, mortally wounded. Thus the lower village was in the hands of the enemy, while from the upper town the incessant roll of musketry proclaimed the obstinate resistance of the British.

At this period our reserves were called up from the right, in time to resist the additional troops which Drouet continued to bring on. The French, reinforced by the whole sixth corps, now came forward at a quick-step. Dashing through the ruined streets of the lower town, they crossed the rivulet, fighting bravely, and charged against the height. Already their leading files had gained the crag beside the chapel. A French colonel, holding his cap upon his sword-point, waved on his men.

The grizzly features of the grenadiers soon appeared, and the dark column, half climbing, half running, were seen scaling

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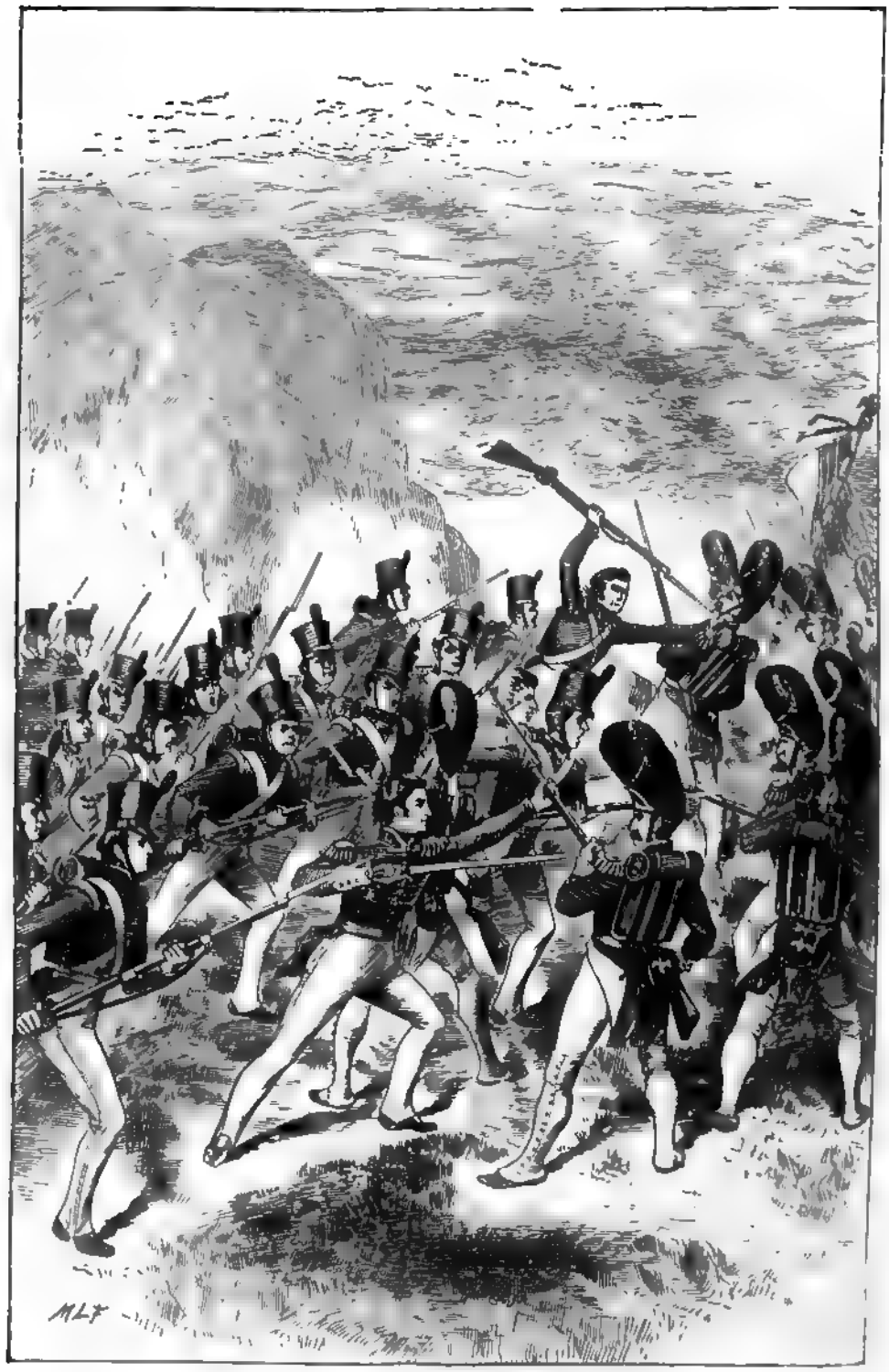

"THAT WAS AN IRISH SHOUT! THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH ARE AT THEM!" (P. 909.)

the height. A rifle-bullet sent the French leader tumbling from the precipice; and a cheer—mad and reckless as the war-cry of an Indian—rent the sky, as the 71st and 79th Highlanders sprang upon the enemy.

Our part was a short one; advancing in half squadrons, we were concealed from the observation of the enemy by the thick vineyards which skirted the lower town; waiting, with impatience, the moment when our gallant infantry should succeed in turning the tide of battle. We were ordered to dismount, and stood with our bridles on our arms, anxious and expectant. The charge of the French column was made close to where we were standing—the inspiriting cheers of the officers, the loud *vivas* of the men, were plainly heard by us as they rushed to the assault; but the space between us was intersected by walls and brushwood, which totally prevented the movements of cavalry.

Fearlessly their dark column moved up the heights, fixing the bayonets as they went. No tirailleurs preceded them, but the tall shako of the Grenadier of the Guard was seen in the first rank. Long before the end of the column had passed us, the leading files were in action. A deafening peal of musketry—so loud, so dense, it seemed like artillery—burst forth. A volume of black smoke rolled heavily down from the heights and hid all from our view, except when the vivid lightning of the platoon firing rent the vail asunder, and showed us the troops almost in hand to hand conflict.

"It's Picton's division, I'm certain," cried Merivale; "I hear the bag-pipes of the Highlanders."

"You are right, sir," said Hampden, "the Seventy-first are in the same brigade, and I know their bugles well. There they go again!"

"Fourteenth! Fourteenth!" cried a voice from behind, and at the same moment, a staff officer without his hat, and his horse bleeding from a recent sabre-cut, came up. "You must move to the rear, Colonel Merivale; the French have gained the heights! Move round by the causeway—bring up your squadrons as quickly as you can, and support the infantry!"

In a moment we were in our saddles; but scarcely was the word "to fall in" given, when a loud cheer rent the very air; the musketry seemed suddenly to cease, and the dark mass which continued to struggle up the heights wavered, broke, and turned.

"What can that be?" said Merivale. "What can it mean?"

"I can tell you, sir," said I, proudly, while I felt my heart beat as though it would bound from my bosom.

"And what is it, boy? Speak!"

"There it goes again. That was an Irish shout! The Eighty-eighth are at them!"

"By Jove! here they come!" said Hampden. "God help the Frenchmen now!"

The words were not well spoken, when the red coats of our gallant fellows were seen dashing through the vineyard.

"The steel, boys—nothing but the steel!" shouted a loud voice from the crag above our heads.

I looked up. It was the stern Picton himself who spoke.

The Eighty-eighth now led the pursuit, and sprang from rock to rock in all the mad impetuosity of battle; and like some mighty billow rolling before the gale, the French went down the heights.

"Gallant Eighty-eighth! Gloriously done!" cried Picton, as he waved his hat.

"Aren't we Connaught robbers, now?" shouted a rich brogue, as its owner, breathless and bleeding, pressed forward in the charge.

A hearty burst of laughter mingled with the din of the battle.

"Now for it, boys! Now for *our* work!" said old Merivale, drawing his sabre as he spoke. "Forward! and charge!"

We waited not a second bidding, but bursting from our concealment, galloped down into the broken column. It was no regular charge, but an indiscriminate rush. Scarcely offering resistance, the enemy fell beneath our sabres, or the still more deadly bayonets of the infantry, who were inextricably mingled up in the conflict.

The chase was followed up for above half a mile, when we fell back, fortunately, in good time; for the French had opened a heavy fire from their artillery, and, regardless of their own retreating column, poured a shower of grape among our squadrons. As we retired, the struggling files of the Rangers joined us—their faces and accoutrements blackened and begrimed with powder; many of them, themselves wounded, had captured prisoners; and one huge fellow of the grenadier company was seen driving before him a no less powerful Frenchman, and to whom, as he turned from time to time reluctantly, and scowled upon his jailer, the other vociferated some Irish imprecation, whose harsh intentions were made most palpably evident by a flourish of a drawn bayonet.

"Who is he?" said Mike; "who is he, ahagur?"

"Sorra one o' me knows," said the other; "but it's the chap that shot Lieutenant Mahony, and I never took my eye off him after; and if the lieutenant's not dead, sure it'll be a satisfaction to him that I cotch him."

* * * * *
* * * * *

The lower town was now evacuated by the French, who retired beyond the range of our artillery; the upper continued in the occupation of our troops; and, worn out and exhausted, surrounded by dead and dying, both parties abandoned the contest —and the battle was over.

Both sides laid claim to the victory: the French, because, having taken the village of Poço Velho, they had pierced the British line, and compelled them to fall back and assume a new position; the British, because the attack upon Fuentes d'Onoro had been successfully resisted, and the blockade of Almeida—the real object of the battle—maintained. The loss to each was tremendous: fifteen hundred men and officers, of whom three hundred were prisoners, were lost by the allies, and a far greater number fell among the forces of the enemy.

After the action, a brigade of the light division released the troops in the village, and the armies bivouacked once more in sight of each other.

CHAPTER XCI.

A RENCONTRE.

"LIEUTENANT O'MALLEY, 14th Light Dragoons, to serve as extra aide-de-camp to Major-General Craufurd, until the pleasure of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent is known." Such was the first paragraph of a general order, dated Fuentes d'Onoro, the day after the battle, which met me as I awoke from a sound and heavy slumber, the result of thirteen hours on horseback.

A staff appointment was not exactly what I desired at the moment; but I knew that with Craufurd my duties were more likely to be at the pickets and advanced posts of the army, than in the mere details of note-writing or dispatch-bearing; besides that, I felt, whenever anything of importance was to be done, I should always obtain his permission to do duty with my regiment.

Taking a hurried breakfast, therefore, I mounted my horse, and cantered over to Villa Formosa, where the General's quarters were, to return my thanks for the promotion, and take the necessary steps for assuming my new functions.

Although the sun had risen about two hours, the fatigue of the previous day had impressed itself upon all around. The cavalry, men and horses, were still stretched upon the sward, sunk in sleep; the videttes, weary and tired, seemed anxiously watching for the relief, and the disordered and confused appearance of everything bespoke that discipline had relaxed its stern features, in compassion for the bold exertions of the preceding day. The only contrast to this general air of exhaustion and weariness on every side was a corps of sappers, who were busily employed upon the high grounds above the village. Early as it was, they seemed to have been at work some hours—at least so their labors bespoke; for already a rampart of considerable extent had been thrown up, stockades implanted, and a breastwork was in a state of active preparation. The officer of the party, wrapped up in a loose cloak, and mounted upon a sharp-looking hackney, rode hither and thither, as the occasion warranted, and seemed, as well as from the distance I could guess, something of a tartar. At least I could not help remarking how, at his approach, the several inferior officers seemed suddenly so much more on the alert, and the men worked with an additional vigor and activity. I stopped for some minutes to watch him, and seeing an engineer captain of my acquaintance among the party, couldn't resist calling out:

"I say, Hachard, your friend on the chestnut mare must have had an easier day yesterday than some of us, or I'll be hanged if he'd be so active this morning." Hachard hung his head in some confusion, and did not reply; and, on my looking round, whom should I see before me but the identical individual I had so coolly been criticising, and who, to my utter horror and dismay, was no other than Lord Wellington himself. I did not wait for a second peep. Helter-shelter, through water, thickets, and brambles, away I went, clattering down the causeway like a madman. If a French squadron had been behind me, I should have had a stouter heart, although I did not fear pursuit. I felt his eye was upon me—his sharp and piercing glance, that shot like an arrow into me; and his firm look stared at me in every object around.

Onward I pressed, feeling in the very recklessness of my course some relief to my sense of shame, and ardently hoping that some accident—some smashed arm, or broken collar-bone—might befall me, and rescue me from any notice my conduct might otherwise call for. I never drew rein till I reached the Villa Formosa, and pulled up short at a small cottage, where a double sentry apprised me of the General's quarters. As I came up, the low lattice sprang quickly open, and a figure, half dressed and more than half asleep, protruded his head.

"Well! what has happened? Anything wrong?" said he, whom I now recognized to be General Craufurd.

"No; nothing wrong, sir," stammered I, with evident confusion. "I'm merely come to thank you for your kindness in my behalf."

"You seemed in a devil of a hurry to do it, if I'm to judge by the pace you came at. Come in and take your breakfast with us; I shall be dressed presently, and you'll meet some of your brother aides-de-camp."

Having given my horse to an orderly, I walked into a little room, whose humble accommodations and unpretending appearance seemed in perfect keeping with the simple and unostentatious character of the General. The preparations for a good and substantial breakfast were, however, before me; and an English newspaper of a late date spread its most ample pages to welcome me. I had not been long absorbed in my reading, when the door opened, and the General, whose toilet was not yet completed, made his appearance.

"Egad, O'Malley, you startled me this morning. I thought we were in for it again."

I took this as the most seasonable opportunity to recount my mishap of the morning, and accordingly, without more ado, detailed the unlucky meeting with the Commander-in-Chief. When I came to the end, Craufurd threw himself into a chair and laughed till the very tears coursed down his bronzed features.

"You don't say so, boy? You don't really tell me you said that? By Jove! I had rather have faced a platoon of musketry than have stood in your shoes! You did not wait for a reply, I think?"

"No, faith, sir, that I did not!"

"Do you suspect he knows you?"

"I trust not, sir; the whole thing passed so rapidly?"

"Well, it's most unlucky, in more ways than one!" He paused for a few moments as he said this, and then added, "Have you seen the general order?" pushing toward me a written paper as he spoke. It ran thus:

"G. O. "Adjutant-General's Office,
Villa Formosa, May 6, 1811.

"*Memorandum.*—Commanding officers are requested to send in to the Military Secretary, as soon as possible, the names of officers they may wish to have promoted in succession to those who have fallen in action."

"Now, look at this list. The Honorable Harvey Howard, Grenadier Guards, to be First Lieutenant, *vice*— No, not that: Henry Beauchamp—George Villiers—Ay, here it is! Captain Lyttleton, 14th Light Dragoons, to be Major in the 3d Dragoon Guards, *vice* Godwin, killed in action; Lieutenant O'Malley to be Captain, *vice* Lyttleton, promoted. You see, boy, I did not forget you: you were to have had the vacant troop in your own regiment. Now, I almost doubt the prudence of bringing your name under Lord Wellington's notice. He may have recognized you; and, if he did so—why, I rather think—that is, I suspect—I mean, the quieter you keep the better."

While I poured forth my gratitude as warmly as I was able for the General's great kindness to me, I expressed my perfect concurrence in his views.

"Believe me, sir," said I, "I should much rather wait any number of years for my promotion, than incur the risk of a reprimand; the more so, as it is not the first time I have blundered with his Lordship." I here narrated my former meeting with Sir Arthur, at which Craufurd's mirth again burst forth, and he paced the room, holding his sides in an ecstasy of merriment.

"Come, come, lad, we'll hope for the best; we'll give you the chance that he has not seen your face, and send the list forward as it is: but here come our fellows."

As he spoke, the door opened, and three officers of his staff entered, to whom, being severally introduced, we chatted away about the news of the morning until breakfast.

"I've frequently heard of you from my friend Hammersley," said Captain Fitzroy, addressing me; "you were intimately acquainted, I believe?"

"Oh yes! Pray where is he now? We have not met for a long time?"

"The poor fellow's invalided; that sabre-cut upon his head has turned out a sad affair, and he's gone back to England

on a sick leave. Old Dashwood took him back with him as private secretary, or something of that sort."

"Ah!" said another, "Dashwood has daughters, hasn't he? No bad notion of his; for Hammersley will be a baronet some of these days, with a rent-roll of eight or nine thousand per annum."

"Sir George Dashwood," said I, "has but one daughter, and I am quite sure that in his kindness to Hammersley no intentions of the kind you mention were mixed up."

"Well, I don't know," said the third, a pale, sickly youth, with handsome but delicate features. "I was on Dashwood's staff until a few weeks ago, and certainly I thought there was something going on between Hammersley and Miss Lucy, who, be it spoken, is a devilish fine girl, though rather disposed to give herself airs."

I felt my cheek and my temples boiling like a furnace; my hand trembled as I lifted my coffee to my lips; and I would have given my expected promotion twice over to have had any reasonable ground of quarrel with the speaker.

"Egad, lads," said Craufurd, "that's the very best thing I know about a command. As a bishop is always sure to portion off his daughters with deaneries and rectories, so your knowing old general always marries his among his staff."

This sally was met with the ready laughter of the subordinates, in which, however little disposed, I was obliged to join.

"You are quite right, sir," rejoined the pale youth; "and Sir George has no fortune to give his daughter."

"How came it, Horace, that you got off safe?" said Fitzroy, with a certain air of affected seriousness in his voice and manner; "I wonder they let such a prize escape them."

"Well, it was not exactly their fault, I do confess. Old Dashwood did the civil toward me; and *la belle Lucie* herself was condescending enough to be less cruel than to the rest of the staff. Her father threw us a good deal together; and, in fact, I believe—I fear—that is—that I didn't behave quite well."

"You may rest perfectly assured of it, sir," said I; "whatever your previous conduct may have been, you have completely relieved your mind on this occasion, and behaved most shamefully!"

Had a shell fallen in the midst of us, the faces around me could not have been more horror-struck, than when, in a cool, determined tone, I spoke these few words. Fitzroy pushed his chair slightly back from the table, and fixed his eyes full upon me. Craufurd grew dark purple over his whole face and forehead, and looked from one to the other of us, without speaking; while the Honorable Horace Delawar, the individual addressed, never changed a muscle of his wan and sickly features, but lifting his eyes slowly from his muffin, lisped softly out,

"You think so? How very good!"

"General Craufurd," said I, the moment I could collect myself sufficiently to speak, "I am deeply grieved that I should so far have forgotten myself as to disturb the harmony of your table; but when I tell you that Sir George Dashwood is one of my warmest friends on earth; that from my intimate knowledge of him, I am certain that gentleman's statements are either the mere outpourings of folly, or worse—"

"By Jove, O'Malley, you have a very singular mode of explaining away the matter. Delawar, sit down again. Gentlemen, I have only one word to say about this transaction: I'll have no squabbles nor broils here; from this room to the guard-house is a five minutes' walk. Promise me, upon your honors, this altercation ends here, or, as sure as my name's Craufurd, you shall both be placed under arrest, and the man who refuses to obey me shall be sent back to England."

Before I well knew in what way to proceed, Mr. Delawar rose and bowed formally to the General, while I imitated his example; silently we resumed our places, and, after a pause of a few moments, the current of conversation was renewed, and other topics discussed, but with such evident awkward talk and constraint, that all parties felt relieved when the General rose from the table.

"I say, O'Malley, have you forwarded the returns to the Adjutant-General's office?"

"Yes, sir; I dispatched them this morning before leaving my quarters."

"I am glad of it; the irregularities on this score have called forth a heavy reprimand at head-quarters."

I was also glad of it, and it chanced that by mere accident I remembered to charge Mike with the papers, which, had they not been lying unsealed upon the table before me, would, in all likelihood, have escaped my attention. The post started to Lisbon that same morning, to take advantage of which I had set up writing for half the night. Little was I aware at the moment what a mass of trouble and annoyance was in store for me from the circumstance.

CHAPTER XCII.

ALMEIDA.

On the morning of the 7th we perceived, from a movement in the French camp, that the wounded were being sent to the rear, and shortly afterward the main body of their army commenced its retreat. They moved with slow, and, as it were, reluctant steps; and Bessières, who commanded the Imperial Guard, turned his eyes more than once to that position which all the bravery of his troops was unavailing to capture. Although our cavalry lay in force to the front of our line, no attempt was made to molest the retreating French; and Massena, having retired beyond the Aguada, left a strong force to watch the ford, while the remainder of the army fell back upon Ciudad Rodrigo.

During this time we had succeeded in fortifying our position at Fuentes d'Onoro so strongly as to resist any new attack, and Lord Wellington now turned his whole attention to the blockade of Almeida, which, by Massena's retreat, was abandoned to its fate.

On the morning of the 10th I accompanied General Craufurd in a reconnaissance of the fortress, which, from the intelligence we had lately received, could not much longer hold out against our blockade. The fire from the enemy's artillery was, however, hotly maintained; and, as night fell, some squadrons of the Fourteenth, who were picketed near, were unable to light their watch-fires, being within reach of their shot. As the darkness increased, so did the cannonade, and the bright flashes from the walls, and the deep booming of the artillery, became incessant.

A hundred conjectures were afloat to account for the circumstance; some asserting that what we heard were mere signals to Massena's army; and others, that Brennier was destroying and mutilating the fortress before he evacuated it to the allies.

It was a little past midnight when, tired from the fatigues of the day, I had fallen asleep beneath a tree, an explosion, louder than any which preceded it, burst suddenly forth, and, as I awoke and looked about me, I perceived the whole heavens illuminated by one bright glare, while the crashing noise of falling stones and crumbling masonry told me that a mine had been sprung: the moment after all was calm, and still, and motionless; a thick black smoke increasing the somber darkness of the night, shut out every star from view, and some drops of heavy rain began to fall.

The silence, ten times more appalling than the din which preceded it, weighed heavily upon my senses, and a dread of some unknown danger crept over me; the exhaustion, however, was greater than my fear, and again I sang into slumber.

Scarcely had I been half an hour asleep, when the blast of a trumpet again awoke me, and I found, amid the confusion and excitement about, that something of importance had occurred. Questions were eagerly asked on all sides, but no one could explain what had happened. Toward the town all was still as death, but a dropping, irregular fire of musketry issued from the valley beside the Aguada. "What can this mean? what can it be?" we asked of each other. "A sortie from the garrison," said one; "A night attack by Massena's troops," cried another; and, while thus we disputed and argued, a horseman was heard advancing along the road at the top of his speed.

"Where are the cavalry?" cried a voice I recognized as one of my brother aides-de-camp. "Where are the Fourteenth?"

A cheer from our party answered this question, and the next moment, breathless and agitated, he rode in amongst us.

"What is it? are we attacked?"

"Would to Heaven that were all! But come along, lads, follow me."

"What can it be, then?" said I again; while my anxiety knew no bounds.

"Brennier has escaped; burst his way through Pack's division, and has already reached Valde Mula."

"The French have escaped!" was repeated from mouth to mouth; while, pressing spurs to our horses, we broke into a gallop, and dashed forward in the direction of the musketry. We soon came up with the 36th Infantry, who, having thrown away their knapsacks, were rapidly pressing the pursuit. The maledictions which burst from every side proved how severely the misfortune was felt by all, while the eager advance of the men bespoke how ardently they longed to repair the mishap.

Dark as was the night, we passed them in a gallop, when suddenly the officer who commanded the leading squadron called out to halt.

"Take care there, lads!" cried he; "I hear the infantry before us; we shall be down upon our own people."

The words were hardly spoken, when a bright flash blazed out before us, and a smashing volley was poured into the squadron.

"The French! the French, by Jove!"

said Hampden. "Forward, boys! charge them!"

Breaking into open order, to avoid our wounded comrades, several of whom had fallen by the fire, we rode down amongst them. In a moment their order was broken, their ranks pierced, and, fresh squadrons coming up at the instant, they were sabred to a man.

After this the French pursued their march in silence, and, even when assembling in force we rode down upon their squares, they never halted nor fired a shot. At Barba del Puerco, the ground being unfit for cavalry, the Thirty-sixth took our place, and pressed them hotly home. Several of the French were killed, and above three hundred made prisoners, but our fellows following up the pursuit too rashly, came upon an advanced body of Massena's force, drawn up to await and cover Brennier's retreat; the result was the loss of above thirty men in killed and wounded.

Thus were the great efforts of the three preceding days rendered fruitless and nugatory. To maintain this blockade, Lord Wellington, with an inferior force, and a position by no means strong, had ventured to give the enemy battle; and now, by the unskillfulness of some and the negligence of others, were all his combinations thwarted, and the French General enabled to march his force through the midst of the blockading columns almost unmolested and uninjured.

Lord Wellington's indignation was great, as well it might be; the prize for which he had contested was torn from his grasp at the very moment he had won it, and, although the gallantry of the troops in the pursuit might, under other circumstances, have called forth eulogium, his only observation on the matter was a half-sarcastic allusion to the inconclusive effects of undisciplined bravery. "Notwithstanding," says the general order of the day, "what has been printed in gazettes and newspapers, we have never seen small bodies, unsupported, successfully opposed to large; nor has the experience of any officer realized the stories which all have read, of whole armies being driven by a handful of light infantry and dragoons."

CHAPTER XCIII.

THE NIGHT ON THE AZAVA.

MASSENA was now recalled, and Marmont having assumed the command of the French army, retired toward Salamanca, while our troops went into cantonments upon the Aguada. A period of inaction succeeded to our previous life of bustle and excitement, and the whole interest of the campaign was now centered in Beresford's army, exposed to Soult in Estramadura.

On the 15th, Lord Wellington set out for that province, having already directed a strong force to march upon Badajos.

"Well, O'Malley," said Craufurd, as he returned from bidding Lord Wellington good-by, "your business is all right; the Commander-in-Chief has signed my recommendation, and you will get your troop."

While I continued to express my grateful acknowledgments for his kindness, the General, apparently inattentive to all I was saying, paced the room with hurried steps, stopping every now and then to glance at a large map of Spain which covered one wall of the apartment, while he muttered to himself some broken and disjointed sentences.

"Eight leagues—too weak in cavalry—with the left upon Fuenta Grenaldo—a strong position. O'Malley, you'll take a troop of dragoons and patrol the country toward Castro; you'll reconnoiter the position the sixth corps occupies, but avoid any collision with the enemy's pickets, keeping the Azava between you and them. Take rations for three days."

"When shall I set out, sir?"

"Now!" was the reply.

Knowing with what pleasure the hardy veteran recognized anything like alacrity and dispatch, I resolved to gratify him; and, before half an hour had elapsed, was ready with my troop to receive his final orders.

"Well done, boy!" said he, as he came to the door of the hut, "you've lost no time. I don't believe I have any further instructions to give you; to ascertain as far as possible the probable movement of the enemy is my object, that's all." As he spoke this, he waved his hand, and wishing me "Good-by," walked leisurely back into the house. I saw that his mind was occupied by other thoughts; and, although I desired to obtain some more accurate information for my guidance, knowing his dislike to questions, I merely returned his salute, and set forth upon my journey.

The morning was beautiful; the sun had risen about an hour, and the earth, refreshed by the heavy dew of the night, was breathing forth all its luxuriant fragrance. The river, which flowed beside us, was clear as crystal, showing beneath its eddying current the shining, pebbly

bed, while, upon the surface, the water-lilies floated or sank, as the motion of the stream inclined. The tall cork-trees spread their shadows about us, and the richly plumed birds hopped from branch to branch, awaking the echoes with their notes.

It is but seldom that the heart of man is thoroughly attuned to the circumstances of the scenery around him. How often do we need a struggle with ourselves to enjoy the rich and beautiful landscape which lies smiling in its freshness before us! How frequently do the blue sky and the calm air look down upon the heart darkened and shadowed with affliction! And how often have we felt the discrepancy between the lowering look of winter and the glad sunshine of our hearts! The harmony of the world without with our thoughts within is one of the purest, as it is one of the greatest, sources of happiness. Our hopes and our ambitions lose their selfish character when, feeling that fortune smiles upon us from all around, and the flattery which speaks to our hearts from the bright stars and the blue sky, the peaked mountain, or the humble flower, is greater in its mute eloquence than all the tongue of man can tell us.

This feeling did I experience in all its fullness, as I ruminated upon my bettered fortunes, and felt within myself that secret instinct that tells of happiness to come. In such moods of mind my thoughts strayed ever homeward, and I could not help confessing how little were all my successes in my eyes, did I not hope for the day when I should pour forth my tale of war and battle-field to the ears of those who loved me.

I resolved to write home at once to my uncle. I longed to tell him each incident of my career, and my heart glowed as I thought over the broken and disjointed sentences which every cottier around would whisper of my fortunes, far prouder as they would be in the humble deeds of one they knew, than in the proudest triumphs of a nation's glory.

Indeed, Mike himself gave the current to my thoughts. After riding beside me for some time in silence, he remarked,

"And isn't it Father Rush will be proud when he sees your honor's a captain; to think of the little boy that he used to take before him on the ould gray mare for a ride down the avenue; to think of him being a real captain, six feet two without his boots, and galloping over the French as if they were lurchers! Peggy Mahon, that nursed you, will be the proud woman the day she hears it; and there won't be a soldier sober in his quarters that night in Portumna barracks! 'Pon my soul, there's not a thing with a red coat on it, if it was even a scarecrow to frighten the birds from the barley, that won't be treated with respect when they hear of the news."

The country through which we traveled was marked at every step by the traces of a retreating army; the fields of rich corn lay flattened beneath the tramp of cavalry, or the wheels of the baggage-wagons; the roads, cut up and nearly impassable, were studded here and there with marks which indicated a bivouac; at the same time, everything around bore a very different aspect from what we had observed in Portugal; there, the vindictive cruelty of the French soldiery had been seen in full sway. The ruined châteaux, the burned villages, the desecrated altars, the murdered peasantry,—all attested the revengeful spirit of a beaten and baffled enemy. No sooner, however, had they crossed the frontiers, than, as if by magic, their character became totally changed. Discipline and obedience succeeded to recklessness and pillage; and, instead of treating the natives with inhumanity and cruelty, in all their intercourse with the Spaniards the French behaved with moderation and even kindness. Paying for everything, obtaining their billets peaceably and quietly, marching with order and regularity, they advanced into the heart of the country, showing, by the most irrefragable proof, the astonishing evidences of a discipline which, by a word, could convert the lawless irregularities of a ruffian soldiery into the orderly habits and obedient conduct of a highly-organized army.

As we neared the Azava, the tracks of the retiring enemy became gradually less perceptible, and the country, uninjured by the march, extended for miles around us in all the richness and abundance of a favored climate. The tall corn waving its yellow gold, reflected like a sea the clouds that moved slowly about it. The wild gentian and the laurel grew thickly around, and the cattle stood basking in the clear streams, while some listless peasant lounged upon the bank beside them. Strange as all these evidences of peace and tranquillity were, so near to the devastating track of a mighty army, yet I have more than once witnessed the fact, and remarked how, but a short distance from the line of our hurried march, the country lay untouched and uninjured; and though the clank of arms and the dull roll of the artillery may have struck upon the ear of the far-off

dweller in his native valley, he listened as he would have done to the passing thunder as it crashed above him; and when the bright sky and pure air succeeded to the lowering atmosphere and the darkening storm, he looked forth upon his smiling fields and happy home, while he muttered to his heart a prayer of thanksgiving that the scourge was passed.

We bivouacked upon the bank of the river, a truly Salvator Rosa scene; the rocks, towering high above us, were fissured by the channel of many a trickling stream, seeking, in its zigzag current, the bright river below. The dark pine-tree and the oak mingled their foliage with the graceful cedar, which spread its fan-like branches about us. Through the thick shade some occasional glimpses of a starry sky could yet be seen, and a faint yellow streak upon the silent river told that the queen of night was there.

When I had eaten my frugal supper, I wandered forth alone upon the bank of the stream, now standing to watch its bold sweeps as it traversed the lonely valley before me, now turning to catch a passing glance at our red watch-fires, and the hardy features which sat around. The hoarse and careless laugh, the deep-toned voice of some old campaigner holding forth his tale of flood and field, were the only sounds I heard; and gradually I strolled beyond the reach of even these. The path beside the river, which seemed scarped from the rock, was barely sufficient for the passage of one man, a rude balustrade of wood being the only defense against the precipice, which, from a height of full thirty feet, looked down upon the stream. Here and there some broad gleam of moonlight would fall upon the opposite bank, which, unlike the one I occupied, stretched out into rich meadow and pasturage, broken by occasional clumps of ilex and beech. River scenery has been ever a passion with me; I can glory in the bold and broken outline of a mighty mountain; I can gaze with delighted eyes upon the boundless sea, and know not whether to like it more in all the mighty outpouring of its wrath, when the white waves lift their heads to heaven, and break themselves in foam upon the rocky beach, or in the calm beauty of its broad and mirrored surface, in which the bright world of sun and sky are seen full many a fathom deep. But far before these, I love the happy and tranquil beauty of some bright river, tracing its winding current through valley and through plain, now spreading into some calm and waveless lake, now narrowing to an eddying stream, with mossy rocks and waving trees darkening over it. There's not a hut, however lowly, where the net of the fisherman is stretched upon the sward, around whose hearth I do not picture before me the faces of happy toil and humble contentment, while, from the ruined tower upon the crag, methinks I hear the ancient sounds of wassail and of welcome; and though the keep be fissured and the curtain fallen, and though for banner there "waves some tall wall-flower," I can people its crumbling walls with images of the past; and the merry laugh of the warder, and the clanking tread of the mailed warrior, are as palpably before me as the tangled lichen that now trails from its battlements.

As I wandered on, I reached the little rustic stair which led downward from the path to the river side; and, on examining further, perceived that at this place the stream was fordable: a huge flat rock, filling up a great part of the river's bed, occupied the middle, on either side of which the current ran with increased force.

Bent upon exploring, I descended the cliff, and was preparing to cross, when my attention was attracted by the twinkle of a fire at some distance from me, on the opposite side; the flame rose and fell in fitful flashes, as though some hand were ministering to it at the moment. As it was impossible, from the silence on every side, that it could proceed from a bivouac of the enemy, I resolved on approaching it, and examining it for myself. I knew that the shepherds in remote districts were accustomed thus to pass the summer nights, with no other covering save the blue vault above them. It was not impossible, too, that it might prove a Guerilla party, who frequently, in small numbers, hang upon the rear of a retreating army. Thus conjecturing, I crossed the stream, and, quickening my pace, walked forward in the direction of the blaze. For a moment a projecting rock obstructed my progress; and, while I was devising some means of proceeding further, the sound of voices near me arrested my attention. I listened, and what was my astonishment to hear that they spoke in French. I now crept cautiously to the verge of the rock and looked over; the moon was streaming in its full brilliancy upon a little shelving strand beside the stream, and here I now beheld the figure of a French officer. He was habited in the undress uniform of a *chasseur à cheval*, but wore no arms; indeed, his occupation at the

moment was anything but a warlike one, he being leisurely employed in collecting some flasks of champagne which apparently had been left to cool within the stream.

"*Eh bien, Alphonse!*" said a voice in the direction of the fire, "what are you delaying for?"

"I'm coming, I'm coming," said the other; "but, *par Dieu!* I can only find five of our bottles; one seems to have been carried away by the stream."

"No matter," replied the other, "we are but three of us, and one is, or should be, on the sick list."

The only answer to this was the muttered chorus of a French drinking-song, interrupted at intervals by an imprecation upon the missing flask. It chanced, at this moment, that a slight clinking noise attracted me, and, on looking down, I perceived at the foot of the rock the prize he sought for. It had been, as he conceived, carried away by an eddy of the stream, and was borne, as a true prisoner of war, within my grasp. I avow that from this moment my interest in the scene became considerably heightened: such a waif as a bottle of champagne was not to be despised in circumstances like mine; and I watched with anxious eyes every gesture of the impatient Frenchman, and alternately vibrated between hope and fear, as he neared or receded from the missing flask.

"Let it go to the devil," shouted his companion once more. "Jacques has lost all patience with you."

"Be it so, then," said the other, as he prepared to take up his burden. At this instant I made a slight effort so to change my position as to obtain a view of the rest of the party. The branch by which I supported myself, however, gave way beneath my grasp with a loud crash. I lost my footing, and slipping downward from the rock, came plump into the stream below. The noise, the splash, and, more than all, the sudden appearance of a man beside him, astounded the Frenchman, who almost let fall his pannier, and thus we stood confronting each other for at least a couple of minutes in silence. A hearty burst of laughter from both parties terminated this awkward moment, while the Frenchman, with the readiness of his country, was the first to open the negotiation.

"*Sacré Dieu!*" said he, "what can you be doing here? You're English, without doubt."

"Even so," said I; "but that is the very question I was about to ask you; what are you doing here?"

"*Eh bien,*" replied the other, gayly, "you shall be answered in all frankness. Our captain was wounded in the action of the 8th, and we heard had been carried up the country by some peasants. As the army fell back, we obtained permission to go in search of him: for two days all was fruitless; the peasantry fled at our approach; and, although we captured some of our stolen property — among other things, the contents of this basket—yet we never came upon the track of our comrade till this evening. A good-hearted shepherd had taken him to his hut, and treated him with every kindness, but no sooner did he hear the gallop of our horses and the clank of our equipments, than, fearing himself to be made a prisoner, he fled up the mountains, leaving our friend behind him: *voilà notre histoire.* Here we are, three in all, one of us with a deep sabre-cut in his shoulder. If you are the stronger party, we are, I suppose, your prisoners; if not—"

What was to have followed I know not, for at this moment his companion, who had finally lost all patience, came suddenly to the spot.

"A prisoner," cried he, placing a heavy hand upon my shoulder, while with the other he held his drawn sword pointed toward my breast.

To draw a pistol from my bosom was the work of a second; and while gently turning the point of his weapon away, I coolly said,

"Not so fast, my friend, not so fast! The game is in my hands, not yours. I have only to pull this trigger, and my dragoons are upon you; whatever fate befall me, yours is certain."

A half-scornful laugh betrayed the incredulity of him I addressed, while the other, apparently anxious to relieve the awkwardness of the moment, suddenly broke in with,

"He is right, Auguste, and you are wrong; we are in his power; that is," added he, smiling, "if he believes there is any triumph in capturing such *pauvres diables* as ourselves."

The features of him he addressed suddenly lost their scornful expression, and sheathing his sword with an air of almost melodramatic solemnity, he gravely pulled up his moustaches, and, after a pause of a few seconds, solemnly ejaculated a malediction upon his fortune.

"*C'est toujours ainsi,*" said he, with a bitterness that only a Frenchman can convey when cursing his destiny. "*Soyez bon enfant,* and see what will come of it. Only be good-natured, only be kind, and if you

haven't bad luck at the end of it, it's only because fortune has a heavier stroke in reserve for you hereafter."

I could not help smiling at the Frenchman's philosophy, which, assuming as a good augury, he gayly said, "So, then, you'll not make us prisoners. Isn't it so?"

"Prisoners," said the other, "nothing of the kind. Come and sup with us; I'll venture to say our larder is as well stocked as your own: in any case an omelet, a cold chicken, and a glass of champagne are not bad things in our circumstances."

I could not help laughing outright at the strangeness of the proposal. "I fear I must decline," said I; "you seem to forget I am placed here to watch, not to join you."

"*A la bonne heure*," cried the younger of the two; "do both. Come along; *soyez bon camarade;* you are always near your own people, so don't refuse us."

In proportion as I declined, they both became more pressing in their entreaties, and, at last, I began to dread lest my refusal might seem to proceed from some fear as to the good faith of the invitation, and I never felt so awkwardly placed as when one plumply pressed me by saying,

"*Mais pourquoi pas, mon cher?*"

I stammered out something about duty and discipline, when they both interrupted me by a long burst of laughter.

"Come, come!" said they; "in an hour —in half an hour, if you will—you shall be back with your own people. We've had plenty of fighting latterly, and we are likely to have enough in future; we know something of each other by this time in the field; let us see how we get on in the bivouac!"

Resolving not to be outdone in generosity, I replied at once, "Here goes, then!"

Five minutes afterward I found myself seated at their bivouac fire. The captain, who was the oldest of the party, was a fine soldier-like fellow of some forty years old: he had served in the Imperial Guard through all the campaigns of Italy and Austria, and abounded in anecdotes of the French army. From him I learned many of those characteristic traits which so eminently distinguish the imperial troops, and saw how completely their bravest and boldest feats of arms depended upon the personal valor of him who led them on. From the daring enterprise of Napoleon at Lodi to the conduct of the lowest corporal in the *grande armée*, the picture presents nothing but a series of brilliant and splendid chivalry; while, at the same time, the warlike character of the nation is displayed by that instinctive appreciation of courage and daring which teaches them to follow their officers to the very cannon's mouth.

"It was at Elchingen," said the Captain, "you should have seen them. The regiment in which I was a lieutenant was ordered to form close column, and charge through a narrow ravine to carry a brigade of guns, which, by a flanking fire, were devastating our troops. Before we could reach the causeway, we were obliged to pass an open plain, in which the ground dipped for about a hundred yards; the column moved on, and, though it descended one hill, not a man ever mounted the opposite one. A very avalanche of balls swept the entire valley; and yet, amid the thunder and the smoke, the red glare of the artillery, and the carnage around them, our grenadiers marched firmly up. At last, Marshal Ney sent an aide-de-camp with orders to the troops to lay flat down, and in this position the artillery played over us for above half an hour. The Austrians gradually slackened, and finally discontinued their fire: this was the moment to resume the attack. I crept cautiously to my knees, and looked about. One word brought my men around me; but I found to my horror that, of a battalion who came into action fourteen hundred strong, not five hundred remained; and that I myself, a mere lieutenant, was now the senior officer of the regiment. Our gallant colonel lay dead beside my feet. At this instant a thought struck me. I remembered a habit he possessed, in moments of difficulty and danger, of placing in his shako a small red plume which he commonly carried in his belt. I searched for it, and found it. As I held it aloft, a maddening cheer burst around me, while from out the line each officer sprang madly forward, and rushed to the head of the column. It was no longer a march. With a loud cry of vengeance the mass rushed forward, the men trying to outstrip their officers, and come first in contact with the foe. Like tigers on the spring, they fell upon the enemy, who, crushed, overwhelmed, and massacred, lay in slaughtered heaps around the cannon. The cavalry of the Guard came thundering on behind us, a whole division followed, and three thousand five hundred prisoners, and fourteen pieces of artillery, were captured.

"I sat upon the carriage of a gun, my face begrimed with powder, and my uni-

form blackened and blood-stained. The whole thing appeared like some shocking dream. I felt a hand upon my shoulder, while a rough voice called in my ear, *'Capitaine du soixante-neuvième, tu es mon frère!'*

"It was Ney who spoke. This," added the brave Captain, his eyes filling as he said the words—"this is the sabre he gave me."

I know not why I have narrated this anecdote; it has little in itself, but, somehow, to me, it brings back in all its fullness the recollection of that night.

There was something so strongly characteristic of the old Napoleonist in the tone of his narrative that I listened throughout with breathless attention. I began to feel, too, for the first time, what a powerful arm in war the Emperor had created by fostering the spirit of individual enterprise. The field thus opened to fame and distinction left no bounds to the ambition of any. The humble conscript, as he tore himself from the embraces of his mother, wiped his tearful eyes to see before him in the distance the bâton of a marshal. The bold soldier who stormed a battery, felt his heart beat more proudly and more securely beneath the cordon of the Legion than behind a cuirass of steel, and to a people in whom the sense of duty alone would seem cold, barren, and inglorious, he had substituted a highly-wrought chivalrous enthusiasm, and, by the *prestige* of his own name, the proud memory of his battles, and the glory of those mighty tournaments at which all Europe were the spectators, he had converted a nation into an army.

By a silent and instinctive compact we appeared to avoid those topics of the campaign in which the honor of our respective arms was interested; and once when, by mere accident, the youngest of the party adverted to Fuentes d'Onoro, the old Captain adroitly turned the current of the conversation by saying, "Come, Alphonse, let's have a song."

"Yes," said the other, "*Le Pas de Charge.*"

"No, no," said the Captain; "if I am to have a choice, let it be that little Breton song you gave us on the Danube."

"So be it, then," said Alphonse. "Here goes!"

I have endeavored to convey, by a translation, the words he sang; but I feel conscious how totally their feeling and simplicity are lost when deprived of their own *patois*, and the wild but touching melody that accompanied them.

THE BRETON HOME.

"When the battle is o'er, and the sounds of fight
Have closed with the closing day,
How happy, around the watch-fire's light,
To chat the long hours away;
To chat the long hours away, my boy,
And talk of the days to come,
Or a better still, and a purer joy,
To think of our far-off home.

"How many a cheek will then grow pale,
That never felt a tear!
And many a stalwart heart will quail,
That never quailed in fear!
And the breast that, like some mighty rock
Amid the foaming sea,
Bore high against the battle's shock
Now heaves like infancy.

"And those who knew each other not,
Their hands together steal,
Each thinks of some long hallowed spot,
And all like brothers feel:
Such holy thoughts to all are given;
The lowliest has his part;
The love of home, like love of Heaven,
Is woven in our heart."

There was a pause as he concluded, each sank in his own reflections. How long we should have thus remained I know not; but we were speedily aroused from our reveries by the tramp of horses near us. We listened, and could plainly detect in their rude voices and coarse laughter the approach of a body of Guerillas. We looked from one to the other in silence and in fear. Nothing could be more unfortunate should we be discovered. Upon this point we were left little time to deliberate; for, with a loud cheer, four Spanish horsemen galloped up to the spot, their carbines in the rest. The Frenchmen sprang to their feet, and seized their sabres, bent upon making a resolute resistance. As for me, my determination was at once taken. Remaining quietly seated upon the grass, I stirred not for a moment, but, addressing him who appeared to be the chief of the Guerillas, said, in Spanish:

"These are my prisoners; I am a British officer of dragoons, and my party is yonder."

This evidently unexpected declaration seemed to surprise them, and they conferred for a few moments together. Meanwhile, they were joined by two others, in one of whom we could recognize, by his costume, the real leader of the party.

"I am captain in the light dragoons," said I, repeating my declaration.

"*Morte de Dios!*" replied he; "it is false; you are a spy!"

The word was repeated from lip to lip by his party, and I saw, in their lowering

looks and darkening features, that the moment was a critical one for me.

"Down with your arms!" cried he, turning to the Frenchmen. "Surrender yourselves our prisoners; I'll not bid ye twice!"

The Frenchmen turned upon me an inquiring look, as though to say that upon me now their hopes entirely reposed.

"Do as he bids you," said I; while at the same moment I sprang to my legs, and gave a loud, shrill whistle, the last echo of which had not died away in the distance ere it was replied to.

"Make no resistance now," said I to the Frenchmen; "our safety depends on this."

While this was passing, two of the Spaniards had dismounted, and, detaching a coil of rope which hung from their saddle-peak, were proceeding to tie the prisoners wrist to wrist; the others, with their carbines to the shoulder, covered us man by man, the chief of the party having singled out me as his peculiar prey.

"The fate of Mascarenhas might have taught you better," said he, "than to play this game." And then added, with a grim smile, "But we'll see if an Englishman will not make as good a carbonado as a Portuguese!"

This cruel speech made my blood run cold, for I knew well to what he alluded. I was at Lisbon at the time it happened, but the melancholy fate of Julian Mascarenhas, the Portuguese spy, had reached me there. He was burned to death at Torres Vedras!

The Spaniard's triumph over my terror was short-lived, indeed, for scarcely had the words fallen from his lips, when a party of the Fourteenth, dashing through the river at a gallop, came riding up. The attitude of the Guerillas, as they sat with presented arms, was sufficient for my fellows, who needed not the exhortation of him who rode foremost of the party:

"Ride them down, boys! Tumble them over! Flatten their broad beavers, the infernal thieves!"

"Whoop!" shouted Mike, as he rode at the chief, with the force of a catapult. Down went the Spaniard, horse and all; and, before he could disentangle himself, Mike was upon him, his knee pressed upon his neck.

"Isn't it enough for ye to pillage the whole country, without robbing the king's throops?" cried he, as he held him fast to the earth with one hand, while he presented a loaded pistol to his face.

By this time the scene around me was sufficiently ludicrous. Such of the Guerillas as had not been thrown by force from their saddles, had slid peaceably down, and depositing their arms upon the ground, dropped upon their knees in a semicircle around us, and, amid the hoarse laughter of the troopers and the irrepressible merriment of the Frenchmen, rose up the muttered prayers of the miserable Spaniards, who believed that now their last hour was come.

"*Madre de Dios*, indeed!" cried Mike, imitating the tone of a repentant old sinner, in a patched mantle; "it's much the blessed Virgin thinks of the like o' ye, thieves and rogues as ye are; it a'most puts me beyond my senses to see ye there crossing yourselves like *rale* Christians."

If I could not help indulging myself in this retributive cruelty toward the chief, and leaving him to the tender mercies of Mike, I ordered the others to rise and form in line before me. Affecting to occupy myself entirely with them, I withdrew the attention of all from the French officers, who remained quiet spectators of the scene around them.

"*Point de façons*, gentlemen," said I, in a whisper. "Get to your horses and away! now's your time. Good-by!"

A warm grasp of the hand from each was the only reply, and I turned once more to my discomfited friends, the Guerillas.

"There, Mike, let the poor devil rise. I confess appearances were strong against me just now."

"Well, Captain, are you convinced by this time that I was not deceiving you?"

The Guerilla muttered some words of apology between his teeth, and, while he shook the dust from his cloak, and arranged the broken feather of his hat, cast a look of scowling and indignant meaning upon Mike, whose rough treatment he had evidently not forgiven.

"Don't be looking at me that way, you black thief! or I'll—"

"Hold there!" said I; "no more of this. Come, gentlemen, we must be friends. If I mistake not, we've got something like refreshment at our bivouac. In any case you'll partake of our watch-fire till morning."

They gladly accepted our invitation, and ere half an hour elapsed Mike's performance in the part of host had completely erased every unpleasant impression his first appearance gave rise to; and as for myself, when I did sleep at last, the confused mixture of Spanish and Irish airs which issued from the thicket beside me, proved that a most intimate alliance had grown up between the parties.

CHAPTER XCIV.

MIKE'S MISTAKE.

An hour before daybreak the Guerillas were in motion, and, having taken a most ceremonious leave of us, they mounted their horses and set out upon their journey. I saw their gaunt figures wind down the valley, and watched them till they disappeared in the distance. "Yes, brigands though they be," thought I, "there is something fine, something heroic, in the spirit of their unrelenting vengeance." The sleuth-hound never sought the lair of his victim with a more ravening appetite for blood than they track the retreating columns of the enemy. Hovering around the line of march, they sometimes swoop down in masses, and carry off a part of the baggage, or the wounded. The wearied soldier, overcome by heat and exhaustion, who drops behind his ranks, is their certain victim; the sentry on an advanced post is scarcely less so. Whole pickets are sometimes attacked and carried off to a man; and, when traversing the lonely passes of some mountain gorge, or defiling through the dense shadows of a wooded glen, the stoutest heart has felt a fear, lest from behind the rock that frowned above him, or from the leafy thicket whose branches stirred without a breeze, the sharp ring of a Guerilla carbine might sound his death-knell.

It was thus in the retreat upon Corunna fell Colonel Lefebvre. Ever foremost in the attack upon our rear-guard, this gallant youth (he was scarce six-and-twenty), a colonel of his regiment, and decorated with the Legion of Honor, he led on every charge of his bold "*sabreurs*," riding up to the very bayonets of our squares, waving his hat above his head, and seeming actually to court his death-wound; but so struck were our brave fellows with his gallant bearing, that they cheered him as he came on.

It was in one of these moments as, rising high in his stirrups, he bore down upon the unflinching ranks of the British infantry, the shrill whistle of a ball strewed the leaves upon the roadside, the exulting shout of a Guerilla followed it, and the same instant Lefebvre fell forward upon his horse's mane, a deluge of blood bursting from his bosom. A broken cry escaped his lips—a last effort to cheer on his men; his noble charger galloped forward between our squares, bearing to us as our prisoner the corpse of his rider.

"Captain O'Malley," said a mounted dragoon to the advanced sentry at the bottom of the little hill upon which I was standing. "Dispatches from head-quarters, sir," delivering into my hands a large sealed packet from the Adjutant-General's office. While he proceeded to search for another letter of which he was the bearer, I broke the seal and read as follows:

"Adjutant-General's Office, May 15.

"Sir,—On the receipt of this order you are directed, having previously resigned your command to the officer next in seniority, to repair to head-quarters at Fuentes d'Onoro, there to report yourself under arrest.

"I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

"George Hopeton, Military Secretary."

"What the devil can this mean?" said I to myself, as I read the lines over again and again. "What have I done lately, or what have I left undone to involve me in this scrape? Ah!" thought I, "to be sure, it can be nothing else. Lord Wellington *did* recognize me that unlucky morning, and has determined not to let me pass unpunished. How unfortunate. Scarcely twenty-four hours have elapsed since fortune seemed to smile upon me from every side, and now the very destiny I most dreaded stares me fully in the face." A reprimand, or the sentence of a court-martial, I shrank from with a coward's fear. It mattered comparatively little from what source arising, the injury to my pride as a man and my spirit as a soldier would be almost the same.

"This is the letter, sir," said the orderly, presenting me with a packet, the address of which was in Power's handwriting. Eagerly tearing it open, I sought for something which might explain my unhappy position. It bore the same date as the official letter, and ran thus:

"My dear Charley,—I joined yesterday, just in time to enjoy the heartiest laugh I have had since our meeting. If notoriety can gratify you, by Jove you have it; for Charles O'Malley and his man Mickey Free are by-words in every mess from Villa Formosa to the rear-guard. As it's only fair you should participate a little in the fun you've originated, let me explain the cause: Your inimitable man Mike, to whom it appears you intrusted the report of killed and wounded for the Adjutant-General, having just at that moment accomplished a letter to his friends at home, substituted his correspondence

for your returns, and, doubtless, sent the list of the casualties as very interesting information to his sweetheart in Ireland. If such be the case, I hope and trust she has taken the blunder in better part than old Colburn, who swears he'll bring you to a court-martial, under Heaven knows what charges. In fact his passion has known no bounds since the event; and a fit of jaundice has given his face a kind of neutral tint between green and yellow, like nothing I know of except the facings of the 'dirty Half-hundred.'*

"As Mr. Free's letter may be as great a curiosity to you as it has been to us, I inclose you a copy of it, which Hopeton obtained for me. It certainly places the estimable Mike in a strong light as a dispatch-writer. The occasional interruption to the current of the letter, you will perceive, arises from Mike having used the pen of a comrade, writing being, doubtless, an accomplishment forgotten in the haste of preparing Mr. Free for the world: and the amanuensis has, in more than one instance, committed to paper more than was meant by the author:

"'MRS. M'GRA,—Tear an ages, sure I need not be treating her that way. Now, just say Mrs. Mary—ay, that'll do—Mrs. Mary, it's maybe surprised you'll be to be reading a letter from your humble servant, sitting on the top of the Alps.—Arrah, maybe it's not the Alps; but sure she'll never know—fornent the whole French army, with Bony himself and all his jinnerals—God be between us and harm—ready to murther every mother's son of us, av they was able, Molly darlin'; but, with the blessing of Providence, and Lord Wellington, and Mister Charles, we'll bate them yet, as we bate them afore.

"'My lips is wathering at the thought o' the plunder. I often think of Tim Riley, that was hanged for sheep-stealing; he'd be worth his weight in gold here.

"'Mister Charles is now a captain—devil a less—and myself might be somethin' that same, but ye see I was always of a bashful nature, and recommended the master in my place. "He's mighty young, Mister Charles is," says my Lord Wellington to me,—"he's mighty young, Mr. Free." "He is, my lord," says I; "he's young, as you obsarve, but he's as much divilment in him as many that might be his father." "That's somethin', Mr. Free," says my Lord; "ye say he comes from a good stock?" "The *rale* sort, my Lord," says I; "an ould, ancient family, that's spent every sixpence they had in treating their neighbors. My father lived near him for years,"—you see, Molly, I said that to season the discourse. "We'll make him a captain," says my Lord; "but, Mr. Free, could we do nothing for you?" "Nothing, at present, my Lord. When my friends comes into power," says I, "they'll think of me. There's many a little thing to give away in Ireland, and they often find it mighty hard to find a man for lord-lieutenant; and if that same, or a tide-waiter's place was vacant—" "Just tell me," says my lord. "It's what I'll do," says I. "And now, wishing you happy dreams, I'll take my lave." Just so, Molly, it's hand and glove we are. A pleasant face, agreeable manners, seasoned with natural modesty, and a good pair of legs, them's the gifts to push a man's way in the world. And even with the ladies—but sure I am forgetting, my master was proposed for, and your humble servant too, by two illigant creatures in Lisbon; but it wouldn't do, Molly,—it's higher nor that we'll be looking—*rale* princesses, the devil a less. Tell Kitty Hannigan I hope she's well: she was a disarving young woman in her situation in life. Shusey Dogherty, at the cross roads—if I don't forget the name—was a good-looking slip too; give her my affectionate salutations, as we say in the Portuguese. I hope I'll be able to bear the inclementuous nature of your climate when I go back; but I can't expect to stay long—for Lord Wellington can't do without me. We play duets on the guitar together every evening. The master is shouting for a blanket, so no more at present from

"'Your very affectionate friend,

"'MICKEY FREE.

"'P. S.—I don't write this myself, for the Spanish tongue puts me out o' the habit of English. Tell Father Rush, if he'd study the Portuguese, I'd use my interest for him with the Bishop of Toledo. It's a country he'd like—no regular stations, but promiscuous eating and drinking, and as pretty girls as ever confessed their sins.'

"My poor Charley, I think I am looking at you. I think I can see the struggle between indignation and laughter, which every line of this letter inflicts upon you. Get back as quickly as you can, and we'll try if Craufurd won't pull you through

* For the information of my unmilitary readers, I may remark that this *sobriquet* was applied to the 50th Regiment.

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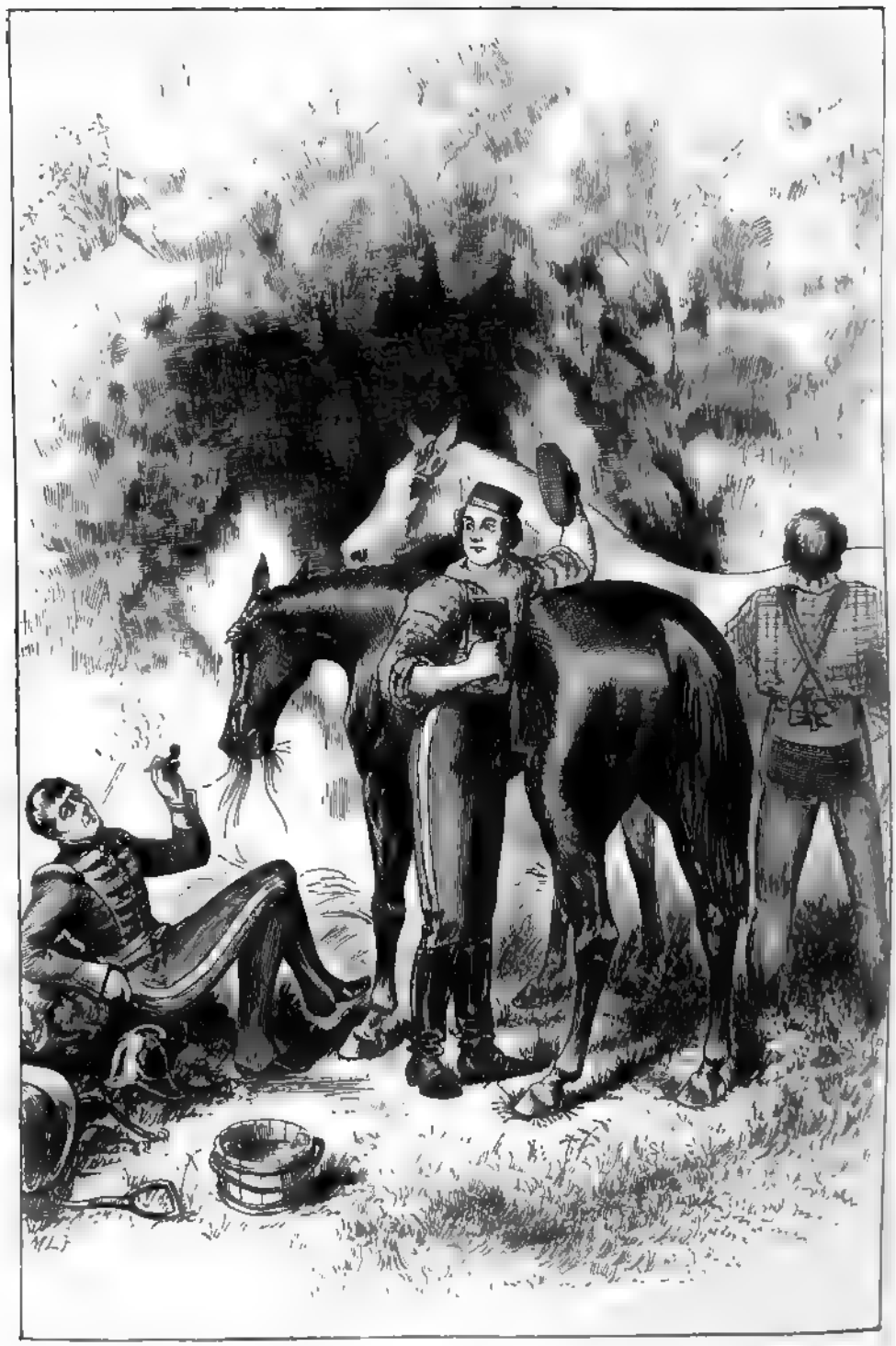

"TEAR AN AGES! AIN'T I COMPOSIN' IT? AV I WAS TOMMY MOORE I COULDN'T BE QUICKER." (P. 923.)

the business. In any case, expect no sympathy; and, if you feel disposed to be angry with all who laugh at you, you had better publish a challenge in the next general order. George Scott, of the Grays, bids me say, that if you're hard up for cash, he'll give you a couple of hundred for Mickey Free. I told him I thought you'd accept it, as your uncle has the breed of those fellows upon his estate, and might have no objection to weed his stud. Hammersley's gone back with the Dashwoods; but I don't think you need fear anything in that quarter. At the same time, if you wish for success, make a bold push for the peerage and half a dozen decorations, for Miss Lucy is most decidedly gone wild about military distinction. As for me, my affairs go on well; I've had half a dozen quarrels with Inez, but we parted good friends, and my bad Portuguese has got me out of all difficulties with papa, who pressed me tolerably close as to fortune. I shall want your assistance in this matter yet. If parchments will satisfy him, I think I could get up a qualification; but, somehow, the matter must be done, for I'm resolved to have his daughter.

"The orderly is starting, so no more till we meet. Yours ever,

"FRED POWER."

"Godwin," said I, as I closed the letter, "I find myself in a scrape at head-quarters; you are to take the command of the detachment, for I must set out at once."

"Nothing serious, I hope, O'Malley?"

"Oh no! nothing of consequence. A most absurd blunder of my rascally servant."

"The Irish fellow yonder?"

"The same."

"He seems to take it easily, however."

"Oh, confound him! he does not know what trouble he has involved me in; not that he'll care much when he does."

"Why, he does not seem to be of a very desponding temperament. Listen to the fellow! I'll be hanged if he's not singing!"

"I'm devilishly disposed to spoil his mirth. They tell me, however, he always keeps the troop in good humor; and see, the fellows are actually cleaning his horses for him, while he is sitting on the bank!"

"Faith, O'Malley, that fellow knows the world. Just hear him."

Mr. Free was, as described, most leisurely reposing on a bank, a mug of something drinkable beside him, and a pipe of that curtailed proportion which an Irishman loves held daintily between his fingers. He appeared to be giving his directions to some soldiers of the troop, who were busily cleaning his horses and accoutrements for him.

"That's it, Jim! Rub 'em down along the hocks; he won't kick; it's only play. Scrub away, honey; that's the devil's own carbine to get clean."

"Well, I say, Mr. Free, are you going to give us that ere song?"

"Yes; I'll be danged if I burnish your sabre if you don't sing."

"Tear an ages! ain't I composin' it? Av I was Tommy Moore I couldn't be quicker."

"Well, come along, my hearty; let's hear it."

"Oh, murther!" said Mike, draining the pot to its last few drops, which he poured pathetically upon the grass before him, and then having emptied the ashes from his pipe, he heaved a deep sigh, as though to say, life had no pleasures in store for him. A brief pause followed, after which, to the evident delight of his expectant audience, he began the following song, to the popular air of "Paddy O'Carroll."

BAD LUCK TO THIS MARCHING.

Air—"Paddy O'Carroll."

"Bad luck to this marching,
Pipeclaying and starching,
How neat one must be to be killed by the French!
I'm sick of parading,
Through wet and cowld wading,
Or standing all night to be shot in a trench.
To the tune of a fife
They dispose of your life,
You surrender your soul to some illigant lilt;
Now I like Garryowen,
When I hear it at home,
But it's not half so sweet when you're going to be kilt.

"Then though up late and early,
Our pay comes so rarely,
The devil a farthing we've ever to spare;
They say some disaster
Befell the paymaster;
On my conscience I think that the money's not there.
And, just think, what a blunder,
They won't let us plunder,
While the convents invite us to rob them, 'tis clear,
Though there isn't a village,
But cries, 'Come and pillage,'
Yet we leave all the mutton behind for Mounseer.

"Like a sailor that's nigh land,
I long for that island
Where even the kisses we steal if we please;
Where it is no disgrace,
If you don't wash your face,
And you've nothing to do but to stand at your ease.
With no sergeant t' abuse us,
We fight to amuse us,

Sure it's better bate Christians than kick a baboon.
How I'd dance like a fairy,
To see ould Dunleary,
And think twice ere I'd leave it to be a dragoon!"

"There's a sweet little bit for you," said Mike, as he concluded; "thrown off as aisy as a game at football."

"I say, Mr. Free, the Captain's looking for you; he's just received dispatches from the camp, and wants his horses."

"In that case, gentlemen, I must take my leave of you; with the more regret, too, that I was thinking of treating you to a supper this evening. You needn't be laughing, it's in earnest I am. Coming, sir,—coming!" shouted he, in a louder tone, answering some imaginary call, as an excuse for his exit.

When he appeared before me, an air of most business-like alacrity had succeeded to his late appearance, and having taken my orders to get the horses in readiness, he left me at once, and in less than half an hour we were upon the road.

CHAPTER XCV.

MONSOON IN TROUBLE.

As I rode along toward Fuentes d'Onoro, I could not help feeling provoked at the absurd circumstances in which I was involved. To be made the subject of laughter for a whole army was by no means a pleasant consideration; but what I felt far worse was, the possibility that the mention of my name in connection with a reprimand might reach the ears of those who knew nothing of the cause.

Mr. Free himself seemed little under the influence of similar feelings; for when, after a silence of a couple of hours, I turned suddenly toward him with a half-angry look, and remarked, "You see, sir, what your confounded blundering has done," his cool reply was,

"Ah! then, won't Mrs. M'Gra be frightened out of her life when she reads all about the killed and wounded in your honor's report. I wonder if they ever had the manners to send my own letter afterward, when they found out their mistake!"

"*Their* mistake, do you say? rather *yours!* You appear to have a happy knack of shifting blame from your own shoulders. And do you fancy that they've nothing else to do than to trouble their heads about your absurd letters?"

"Faith! it's easily seen you never saw my letter, or you wouldn't be saying that; and sure it's not much trouble it would give Colonel Fitzroy or any o' the staff that write a good hand, just to put in a line to Mrs. M'Gra, to prevent her feeling alarmed about that murthering paper. Well, well, it's God's blessing! I don't think there's anybody of the name of Mickey Free high up in the army but myself; so that the family won't be going into mourning for me on a false alarm."

I had not patience to participate in this view of the case; so that I contined my journey without speaking. We had jogged along for some time after dark, when the distant twinkle of the watch-fires announced our approach to the camp. A detachment of the Fourteenth formed the advanced post, and from the officer in command I learned that Power was quartered at a small mill about half a mile distant; thither I accordingly turned my steps, but finding that the path which led abruptly down to it was broken, and cut up in many places, I sent Mike back with the horses, and continued my way alone on foot.

The night was deliciously calm; and, as I approached the little rustic mill, I could not help feeling struck with Power's taste in a billet.

A little vine-clad cottage, built close against a rock, nearly concealed by the dense foliage around it, stood beside a clear rivulet whose eddying current supplied water to the mill, and rose in a dew-like spray, which sparkled like gems in the pale moonlight. All was still within, but as I came nearer I thought I could detect the chords of a guitar. "Can it be," thought I, "that Master Fred has given himself up to minstrelsy! or is it some little dress-rehearsal for a serenade? But no," thought I, "that certainly is not Power's voice." I crept stealthily down the little path, and approached the window; the lattice lay open, and, as the curtain waved to and fro with the night air, I could see plainly all who were in the room.

Close beside the window sat a large, dark-featured Spaniard, his hands crossed upon his bosom, and his head inclined heavily forward, the attitude perfectly denoting deep sleep, even had not his cigar, which remained passively between his lips, ceased to give forth its blue smoke wreath. At a little distance from him sat a young girl, who, even by the uncertain light, I could perceive was possessed of all that delicacy of form and gracefulness of carriage which characterize her nation.

Her pale features—paler still from the contrast with her jet-black hair and dark costume—were lit up with an expression of animation and enthusiasm as her fingers swept rapidly and boldly across the strings of a guitar.

"And you're not tired of it yet?" said she, bending her head downward toward one whom I now for the first time perceived.

Reclining carelessly at her feet, his arm leaning upon her chair, whilst his hand occasionally touched her taper fingers, lay my good friend, Master Fred Power. An undress jacket thrown loosely open, and a black neckcloth negligently knotted, bespoke the easy *nonchalance* with which he prosecuted his courtship.

"Do sing it again," said he, pressing her fingers to his lips.

What she replied I could not catch; but Fred resumed: "No, no, he never wakes; the infernal clatter of that mill is his lullaby."

"But your friend will be here soon," said she. "Is it not so?"

"Oh, poor Charley! I'd almost forgotten him; by-the-by, you mustn't fall in love with him: there now, do not look angry; I only meant that, as I knew he'd be desperately smitten, you shouldn't let him fancy he got any encouragement.

"What would you have me do?" said she, artlessly.

"I have been thinking over that, too. In the first place, you'd better never let him hear you sing; scarcely ever smile; and, as far as possible, keep out of his sight."

"One would think, Senhor, that all these precautions were to be taken more on my account than his. Is he so very dangerous, then?"

"Not a bit of it! Good-looking enough he is, but—only a boy; at the same time, a devilish bold one! and he'd think no more of springing through that window, and throwing his arms round your neck, the very first moment of his arrival, than I should of whispering how much I love you."

"How very odd he must be! I'm sure I should like him."

"Many thanks to both for your kind hints; and now to take advantage of them." So saying, I stepped lightly upon the window-sill, cleared the miller with one spring, and, before Power could recover his legs, or Margeritta her astonishment, I clasped her in my arms, and kissed her on either cheek.

"Charley! Charley! Damn it, man, it won't do!" cried Fred; while the young lady, evidently more amused at his discomfiture than affronted at the liberty, threw herself into a seat, and laughed immoderately.

"Ha! Hilloa there! What is't?" shouted the miller, rousing himself from his nap, and looking eagerly around. "Are they coming? Are the French coming?"

A hearty renewal of his daughter's laughter was the only reply; while Power relieved his anxiety by saying,

"No, no, Pedrillo, not the French; a mere marauding party—nothing more. I say, Charley," continued he, in a lower tone, "you had better lose no time in reporting yourself at head-quarters. We'll walk up together. Devilish awkward scrape yours."

"Never fear, Fred; time enough for all that. For the present, if you permit me, I'll follow up my acquaintance with our fair friend here."

"Gently, gently!" said he, with a look of most imposing seriousness. "Don't mistake her; she's not a mere country girl: you understand?—been bred in a convent here—rather superior kind of thing."

"Come, come, Fred, I'm not the man to interfere with you for a moment."

"Good-night, Senhor," said the old miller, who had been waiting patiently all this time to pay his respects before going.

"Yes, that's it!" cried Power, eagerly. "Good-night, Pedrillo."

"*Buonos noches*," lisped out Margeritta, with a slight courtesy.

I sprang forward to acknowledge her salutation, when Power coolly interposed between us, and, closing the door after them, placed his back against it.

"Master Charley, I must read you a lesson—"

"You inveterate hypocrite, don't attempt this nonsense with *me*. But come, tell me how long you have been here?"

"Just twenty-four of the shortest hours I ever passed at an outpost. But listen—do you know that voice? Isn't it O'Shaughnessy?"

"To be sure it is. Hear the fellow's song."

"My father cared little for shot or shell,
He laughed at death and dangers;
And he'd storm the very gates of hell
With a company of the 'Rangers.'
So sing tow, row, row, row, row," etc.

"An than, Mister Power, it's twice I'd think of returning your visit, if I knew

the state of your avenue. If there's a grand jury in Spain, they might give you a presentment for this bit of road. My knees are as bare as a commissary's conscience, and I've knocked as much flesh off my shin-bones as would make a cornet in the hussars!"

A regular roar of laughter from both of us apprised Dennis of our vicinity.

"And it's laughing ye are? Wouldn't it be as polite just to hold a candle or lantern for me in this confounded watercourse?"

"How goes it, Major?" cried I, extending my hand to him through the window.

"Charley—Charley O'Malley, my son! I'm glad to see you. It's a hearty laugh you gave us this morning. My friend Mickey's a pleasant fellow for a secretary-at-war. But it's all settled now; Craufurd arranged it for you this afternoon."

"You don't say so! Pray tell me all about it."

"That's just what I won't; for, ye see, I don't know it; but I believe old Monsoon's affair has put everything out of their heads."

"Monsoon's affair! what is that? Out with it, Dennis."

"Faith, I'll be just as discreet about that as your own business. All I can tell you is, that they brought him up to headquarters this evening with a sergeant's guard, and they say he's to be tried by court-martial; and Picton is in a blessed humor about it."

"What could it possibly have been? Some plundering affair, depend on it."

"Faith, you may swear it wasn't for his little charities, as Dr. Pangloss calls them, they've pulled him up," cried Power.

"Maurice is in high feather about it," said Dennis. "There are five of them up at Fuentes, making a list of the charges to send to Monsoon; for Bob Mahon, it seems, heard of the old fellow's doings up the mountains."

"What glorious fun!" said Power. "Let's haste and join them, boys."

"Agreed," said I. "Is it far from this?"

"Another stage. When we've got something to eat," said the Major, "if Power has any intentions that way—"

"Well, I really did begin to fear Fred's memory was lapsing; but somehow, poor fellow, smiles have been more in his way than sandwiches lately."

An admonishing look from Power was his only reply, as he walked toward the door. Bent upon teasing him, however, I continued,

"My only fear is, he may do something silly."

"Who? Monsoon, is it?"

"No, no. Not Monsoon; another friend of ours."

"Faith, I scarcely thought your fears of old Monsoon were called for. He's a fox—the devil a less."

"No, no, Dennis. I wasn't thinking of him. My anxieties were for a most soft-hearted young gentleman—one Fred Power."

"Charley, Charley!" said Fred, from the door where he had been giving directions to his servant about supper. "A man can scarce do a more silly thing than marry in the army; all the disagreeables of married life, with none of its better features."

"Marry—marry!" shouted O'Shaughnessy; "upon my conscience, it's incomprehensible to me how a man can be guilty of it. To be sure, I don't mean to say that there are not circumstances—such as half-pay, old age, infirmity, the loss of your limbs, and the like; but that, with good health and a small balance at your banker's, you should be led into such an embarrassment—"

"Men will flirt," said I, interrupting; "men will press taper fingers, look into bright eyes, and feel their witchery; and, although the fair owners be only quizzing them half the time, and amusing themselves the other, and though they be the veriest hackneyed coquettes—"

"Did you ever meet the Dalrymple girls, Dennis?" said Fred, with a look I shall never forget.

What the reply was I cannot tell. My shame and confusion were overwhelming, and Power's victory complete.

"Here comes the prog," cried Dennis, as Power's servant entered with a very plausible-looking tray, while Fred proceeded to place before us a strong army of decanters.

Our supper was excellent, and we were enjoying ourselves to the utmost, when an orderly sergeant suddenly opened the door, and raising his hand to his cap, asked if Major Power was there?

"A letter for you, sir."

"Monsoon's writing, by Jove! Come, boys, let us see what it means. What a hand the old fellow writes! The letters look all crazy, and are tumbling against each other on every side. Did you ever see anything half so tipsy as the crossing of that *t*?"

"Read it! Read it out, Fred!"

"'Tuesday Evening.

"'DEAR POWER,—I'm in such a scrape! Come up and see me at once; bring a little sherry with you, and we'll talk over what's to be done.

"'Yours ever,

"'B. MONSOON.

"'Quarter-General."

We resolved to finish our evening with the Major; so that, each having armed himself with a bottle or two, and the remnants of our supper, we set out toward his quarters, under the guidance of the orderly. After a sharp walk of half an hour, we reached a small hut, where two sentries of the Eighty-eighth were posted at the door.

O'Shaughnessy procured admittance for us, and in we went. At a small table, lighted by a thin tallow-candle, sat old Monsoon, who, the weather being hot, had neither coat nor wig on; an old cracked china teapot, in which, as we found afterward, he had mixed a little grog, stood before him, and a large mass of papers lay scattered around on every side; he himself being occupied in poring over their contents, and taking occasional draughts from his uncouth goblet.

As we entered noiselessly, he never perceived us, but continued to mumble over, in a low tone, from the documents before him:

"Upon my life, it's like a dream to me! What infernal stuff this brandy is!

"'CHARGE No. 8.—For conduct highly unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, in forcing the cellar of the San Nicholas convent at Banos, taking large quantities of wine therefrom, and subsequently compelling the prior to dance a bolero, thus creating a riot, and tending to destroy the harmony between the British and the Portuguese, so strongly inculcated to be preserved by the general orders.'

"Destroying the harmony! Bless their hearts! How little they know of it! I've never passed a jollier night in the Peninsula! The Prior's a trump, and, as for the bolero, he *would* dance it. I hope they say nothing about my hornpipe.

"'CHARGE No. 9.—For a gross violation of his duty as an officer, in sending a part of his brigade to attack and pillage the Alcalde of Banos; thereby endangering the public peace of the town, being a flagrant breach of discipline and direct violation of the articles of war.'

"Well, I'm afraid I was rather sharp on the Alcalde, but we did him no harm except the fright. What sherry the fellow had! 'twould have been a sin to let it fall into the hands of the French.

"'CHARGE No. 10.—For threatening, on or about the night of the 3d, to place the town of Banos under contribution, and subsequently forcing the authorities to walk in procession before him, in absurd and ridiculous costumes.'

"Lord, how good it was! I shall never forget the old Alcalde! One of my fellows fastened a dead lamb round his neck, and told him it was the golden fleece. The Commander-in-Chief would have laughed himself if he had been there. Picton's much too grave—never likes a joke.

"'CHARGE No. 11.—For insubordination and disobedience, in refusing to give up his sword, and rendering it necessary for the Portuguese guard to take it by force; thereby placing himself in a situation highly degrading to a British officer.'

"Didn't I lay about me before they got it!—Who's that?—Who's laughing there?—Ah, boys! I'm glad to see you.—How are you Fred?—Well, Charley, I've heard of your scrape; very sad thing for so young a fellow as you are; I don't think you'll be broke; I'll do what I can—I'll see what I can do with Picton; we are very old friends—were at Eton together."

"Many thanks, Major; but I hear your own affairs are not flourishing. What's all this court-martial about?"

"A mere trifle; some little insubordination in the legion. Those Portuguese are sad dogs. How very good of you, Fred, to think of that little supper."

While the Major was speaking, his servant, with a dexterity the fruit of long habit, had garnished the table with the contents of our baskets, and Monsoon, apologizing for not putting on his wig, sat down amongst us with a face as cheerful as though the floor was not covered with the charges of the court-martial to be held on him.

As we chatted away over the campaign and its chances, Monsoon seemed little disposed to recur to his own fortunes. In fact, he appeared to suffer much more from what he termed my unlucky predicament than from his own mishaps. At the same time, as the evening wore on, and the sherry began to tell upon him, his heart expanded into its habitual moral tendency, and, by an easy transition, he was led from the religious association of convents to the pleasures of pillaging them.

"What wine they have in their old cellars! It's such fun drinking it out of great silver vessels as old as Methuselah. 'There's much treasure in the house of the

righteous,' as David says; and any one who has ever sacked a nunnery knows that."

"I should like to have seen that prior dancing the bolero," said Power.

"Wasn't it good, though! He grew jealous of me, for I performed a hornpipe. Very good fellow the Prior; not like the Alcalde—there was no fun in him. Lord bless him! he'll never forget me."

"What did you do with him, Major?"

"Well, I'll tell you; but you mustn't let it be known, for I see they have not put it in the court-martial. Is there no more sherry there? There, that will do; I'm always contented. 'Better a dry morsel with quietness,' as Moses says. Ay, Charley, never forget that 'a merry heart is just like medicine.' Job found out that, you know."

"Well, but the Alcalde, Major."

"Oh! the Alcalde, to be sure. These pious meditations make me forget earthly matters.

"This old Alcalde at Banos, I found out, was quite spoiled by Lord Wellington. He used to read all the general orders, and got an absurd notion in his head that, because we were his allies, we were not allowed to plunder. Only think, he used to snap his fingers at Beresford; didn't care twopence about the legion; and laughed outright at Wilson. So, when I was ordered down there, I took another way with him; I waited till nightfall, ordered two squadrons to turn their jackets, and sent forward one of my aides-de-camp with a few troopers to the Alcalde's house. They galloped into the court-yard, blowing trumpets and making an infernal hubbub. Down came the Alcalde in a passion.—'Prepare quarters quickly, and rations for eight hundred men.'

"'Who dares to issue such an order?' said he.

"The aide-de-camp whispered one word in his ear, and the old fellow grew pale as death. 'Is he here?—Is he coming?—Is he coming?' said he, trembling from head to foot.

"I rode in myself at this moment, looking thus—

"'*Où est le malheureux?*' said I, in French; you know I speak French like Portuguese."

"Devilish like, I've no doubt," muttered Power.

"'*Pardon, gracias eccellenza!*' said the Alcalde, on his knees."

"Who the deuce did he take you for, Major?"

"*You shall hear: you'll* never guess, though. Lord! I shall never forget it. He thought I was Marmont: my aide-de-camp told him so."

One loud burst of laughter interrupted the Major at this moment, and it was some considerable time before he could continue his narrative.

"And do you really mean," said I, "that you personated the Duke de Raguse?"

"Did I not though?—If you only had seen me with a pair of great moustaches, and a drawn sabre in my hand, pacing the room up and down in presence of the assembled authorities. Napoleon himself might have been deceived. My first order was to to cut off all their heads; but I commuted the sentence to a heavy fine. Ah, boys? if they only understood at headquarters how to carry on a war in the Peninsula, they'd never have to grumble in England about increased taxation. How I'd mulct the nunneries! How I'd grind the corporate towns! How I'd inundate the country with exchequer bills! I'd sell the priors at so much a head, and put the nuns up to auction by the dozen."

"You sacrilegious old villain! But continue the account of your exploits."

"Faith, I remember little more. After dinner, I grew somewhat mellow, and a kind of moral bewilderment, which usually steals over me about eleven o'clock, induced me to invite the Alcalde and all the aldermen to come and sup. Apparently, we had a merry night of it, and, when morning broke, we were not quite clear in our intellects. Hence came that infernal procession; for when the Alcalde rode round the town with a paper cap, and all the aldermen after him, the inhabitants felt offended, it seems, and sent for a large Guerilla force, who captured me and my staff, after a very vigorous resistance. The Alcalde fought like a trump for us, for I promised to make him Prefect of the Seine; but we were overpowered, disarmed, and carried off. The remainder you can read in the court-martial, for you may think that, after sacking the town, drinking all night, and fighting in the morning, my memory was none of the clearest."

"Did you not explain that you were not the Marshal-General?"

"No, faith, I knew better than that; they'd have murdered me, had they known their mistake. They brought me to headquarters, in the hope of a great reward, and it was only when they reached this that they found out I was not the Duke de Raguse; so you see, boys, it's a very complicated business."

"'Gad, and so it is," said Power, "and an awkward one, too."

"He'll be hanged, as sure as my name's Dennis!" vociferated O'Shaughnessy, with an energy that made the Major jump from his chair. "Picton will hang him!"

"I'm not afraid," said Monsoon; "they know me so well. Lord bless you, Beresford couldn't get on without me!"

"Well, Major," said I, "in any case, you certainly take no gloomy nor desponding view of your case."

"Not I, boy. You know what Jeremiah says,—'A merry heart is a continual feast;' and so it is. I may die of repletion, but they'll never find me starved with sorrow."

"And, faith, it's a strange thing!" muttered O'Shaughnessy, thinking aloud; "a most extraordinary thing! An honest fellow would be sure to be hanged; and there's that old rogue, that's been melting down more saints and blessed Virgins than the whole army together, he'll escape. Ye'll see he will!"

"There goes the patrol," said Fred; "we must start."

"Leave the sherry, boys; you'll be back again. I'll have it put up carefully."

We could scarce resist a roar of laughter as we said "Good-night."

"Adieu, Major," said I; "we shall meet soon."

So saying, I followed Power and O'Shaughnessy toward their quarters.

"Maurice has done it beautifully!" said Power. "Pleasant revelations the old fellow will make on the court-martial, if he only remembers what we've heard to-night! But here we are, Charley; so good-night; and remember, you breakfast with me to-morrow."

CHAPTER XCVI.

THE CONFIDENCE.

"I HAVE changed the venue, Charley," said Power, as he came into my room the following morning. "I've changed the venue, and come to breakfast with you."

I could not help smiling, as a certain suspicion crossed my mind; perceiving which, he quickly added,

"No, no, boy! I guess what you're thinking of. I'm not a bit jealous in that quarter. The fact is, you know one cannot be too guarded."

"Nor too suspicious of one's friends, apparently."

"A truce with quizzing. I say, have you reported yourself?"

"Yes; and received this moment a most kind note from the General. But it appears I'm not destined to have a long sojourn amongst you, for I'm desired to hold myself in readiness for a journey this very day."

"Where the deuce are they going to send you now?"

"I'm not certain of my destination. I rather suspect there are dispatches for Badajos. Just tell Mike to get breakfast, and I'll join you immediately."

When I walked into the little room which served as my salon, I found Power pacing up and down, apparently wrapt in meditation.

'I've been thinking, Charley," said he, after a pause of about ten minutes,—"I've been thinking over our adventures in Lisbon. Devilish strange girl, that Senhora! When you resigned in my favor, I took it for granted that all difficulty was removed. Confound it! I no sooner began to profit by your absence, in pressing my suit, than she turned short round, treated me with marked coldness, exhibited a hundred willful and capricious fancies, and concluded one day by quietly confessing to me—you were the only man she cared for."

"You are not serious in all this, Fred?" said I.

"Ain't I, though, by Jove! I wish to Heaven I were not! My dear Charley, the girl is an inveterate flirt—a decided coquette. Whether she has a particle of heart or not, I can't say; but, certainly, her greatest pleasure is to trifle with that of another. Some absurd suspicion that you were in love with Lucy Dashwood piqued her vanity, and the anxiety to recover a lapsing allegiance led her to suppose herself attached to you, and made her treat all my advances with the most frigid indifference or wayward caprice: the more provoking," continued he, with a kind of bitterness in his tone, "as her father was disposed to take the thing favorably; and, if I must say it, I felt devilish spooney about her myself.

"It was only two days before I left, that, in a conversation with Don Emanuel, he consented to receive my addresses to his daughter on my becoming lieutenant-colonel. I hastened back with delight to bring her the intelligence, and found her with a lock of hair on the book before her, over which she was weeping. Confound me, if it was not yours! I don't know what I said, nor what she replied; but, when we parted, it was with a perfect un-

derstanding we were never to meet again. Strange girl! She came that evening, put her arm within mine as I was walking alone in the garden, and, half in jest, half in earnest, talked me out of all my suspicions, and left me fifty times more in love with her than ever. Egad! I thought I used to know something about women, but here is a chapter I've yet to read. Come, now, Charley, be frank with me: tell me all you know."

"My poor Fred! if you were not head and ears in love, you would see as plainly as I do that your affairs prosper. And after all, how invariable is it, that the man who has been the veriest flirt with women—sighing, serenading, sonneteering, flinging himself at the feet of every pretty girl he meets with—should become the most thorough dupe to his own feelings when his heart is really touched. Your man of eight-and-thirty is always the greatest fool about women."

"Confound your impertinence! How the devil can a fellow with a moustache not stronger than a Circassian's eyebrow read such a lecture *to me?*"

"Just for the very reason you've mentioned. You *glide* into an attachment at *my* time of life; you *fall* in love at *yours*."

"Yes," said Power, musingly, "there is some truth in that. This flirting is sad work. It is just like sparring with a friend; you put on the gloves in perfect good humor, with the most friendly intentions of exchanging a few amicable blows; you find yourself insensibly warm with the enthusiasm of the conflict, and some unlucky hard knock decides the matter, and it ends in a downright fight.

"Few men, believe me, are regular seducers; and among those who behave 'vilely' (as they call it), three-fourths of the number have been more sinned against than sinning. You adventure upon love as upon a voyage to India. Leaving the cold northern latitudes of first acquaintance behind you, you gradually glide into the warmer and more genial climate of intimacy. Each day you travel southward shortens the miles and the hours of your existence: so tranquil is the passage, and so easy the transition, you suffer no shock by the change of temperature about you. Happy were it for us that, in our courtship as in our voyage, there were some certain Rubicon to remind us of the miles we have journeyed! Well were it, if there were some meridian in love!"

"I'm not sure, Fred, that there is not that same shaving process they practice on *the line, occasionally* performed for us by parents and guardians at home; and I'm not certain that the iron hoop of old Neptune is not a pleasanter acquaintance than the hair-trigger of some indignant and fire-eating brother. But come, Fred, you have not told me the most important point—How fare your fortunes now? or, in other words, What are your present prospects as regards the Senhora?"

"What a question to ask me! Why not request me to tell you where Soult will fight us next, and when Marmont will cross the frontier? My dear boy, I have not seen her for a week, an entire week—seven full days and nights, each with their twenty-four hours of change and vacillation."

"Well, then, give me the last bulletin from the seat of war; that at least you can do. Tell me how you parted."

"Strangely enough. You must know we had a grand dinner at the villa the day before I left; and when we adjourned for our coffee to the garden, my spirits were at the top of their bent. Inez never looked so beautiful—never was one-half so gracious; and, as she leaned upon my arm, instead of following the others toward the little summer-house, I turned, as if inadvertently, into a narrow dark alley that skirts the lake."

"I know it well; continue."

Power reddened slightly; and went on:

"'Why are we taking this path?' said Donna Inez; 'this is, surely, not a short way?'

"'Oh! I—wished to make my adieux to my old friends the swans. You know I go to-morrow.'

"'Ah! that's true,' added she. 'I'd quite forgotten it.'

"This speech was not very encouraging; but, as I felt myself in for the battle, I was not going to retreat at the skirmish. 'Now or never,' thought I. I'll not tell you what I said. I couldn't, if I would. It is only with a pretty woman upon one's arm—it is only when stealing a glance at her bright eyes, as you bend beyond the border of her bonnet—that you know what it is to be eloquent. Watching the changeful color of her cheek with a more anxious heart than ever did mariner gaze upon the fitful sky above him, you pour out your whole soul in love; you leave no time for doubt, you leave no space for reply; the difficulties that shoot across her mind you reply to ere she is well conscious of them; and when you feel her hand tremble, or see her eyelid fall, like the leader of a storming party, when the guns slacken in their fire, you spring boldly forward in the breach, and, blind to every danger around

you, rush madly on, and plant your standard upon the walls."

"I hope you allow the vanquished the honors of war," said I, interrupting.

Without noticing my observation, he continued:

"I was on my knee before her, her hand passively resting in mine, her eyes bent *upon* me softly and tearfully—"

"The game was your own, in fact."

"You shall hear."

"'Have we stood long enough thus, Senhor?' said she, bursting into a fit of laughter.

"I sprang to my legs in anger and indignation.

"'There, don't be passionate; it is so tiresome. What do you call that tree there?'

"'It is a tulip-tree,' said I, coldly.

"'Then, to put your gallantry to the test, do climb up there and pluck me that flower. No, the far one. If you fall into the lake and are drowned, why, it would put an end to this foolish interview.'

"'And if not?' said I.

"'Oh, then I shall take twelve hours to consider of it; and, if my decision be in your favor, I'll give you the flower ere you leave to-morrow.'

"It's somewhat about thirty years since I went bird-nesting—and, hang me, if a tight jacket and spurs are the best equipment for climbing a tree!—but up I went, and, amid a running fire of laughter and quizzing, reached the branch, and brought it down safely.

"Inez took especial care to avoid me the rest of the evening. We did not meet until breakfast the following morning. I perceived then that she wore the flower in her belt; but, alas! I knew her too well to augur favorably from that; besides that, instead of any trace of sorrow or depression at my approaching departure, she was in high spirits, and the life of the party. 'How can I manage to speak with her?' said I to myself; 'but one word—I already anticipate what it must be; but let the blow fall—anything is better than this uncertainty.'

"'The General and the staff have passed the gate, sir,' said my servant at this moment.

"'Are my horses ready?'

"'At the door, sir; and the baggage gone forward.'

"I gave Inez one look—

"'Did you say more coffee?' said she, smiling.

"I bowed coldly, and rose from the table. They all assembled upon the terrace to see me ride away.

"'You'll let us hear from you,' said Don Emanuel.

"'And pray don't forget the letter to my brother,' cried old Madame Forjas.

"Twenty similar injunctions burst from the party, but not a word said Inez.

"'Adieu, then!' said I. 'Farewell!'

"'Adios! Go with God!' chorused the party.

"'Good-by, Senhora,' said I. 'Have *you* nothing to tell me ere we part?'

"'Not that I remember,' said she, carelessly. 'I hope you'll have good weather.'

"'There is a storm threatening,' said I, gloomily.

"'Well! a soldier cares little for a wet jacket.'

"'Adieu!' said I, sharply, darting at her a look that spoke my meaning.

"'Farewell!' repeated she, courtesying slightly, and giving one of her sweetest smiles.

"I drove the spurs into my horse's flanks, but holding him firmly on the curb at the same moment; instead of dashing forward, he bounded madly in the air.

"'What a pretty creature!' said she, as she turned toward the house; then, stopping carelessly, she looked round:

"'Should you like this bouquet?'

"Before I could reply, she disengaged it from her belt, and threw it toward me. The door closed behind her as she spoke; I galloped on to overtake the staff—*et voilà tout*. Now, Charley, read my fate for me, and tell me what this portends."

"I confess I only see one thing certain in the whole."

"And that is?" said Power.

"That Master Fred Power is more irretrievably in love than any gentleman on full pay I ever met with."

"By Jove! I half fear as much! Is that orderly waiting for you, Charley? Who do you want, my man?"

"Captain O'Malley, sir. General Craufurd desires to see you at head-quarters immediately."

"Come, Charley, I'm going toward Fuentes. Take your cap: we'll walk down together."

So saying, we cantered toward the village, where we separated—Power to join some Fourteenth men stationed there on duty, and I to the General's quarters to receive my orders.

CHAPTER XCVII.

THE CANTONMENT.

Soon after this the army broke up from Caja, and went into cantonments along the

Tagus, the head-quarters being at Portalegre; we were here joined by four regiments of infantry fately arrived from England, and the 12th Light Dragoons. I shall not readily forget the first impression created among our reinforcements by the habits of our life at this period.

Brimful of expectation, they had landed at Lisbon; their minds filled with all the glorious expectancy of a brilliant campaign, sieges, storming, and battle-fields floated before their excited imagination. Scarcely, however, had they reached the camp, when these illusions were dissipated. Breakfasts, dinners, private theatricals, pigeon matches, formed our daily occupation. Lord Wellington's hounds threw off regularly twice a week, and here might be seen every imaginable species of equipment, from the artillery officer, mounted on his heavy troop horse, to the infantry subaltern, on a Spanish jennet. Never was anything more ludicrous than our turnout. Every quadruped in the army was put into requisition; and even those who rolled not from their saddles from sheer necessity, were most likely to do so from laughing at their neighbors. The pace may not have equaled Melton, nor the fences have been as stubborn as in Leicestershire, but I'll be sworn there was more laughter, more fun, and more merriment, in one day with us, than in a whole season with the best organized pack in England. With a lively trust that the country was open and the leaps easy, every man took the field; indeed, the only anxiety evinced at all, was to appear at the meet in something like jockey fashion, and I must confess that this feeling was particularly conspicuous among the infantry. Happy the man whose kit boasted a pair of cords, or buckskins; thrice happy he who sported a pair of tops. I myself was in that enviable position, and well remember with what pride of heart I cantered up to cover in all the superior *éclat* of my costume, though, if truth were to be spoken, I doubt if I should have passed muster among my friends of the "Blazers." A round cavalry jacket, and a foraging cap with a hanging tassel, were the strange accompaniments of my more befitting nether garments. Whatever our costumes, the scene was a most animated one. Here, the shell-jacket of a heavy dragoon was seen storming the fence of a vineyard; there, the dark green of a rifleman was going the pace over the plain. The unsportsmanlike figure of a staff officer might be observed emerging from a drain, while some neck-or-nothing Irishman, with light infantry wings, was flying at every fence before him, and overturning all in his way. The rules and regulations of the service prevailed not here; the starred and gartered general, the plumed and aiguilletted colonel obtained but little deference, and less mercy, from his more humble subaltern. In fact, I am half disposed to think that many an old grudge of rigid discipline, or severe duty, met with its retribution here. More than once have I heard the muttered sentences around me which boded like this:

"Go the pace, Harry! never flinch it! There's old Colquhoun—take him in the haunches—roll him over!"

"See here, boys—watch how I'll scatter the staff—beg your pardon, General, hope I haven't hurt you. Turn about—fair play—I have taught *you* to take up a position now."

I need scarcely say there was one whose person was sacred from all such attacks; he was well mounted upon a strong half-bred horse; rode always foremost, following the hounds with the same steady pertinacity with which he would have followed the enemy; his compressed lip rarely opening for a laugh, when even the most ludicrous misadventure was enacting before him; and when, by chance, he would give way, the short ha! ha! was over in a moment, and the cold stern features were as fixed and impassive as before.

All the excitement, all the enthusiasm of a hunting-field, seemed powerless to turn his mind from the preoccupation which the mighty interests he presided over, exacted. I remember once an incident which, however trivial in itself, is worth recording, as illustrative of what I mean. We were going along at a topping pace, the hounds, a few fields in advance, were hidden from our view by a small beech copse; the party consisted of not more than six persons, one of whom was Lord Wellington himself. Our run had been a splendid one, and, as we were pursuing the fox to earth, every man of us pushed his horse to his full stride in the hot enthusiasm of such a moment.

"This way, my Lord—this way," said Colonel Conyers, an old Melton man, who led the way. "The hounds are in the valley—keep to the left." As no reply was made, after a few moments' pause, Conyers repeated his admonition, "You are wrong, my Lord, the hounds are hunting yonder."

"I know it!" was the brief answer, given with a shortness that almost savored of asperity; for a second or two not a word was spoken.

"How far is Niza, Gordon?" inquired Lord Wellington.

"About five leagues, my Lord," replied the astonished aide-de-camp.

"That's the direction, is it not?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"Let's go over and inspect the wounded."

No more was said, and before a second was given for consideration, away went his Lordship, followed by his aide-de-camp, his pace the same stretching gallop, and apparently feeling as much excitement, as he dashed onward toward the hospital, as though following in all the headlong enthusiasm of a fox chase.

Thus passed our summer; a life of happy ease and recreation succeeding to the harassing fatigues and severe privations of the preceding campaign. Such are the lights and shadows of a soldier's life; such the checkered surface of his fortunes; constituting by their very change that buoyant temperament, that happy indifference, which enables him to derive its full enjoyment from each passing incident of his career.

While thus we indulged in all the fascinations of a life of pleasure, the rigid discipline of the army was never for a moment forgotten: reviews, parades, and inspections were of daily occurrence, and even a superficial observer could not fail to detect that under this apparent devotion to amusement and enjoyment, our Commander-in-Chief concealed a deep stroke of his policy.

The spirits of both men and officers, broken in spite of their successes by the incessant privations they had endured, imperatively demanded this period of rest and repose. The infantry, many of whom had served in the ill-fated campaign of Walcheren, were still suffering from the effects of the intermittent fever. The cavalry, from deficient forage, severe marches, and unremitting service, were in great part unfit for duty. To take the field under circumstances like these was therefore impossible; and, with the double object of restoring their wonted spirit to his troops, and checking the ravages which sickness and the casualties of war had made within his ranks, Lord Wellington embraced the opportunity of the enemy's inaction to take up his present position on the Tagus.

Meanwhile that we enjoyed all the pleasures of a country life, enhanced tenfold by daily association with gay and cheerful companions, the master-mind, whose reach extended from the profoundest calculations of strategy to the minutest details of military organization, was never idle. Foreseeing that a period of inaction, like the present, must only be like the solemn calm that preludes the storm, he prepared for the future by those bold conceptions and unrivaled combinations which were to guide him through many a field of battle and of danger, to end his career of glory in the liberation of the Peninsula.

The failure of the attack upon Badajos had neither damped his ardor nor changed his views; and he proceeded to the investment of Ciudad Rodrigo with the same intense determination of uprooting the French occupation in Spain, by destroying their strongholds and cutting off their resources. Carrying aggressive war in one hand, he turned the other toward the maintenance of those defenses which, in the event of disaster or defeat, must prove the refuge of the army.

To the lines of Torres Vedras he once more directed his attention. Engineer officers were dispatched thither; the fortresses were put into repair; the bridges broken or injured during the French invasion were restored; the batteries upon the Tagus were rendered more effective, and furnaces for heating shot were added to them.

The inactivity and apathy of the Portuguese government but ill corresponded with his unwearied exertions; and, despite of continual remonstrances and unceasing representations, the bridges over the Leira and Alva were left unrepaired, and the roads leading to them, so broken as to be almost impassable, might seriously have endangered the retreat of the army, should such a movement be deemed necessary.

It was in the first week of September I was sent with dispatches for the engineer officer in command at the lines, and, during the fortnight of my absence, was enabled for the first time to examine those extraordinary defenses which, for the space of thirty miles, extended over a country undulating in hill and valley, and presenting, by a succession of natural and artificial resources, the strongest and most impregnable barrier that has ever been presented against the advance of a conquering army.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

MICKEY FREE'S ADVENTURE.

WHEN I returned to the camp, I found the greatest excitement prevailing on all sides. Each day brought in fresh rumors that Marmont was advancing in force;

that sixty thousand Frenchmen were in full march upon Ciudad Rodrigo, to raise the blockade, and renew the invasion of Portugal. Intercepted letters corroborated these reports; and the Guerillas who joined us spoke of large convoys which they had seen upon the roads from Salamanca and Tamanes.

Except the light division, which, under the command of Craufurd, were posted upon the right of the Aguada, the whole of our army occupied the country from El Bodon to Gallegos; the fourth division being stationed at Fuente Guenaldo, where some intrenchments had been hastily thrown up.

To this position Lord Wellington resolved upon retreating, as affording points of greater strength and more capability of defense than the other line of road, which led by Almeida upon the Coa. Of the enemy's intentions we were not long to remain in doubt; for, on the morning of the 24th, a strong body was seen descending from the pass above Ciudad Rodrigo, and cautiously reconnoitering the banks of the Aguada. Far in the distance a countless train of wagons, bullock-cars, and loaded mules were seen winding their slow length along, accompanied by several squadrons of dragoons.

Their progress was slow, but, as evening fell, they entered the gates of the fortress; and the cheering of the garrison mixing with the strains of martial music, faint from distance, reached us where we lay upon the far-off heights of El Bodon. So long as the light lasted, we could perceive fresh troops arriving; and even when the darkness came on, we could detect the position of the reinforcing columns by the bright watch-fires which gleamed along the plain.

By daybreak we were under arms, anxiously watching for the intentions of our enemy, which soon became no longer dubious. Twenty-five squadrons of cavalry, supported by a whole division of infantry, were seen to defile along the great road from Ciudad Rodrigo to Guenaldo. Another column, equally numerous, marched straight upon Espeja: nothing could be more beautiful, nothing more martial, than their appearance; emerging from a close mountain gorge, they wound along the narrow road, and appeared upon the bridge of the Aguada, just as the morning sun was bursting forth; his bright beams tipping the polished cuirassiers and their glittering equipments, they shone in their panoply like the gay troop of some ancient tournament. The lancers of Berg, distinguished by their scarlet dolmans and gorgeous trappings, were followed by the Cuirassiers of the Guard, who again were succeeded by the *chasseurs à cheval*, their bright steel helmets and light-blue uniforms, their floating plumes and dappled chargers, looking the very *beau idéal* of light horsemen; behind, the dark masses of the infantry pressed forward, and deployed into the plain, while, bringing up the rear, the rolling din, like distant thunder, announced the "dread artillery."

On they came, the seemingly interminable line converging on to that one spot upon whose summit now we assembled a force of scarcely ten thousand bayonets.

While this brilliant panorama was passing before our eyes, we ourselves were not idle. Orders had been sent to Picton to come up from the left with his division. Alten's cavalry and a brigade of artillery were sent to the front, and every preparation which the nature of the ground admitted was made to resist the advance of the enemy. While these movements on either side occupied some hours, the scene was every moment increasing in interest. The large body of cavalry was now seen forming into columns of attack. Nine battalions of infantry moved up to their support, and, forming into columns, echelons, and squares, performed before us all the maneuvers of a review with the most admirable precision and rapidity; but from these our attention was soon taken by a brilliant display upon our left. Here, emerging from the wood which flanked the Aguada, were now to be seen the gorgeous staff of Marmont himself. Advancing at a walk, they came forward amid the *vivas* of the assembled thousands, burning with ardor and thirsting for victory. For a moment, as I looked, I could detect the Marshal himself, as, holding his plumed hat above his head, he returned the salute of a lancer regiment who proudly waved their banners as he passed; but, hark! what are those clanging sounds, which, rising high above the rest, seem like the war-cry of a warrior?

"I can't mistake those tones," said a bronzed old veteran beside me; "those are the brass bands of the Imperial Guard. Can Napoleon be there? See! there they come." As he spoke, the head of a column emerged from the wood, and, deploying as they came, poured into the plain. For above an hour that mighty tide flowed on, and before noon a force of sixty thousand men was collected in the space beneath us.

I was not long to remain an unoccupied spectator of this brilliant display, for I

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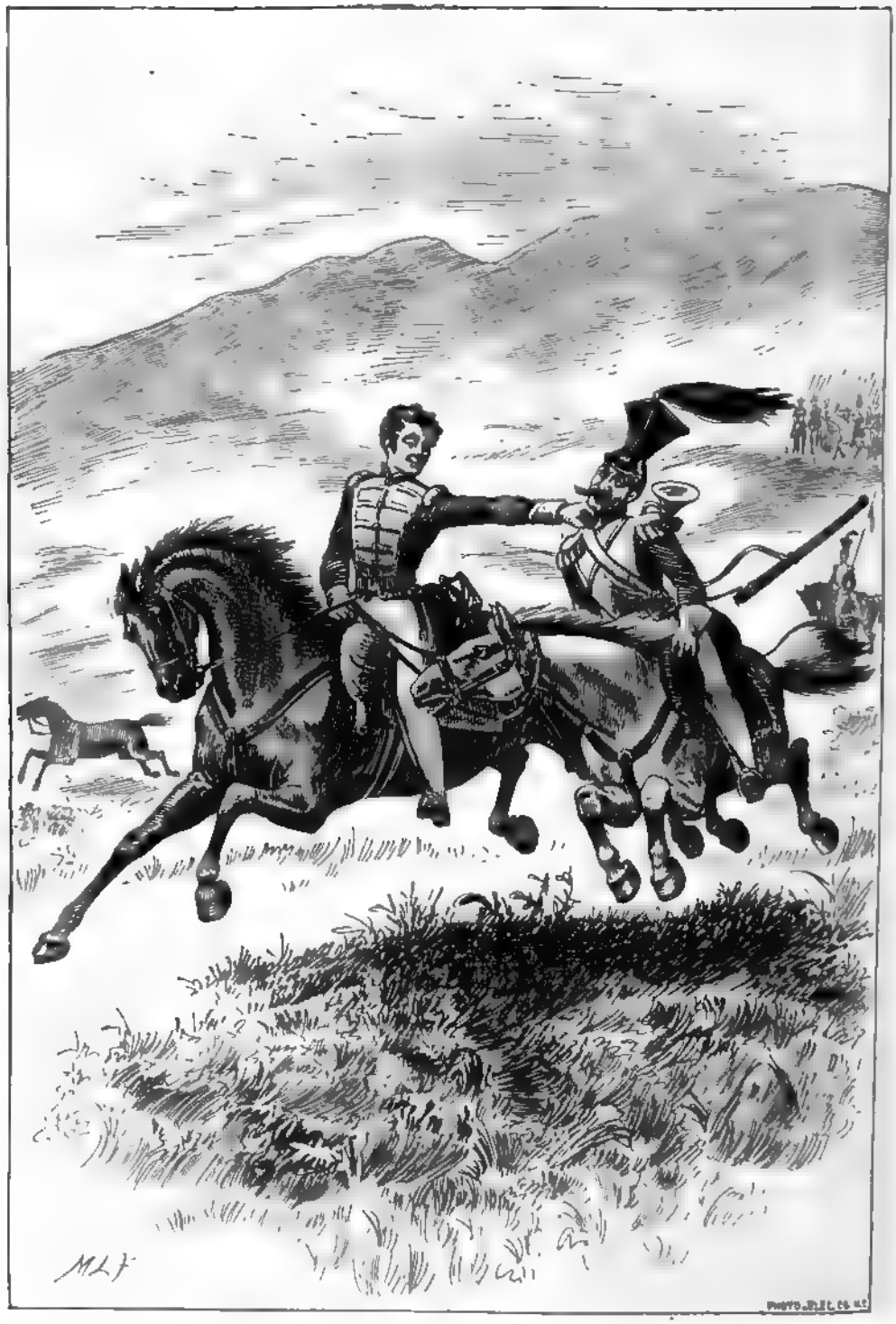

"GALLANT FELLOW!" "HE HAS HIM! HE HAS HIM, BY—!" (P. 985.)

soon received orders to move down with my squadron to the support of the 11th Light Dragoons, who were posted at the base of the hill. The order at the moment was anything but agreeable, for I was mounted upon a hack pony, on which I had ridden over from Craufurd's division early in the morning, and, suspecting that there might be some hot work during the day, had ordered Mike to follow with my horse. There was no time, however, for hesitation, and I moved my men down the slope in the direction of the skirmishers.

The position we occupied was singularly favorable: our flanks defended on either side by brushwood, we could only be assailed in front; and here, notwithstanding our vast inferiority of force, we steadily awaited the attack. As I rode from out the thick wood, I could not help feeling surprised at the sounds which greeted me. Instead of the usual low and murmuring tones—the muttered sentences which precede a cavalry advance—a roar of laughter shook the entire division, while exclamations burst from every side around me: "Look at him now!" "They have him! —by Heavens, they have him!" "Well done!—well done!" "How the fellow rides!" "He's hit!—he's hit!" "No, no!" "Is he down?" "He's down!"

A loud cheer rent the air at this moment, and I reached the front in time to learn the reason of all this excitement. In the wide plain before me a horseman was seen, having passed the ford of the Aguada, to advance at the top of his speed toward the British lines. As he came nearer, it was perceived that he was accompanied by a led horse, and, apparently with total disregard of the presence of an enemy, rode boldly and carelessly forward. Behind him rode three lancers, their lances couched, their horses at speed: the pace was tremendous, and the excitement intense; for sometimes, as the leading horseman of the pursuit neared the fugitive, he would bend suddenly upon the saddle, and, swerving to the right or to the left, totally evade him, while again, at others, with a loud cry of bold defiance, rising in his stirrups, he would press on, and, with a shake of his bridle that bespoke the jockey, almost distance the enemy.

"That must be your fellow, O'Malley; that must be your Irish groom," cried a brother officer. There could be no doubt of it. It was Mike himself.

"I'll be hanged if he's not playing with them!" said Baker. "Look at the villain! He's holding in: that's more than the Frenchmen are doing. Look! look at the fellow on the gray horse! he has flung his trumpet to his back, and drawn his sabre."

A loud cheer burst from the French lines: the trumpeter was gaining at every stride. Mike had got into deep ground, and the horses would not keep together. "Let the brown horse go! let him go, man!" shouted the dragoons, while I re-echoed the cry with my utmost might. But not so; Mike held firmly on, and, spurring madly, he lifted his horse at each stride, turning, from to time, a glance at his pursuer. A shout of triumph rose from the French side; the trumpeter was beside him; his arm was uplifted; the sabre above his head. A yell broke from the British, and with difficulty could the squadron be restrained. For above a minute the horses went side by side, but the Frenchman delayed his stroke until he could get a little in the front. My excitement had rendered me speechless; if a word could have saved my poor fellow, I could not have spoken. A mist seemed to gather across my eyes, and the whole plain, and its peopled thousands, danced before my eyes.

"He's down!" "He's down, by Heavens!" "No! no! no!" "Look there—nobly done!" "Gallant fellow!" "He has him! he has him, by—!" A cheer that rent the very air above us broke from the squadrons, and Mike galloped in amongst us, holding the Frenchman by the throat with one hand; the bridle of his horse he firmly grasped with his own in the other.

"How was it? how did he do it?" cried I.

"He broke his sword-arm with a blow, and the Frenchman's sabre fell to the earth."

"Here he is, Mister Charles; and, musha, but it's trouble he gave me to catch him! And I hope your honor won't be displeased at me losing the brown horse. I was obliged to let him go when the thief closed on me; but, sure, there he is! May I never! if he's not galloping into the lines by himself." As he spoke, my brown charger came cantering up to the squadrons, and took his place in the line with the rest.

I had scarcely time to mount my horse, amid a buzz of congratulations, when our squadron was ordered to the front. Mixed up with detachments from the Eleventh and Sixteenth, we continued to resist the enemy for above two hours.

Our charges were quick, sharp, and successive, pouring in our numbers wherever

the enemy appeared for a moment to be broken, and then retreating under cover of our infantry when the opposing cavalry came down upon us in overwhelming numbers.

Nothing could be more perfect than the manner in which the different troops relieved each other during this part of the day. When the French squadrons advanced, ours met them as boldly. When the ground became no longer tenable, we broke and fell back, and the bayonets of the infantry arrested their progress. If the cavalry pressed heavily upon the squares, ours came up to the relief, and, as they were beaten back, the artillery opened upon them with an avalanche of grape-shot.

I have seen many battles of greater duration, and more important in result,—many there have been, in which more tactic was displayed, and greater combinations called forth,—but never did I witness a more desperate hand to hand conflict than on the heights of El Bodon.

Baffled by our resistance, Montbrun advanced with the Cuirassiers of the Guard. Riding down our advanced squadrons, they poured upon us like some mighty river, overwhelming all before it, and charged, cheering, up the heights. Our brave troopers were thrown back upon the artillery, and many of them cut down beside the guns. The artillerymen and the drivers shared the same fate, and the cannon were captured. A cheer of exultation burst from the French, and their *vivas* rent the air. Their exultation was short-lived, and that cheer their death-cry; for the 5th Foot, who had hitherto lain concealed in the grass, sprang madly to their feet, their gallant Major Ridge at their head. With a yell of vengeance they rushed upon the foe; the glistening bayonets glanced amid the cavalry of the French; the troops pressed hotly home; and, while the cuirassiers were driven down the hill, the guns were recaptured, limbered up, and brought away. This brilliant charge was the first recorded instance of cavalry being assailed by infantry in line.

But the hill could no longer be held; the French were advancing on either flank; overwhelming numbers pressed upon the front, and retreat was unavoidable. The cavalry were ordered to the rear, and Picton's division, throwing themselves into squares, covered the retreating movement.

The French dragoons bore down upon every face of those devoted battalions; the shouts of triumph cheered them as the earth trembled beneath their charge; but the British infantry, reserving their fire until the sabres clanked with the bayonet, poured in a shattering volley, and the cry of the wounded and the groans of the dying rose from the smoke around them.

Again and again the French came on; and the same fate ever awaited them. The only movement in the British squares was closing up the spaces as their comrades fell or sank wounded to the earth.

At last reinforcements came up from the left: the whole retreated across the plain, until, as they approached Guenaldo, our cavalry having re-formed, came to their aid with one crushing charge, which closed the day.

That same night Lord Wellington fell back, and, concentrating his troops within a narrow loop of land bounded on either flank by the Coa, awaited the arrival of the light division, which joined us at three in the morning.

The following day Marmont again made a demonstration of his force, but no attack followed. The position was too formidable to be easily assailed, and the experience of the preceding day had taught him that, however inferior in numbers, the troops he was opposed to were as valiant as they were ably commanded.

Soon after this, Marmont retired on the valley of the Tagus. Dorsenne also fell back, and, for the present, at least, no further effort was made to prosecute the invasion of Portugal.

CHAPTER XCIX.

THE SAN PEDRO.

"Not badly wounded, O'Malley, I hope?" said General Craufurd, as I waited upon him soon after the action.

I could not help starting at the question, while he repeated it, pointing at the same time to my left shoulder, from which a stream of blood was now flowing down my coat-sleeve.

"I never noticed it, sir, till this moment: it can't be of much consequence, for I have been on horseback the entire day, and never felt it."

"Look to it at once, boy; a man wants all his blood for this campaign. Go to your quarters; I shall not need you for the present, so pray see the doctor at once."

As I left the General's quarters, I began to feel sensible of pain, and, before a quarter of an hour had elapsed, had quite con-

vinced myself that my wound was a severe one. The hand and arm were swollen, heavy, and distended with homorrhage beneath the skin; my thirst became great, and a cold shuddering sensation passed over me from time to time.

I sat down for a moment upon the grass, and was just reflecting within myself what course I should pursue, when I heard the tramp of feet approaching. I looked up, and perceived some soldiers in fatigue dresses, followed by a few others, who, from their noiseless gesture and sad countenances, I guessed were carrying some wounded comrade to the rear.

"Who is it, boys?" cried I.

"It's the Major, sir: the Lord be good to him!" said a hardy-looking Eighty-eighth man, wiping his eye with the cuff of his coat as he spoke.

"Not your Major? — not Major O'Shaughnessy?" said I, jumping up, and rushing forward toward the litter. Alas! too true, it was the gallant fellow himself; there he lay, pale and cold; his bloodless cheek and parted lips looking like death itself. A thin blue rivulet trickled from his forehead, but his most serious wound appeared to be in the side; his coat was open, and showed a mass of congealed and clotted blood, from the midst of which, with every motion of the way, a fresh stream kept welling upward. Whether from the shock, or my loss of blood, or from both together, I know not, but I sank fainting to the ground.

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It would have needed a clearer brain and a cooler judgment than I possessed to have conjectured where I was, and what had occurred to me when next I recovered my senses. Weak, fevered, and with a burning thirst, I lay, unable to move, and could merely perceive the objects which lay within the immediate reach of my vision. The place was cold, calm, and still as the grave. A lamp, which hung high above my head, threw a faint light around, and showed me, within a niche of the opposite wall, the figure of a gorgeously dressed female: she appeared to be standing motionless, but, as the pale light flickered upon her features, I thought I could detect the semblance of a smile. The splendor of her costume, and the glittering gems which shone upon her spotless robe, gleamed through the darkness with an almost supernatural brilliancy, and so beautiful did she look, so calm her pale features, that, as I opened and shut my eyes and rubbed my lids, I scarcely dared to trust my erring senses, and believe it could be real. What could it mean? Whence this silence—this cold sense of awe and reverence; was it a dream? was it the fitful vision of a disordered intellect? Could it be death? My eyes were riveted upon that beautiful figure: I essayed to speak, but could not: I would have beckoned her toward me, but my hands refused their office. I felt I know not what charm she possessed to calm my throbbing brain and burning heart; but, as I turned from the gloom and darkness around to gaze upon her fair brow and unmoved features, I felt like the prisoner who turns from the cheerless desolation of his cell, and looks upon the fair world and the smiling valleys lying sunlit and shadowed before him.

Sleep at length came over me; and when I awoke, the day seemed breaking, for a faint gray tint stole through a stained glass window, and fell, in many-colored patches, upon the pavement. A low muttering sound attracted me; I listened—it was Mike's voice. With difficulty raising myself upon one arm, I endeavored to see more around me. Scarcely had I assumed this position, when my eyes once more fell upon the white-clad figure of the preceding night. At her feet knelt Mike, his hands clasped, and his head bowed upon his bosom. Shall I confess my surprise—my disappointment! It was no other than an image of the blessed Virgin, decked out in all the gorgeous splendor which Catholic piety bestows upon her saints. The features, which the imperfect light and my more imperfect faculties had endowed with an expression of calm angelic beauty, were, to my waking senses, but the cold and barren mockery of loveliness: the eyes, which my excited brain gifted with looks of tenderness and pity, stared with no speculation in them; yet, contrasting my feelings of the night before, full as they were of their deceptions, with my now waking thoughts, I longed once more for that delusion which threw a dreamy pleasure over me, and subdued the stormy passions of my soul into rest and repose.

"Who knows," thought I, "but he who kneels yonder feels now as I did then? Who can tell how little the cold, unmeaning reality before him resembles the spiritualized creation the fervor of his love and the ardor of his devotion may have placed upon that altar? Who can limit or bound the depth of that adoration for an object whose attributes appeal not only to every sentiment of the heart, but also to every sense of the brain? I fancy that I can picture to myself how these tinseled relics,

these tasteless wax-works, changed by the magic of devotion and of dread, become to the humble worshiper images of loveliness and beauty. The dim religious light; the reverberating footsteps echoed along those solemn aisles; the vaulted arches, into whose misty heights the sacred incense floats upward, while the deep organ is pealing its notes of praise or prayer;—these are no slight accessories to all the pomp and grandeur of a church, whose forms and ceremonial, unchanged for ages, and hallowed by a thousand associations, appeal to the mind of the humblest peasant or the proudest noble, by all the weaknesses as by all the more favored features of our nature."

How long I might have continued to meditate in this strain I know not, when a muttered observation from Mike turned the whole current of my thoughts. His devotion over, he had seated himself upon the steps of the altar, and appeared to be resolving some doubts within himself concerning his late pious duties.

"Masses is dearer here than in Galway. Father Rush would be well pleased at two-and-sixpence for what I paid three doubloons for, this morning. And sure it's droll enough. How expensive an amusement it is to kill the French. Here's half a dollar I gave for the soul of a cuirassier that I kilt yesterday, and nearly twice as much for an artilleryman I cut down at the guns; and because the villain swore like a heythen, Father Pedro told me he'd cost more nor if he died like a decent man."

At these words he turned suddenly round toward the Virgin, and crossing himself devoutly, added,

"And sure it's yourself knows if it's fair to make me pay for devils that don't know their duties; and, after all, if you don't understand English nor Irish, I've been wasting my time here this two hours."

"I say, Mike, how's the Major? How's Major O'Shaughnessy?"

"Charmingly, sir. It was only loss of blood that ailed him. A thief with a pike—one of the chaps they call Poles, bekase of the long sticks they carry with them—stuck the Major in the ribs; but Doctor Quill—God reward him! he's a great doctor, and a funny divil too—he cured him in no time."

"And where is he now, Mike?"

"Just convanient, in a small chapel off the sacristy; and throuble enough we have to keep him quiet. He gave up the *confusion* of roses, and took to punch; and faith, it isn't hymns nor paslams [psalms] he's singing all night. And they had me there, mixing materials and singing songs, till I heard the bell for matins; and, what between the punch and the prayers, I never closed my eyes."

"What did they call this convent?"

"It is a hard word, I misremember. It's something like saltpeter. But how's your honor? it's time to ask."

"Much better, Mike; much better. But, as I see that either your drink or your devotion seems to have affected your nerves, you'd better lie down for an hour or two. I shall not want you."

"That's just what I can't; for you see I'm making a song for this evening. The Rangers has a little supper, and I'm to be there: and, though I've made one, I'm not sure it'll do. Maybe your honor would give me your opinion about it?"

"With all my heart, Mike: let's hear it."

"Arrah! is it here, before the Virgin and the two blessed saints that's up there in the glass cases? But sure, when they make an hospital of the place, and after the Major's songs last night—"

"Exactly so, Mike: out with it."

"Well, ma'am," said he, turning toward the Virgin, "as I suspect you don't know English, maybe you'll think it's my offices I'm singing. So, saving your favor, here it is."

MR. FREE'S SONG.

Air—"Arrah, Catty, now, can't you be asy?"

"Oh what stories I'll tell when my sodgering's o'er
And the gallant Fourteenth is disbanded,
Not a drill nor parade will I hear of no more,
When safely in Ireland landed.
With the blood that I spilt—the Frenchmen I kilt,
I'll drive the young girls half crazy;
And some 'cute one will cry, with a wink of her eye,
'Mister Free, now—*why can't you be asy?*'

"I'll tell how we routed the squadrons in fight,
And destroyed them all at 'Talavera,'
And then I'll just add how we finished the night,
In learning to dance the 'bolera;'
How by the moonshine we drank raal wine,
And rose next day fresh as a daisy;
Then some one will cry, with a look mighty sly,
'Arrah, Mickey—*now can't you be asy?*'

"I'll tell how the nights with Sir Arthur we spent,
Around a big fire in the air too,
Or maybe enjoying ourselves in a tent,
Exactly like Donnybrook fair too,
How he'd call out to me—'Pass the wine, Mr. Free,
For you're a man never is lasy!'
Then some one will cry, with a wink of her eye,
'Arrah, Mickey dear,—*can't you be asy?*'

"I'll tell, too, the long years in fighting we passed,
Till Mounseer asked Bony to lead him;
And Sir Arthur, grown tired of glory at last,
Begged of one Mickey Free to succeed him.
'But, acushla,' says I, 'the truth is I'm shy!
There's a lady in Ballymacrazy!
And I swore on the book—' He gave me a look,
And cried, 'Mickey—*now can't you be asy?*'"

"Arrah! Mickey, now can't you be *asy?*" sang out a voice in chorus, and the next moment Dr. Quill himself made his appearance.

"Well, O'Malley, is it a penitential psalm you're singing, or is my friend Mike endeavoring to raise your spirits with a Galway sonata?"

"A little bit of his own muse, Doctor, nothing more; but, tell me, how goes it with the Major—is the poor fellow out of danger?"

"Except from the excess of his appetite, I know of no risk he runs. His servant is making gruel for him all day in a thing like the grog-tub of a frigate. But you've heard the news—Sparks has been exchanged; he came here last night; but the moment he caught sight sight of me, he took his departure. Begad! I'm sure he'd rather pass a month in Verdun than a week in my company."

"By-the-by, Doctor, you never told me how this same antipathy of Sparks for you had its origin."

"Sure I drove him out of the Tenth, before he was three weeks with the regiment."

"Ay, I remember; you began the story for me one night on the retreat from the Coa, but something broke it off in the middle."

"Just so; I was sent for to the rear to take off some gentlemen's legs that weren't in dancing condition; but, as there's no fear of interruption now, I'll finish the story. But, first, let us have a peep at the wounded. What beautiful anatomists they are in the French artillery! Do you feel the thing I have now in my forceps?—there, don't jump—that's a bit of the brachial nerve, most beautifully displayed;—faith, I think I'll give Mike a demonstration."

"Oh! Mister Quill dear! Oh! Doctor darling!—"

"Arrah! Mickey, now can't ye be asy?" sang out Maurice, with a perfect imitation of Mike's voice and manner.

"A little lint here—bend your arm—that's it—don't move your fingers. Now, Mickey, make me a cup of coffee with a glass of brandy in it. And now, Charley, for Sparks. I believe I told you what kind of fellows the Tenth were—regular out-and-outers; we hadn't three men in the regiment that were not from the south of Ireland—the *bocca Corkana* on their lips, fun and devilment in their eyes, and more drollery and humbug in their hearts than in all the messes in the service put together. No man had any chance among them if he wasn't a real droll one; every man wrote his own songs, and sang them too; it was no small promotion could tempt a fellow to exchange out of the corps. You may think, then, what a prize your friend Sparks proved to us; we held a court-martial upon him the week after he joined; it was proved in evidence that he had never said a good thing in his life, and had about as much notion of a joke as a Cherokee has of the Court of Chancery; and as to singing, Lord bless you! he had a tune with wooden turns to it, it was most cruel to hear; and then the look of him—those eyes, like dropsical oysters, and the hair standing every way, like a field of insane flax, and the mouth, with a curl in it like the slit in the side of a fiddle. A pleasant fellow that for a mess that always boasted the best-looking chaps in the service.

"'What's to be done with him?' said the Major; 'Shall we tell him we are ordered to India, and terrify him about his liver?'

"'Or drill him into a hectic fever?'

"'Or drink him dry?'

"'Or get him into a fight, and wing him?'

"'Oh, no,' said I, 'leave him to me; we'll laugh him out of the corps.'

"'Yes, we'll leave him to you, Maurice,' said the rest.

"And that day week you might read in the *Gazette*,' Pierce Flynn O'Haygerty, to be Ensign, 10th Foot, *vice* Sparks, exchanged.'"

"But how was it done, Maurice? You haven't told me that."

"Nothing easier. I affected great intimacy with Sparks; bemoaned our hard fate, mutually, in being attached to such a regiment: 'A damnable corps this—low, vulgar fellows—practical jokes—not the kind of thing one expects in the army. But as for me, I've joined it partly from necessity. You, however, who might be in a crack regiment, I can't conceive your remaining in it.'

"'But why did you join, Doctor?' said he; 'what necessity could have induced you?'

"'Ah! my friend,' said I, '*that* is the secret—*that* is the hidden grief that must lie buried in my own bosom.'

"I saw that his curiosity was excited, and took every means to increase it further. At length, as if yielding to a sudden impulse of friendship, and having sworn him to secrecy, I took him aside, and began thus:

"'I may trust you, Sparks, I feel I may; and when I tell you that my honor, my reputation, my whole fortune is at stake, you will judge of the importance of the trust.'

"The goggle eyes rolled fearfully, and his features exhibited the most craving anxiety to hear my story.

"'You wish to know why I left the Fifty-sixth. Now I'll tell you; but mind, you're pledged, you're sworn, never to divulge it.'

"'Honor bright.'

"'There, that's enough; I'm satisfied. It was a slight infraction of the articles of war; a little breach of the rules and regulations of the service; a trifling misconception of the mess-code; they caught me one evening leaving the mess with—what do you think in my pocket? But you'll never tell! no, no, I know you'll not—eight forks and a gravy-spoon; silver forks every one of them. There now,' said I, grasping his hand, 'you have my secret; my fame and character are in your hands; for, you see, they made me quit the regiment—a man can't stay in a corps where he is laughed at.'

"Covering my face with my handkerchief, as if to conceal my shame, I turned away, and left Sparks to his meditations. That same evening we happened to have some strangers at mess; the bottle was passing freely round, and, as usual, the good spirits of the party at the top of their bent, when suddenly, from the lower end of the table, a voice was heard demanding, in tones of the most pompous importance, permission to address the president upon a topic where the honor of the whole regiment was concerned.

"'I rise, gentlemen,' said Mr. Sparks, 'with feelings the most painful; whatever may have been the laxity of habit and freedom of conversation habitual in this regiment, I never believed that so flagrant an instance as this morning came to my ears—'

"'Oh, murder!' said I. 'Oh, Sparks darling! sure you're not going to tell?'

"'Doctor Quill,' replied he, in an austere tone, 'it is impossible for me to conceal it.'

"'Oh, Sparks dear! will you betray me?'

"I gave him here a look of the most imploring entreaty, to which he replied by one of unflinching sternness.

"'I have made up my mind, sir,' continued he; 'it is possible the officers of this corps may look more leniently than I do upon this transaction; but know it they shall.'

"'Out with it, Sparks—tell it by all means!' cried a number of voices; for it was clear to every one, by this time, that he was involved in a hoax.

"Amid, therefore, a confused volley of entreaty on the one side, and my reiterated prayers for his silence, on the other, Sparks thus began:

"'Are you aware, gentlemen, why Dr. Quill left the Fifty-sixth?'

"'No, no, no!' rang from all sides; 'let's have it!'

"'No, sir!' said he, turning toward me, 'concealment is impossible: an officer detected with the mess-plate in his pocket—'

"They never let him finish, for a roar of laughter shook the table from one end to the other; while Sparks, horror-struck at the lack of feeling and propriety that could make men treat such a matter with ridicule, glared around him on every side.

"'Oh! Maurice, Maurice,' cried the Major, wiping his eyes, 'this is too bad—this is too bad!'

"'Gracious Heaven!' screamed Sparks, 'can you laugh at it?'

"'Laugh at it?' re-echoed the paymaster. 'God grant I only don't burst a blood-vessel!' And once more the sounds of merriment rang out anew, and lasted for several minutes.

"'Oh! Maurice Quill,' cried an old captain, 'you've been too heavy on the lad. Why, Sparks, man, he's been humbugging you.'

"Scarcely were the words spoken when he sprang from the room; the whole truth flashed at once upon his mind; in an instant he saw that he had exposed himself to the merciless ridicule of a mess-table, and that all peace for him, in that regiment at least, was over.

"We got a glorious fellow in exchange for him; and Sparks descended into a cavalry regiment—I ask your pardon, Charley—where, as you are well aware, sharp wit and quick intellect are by no means indispensable. There, now, don't be angry, or you'll do yourself harm. So good-by, for an hour or two."

CHAPTER C.

THE COUNT'S LETTER.

O'SHAUGHNESSY'S wound, like my own, was happily only formidable from the loss

of blood. The sabre or the lance are rarely, indeed, so death-dealing as the musket or the bayonet; and the murderous fire from a square of infantry is far more terrific in its consequences than the heaviest charge of a cavalry column. In a few weeks, therefore, we were once more about, and fit for duty; but, for the present, the campaign was ended. The rainy season, with its attendant train of sickness and sorrow, set in; the troops were cantoned along the line of the frontier, the infantry occupying the villages, and the cavalry being stationed wherever forage could be obtained.

The Fourteenth were posted at Avintas, but I saw little of them. I was continually employed upon the staff; and, as General Craufurd's activity suffered no diminution from the interruption of the campaign, rarely passed a day without eight or nine hours on horseback.

The preparations for the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo occupied our undivided attention. To the reduction of this fortress and of Badajos Lord Wellington looked as the most important objects, and prosecuted his plans with unremitting zeal. To my staff appointment I owed the opportunity of witnessing that stupendous feature of war, a siege; and as many of my friends formed part of the blockading force, I spent more than one night in the trenches. Indeed, except for this, the tiresome monotony of life was most irksome at this period. Day after day the incessant rain poured down; the supplies were bad, scanty, and irregular; the hospitals crowded with sick; field-sports impracticable; books there were none; and a dullness and spiritless depression prevailed on every side. Those who were actively engaged around Ciudad Rodrigo had, of course, the excitement and interest which the enterprise involved; but even there the works made slow progress; the breaching artillery was defective in every way; the rain undermined the faces of the bastions; the clayey soil sank beneath the weight of the heavy guns; and the storms of one night frequently destroyed more than a whole week's labor had effected.

Thus passed the dreary months along; the cheeriest and gayest amongst us broken in spirit, and subdued in heart, by the tedium of our life. The very news which reached us partook of the gloomy features of our prospects; we heard only of strong reinforcements marching to the support of the French in Estramadura; we were told that the Emperor, whose successes in Germany enabled him to turn his entire attention to the Spanish campaign, would himself be present in the coming spring, with overwhelming odds, and a firm determination to drive us from the Peninsula.

In that frame of mind which such gloomy and depressing prospects are well calculated to suggest, I was returning one night to my quarters at Mucia, when suddenly I beheld Mike galloping toward me with a large packet in his hand, which he held aloft to catch my attention. "Letters from England, sir," said he; "just arrived with the General's dispatches." I broke the envelope at once, which bore the War-office seal, and, as I did so, a perfect avalanche of letters fell at my feet. The first which caught my eye was an official intimation from the Horse Guards, that the Prince Regent had been graciously pleased to confirm my promotion to the troop, my commission to bear date from the appointment, etc., etc. I could not help feeling struck, as my eye ran rapidly across the lines, that, although the letter came from Sir George Dashwood's office, it contained not a word of congratulation nor remembrance on his part, but was couched in the usual cold and formal language of an official document. Impatient, however, to look over my other letters, I thought but little of this; so, throwing them hurriedly into my sabretasche, I cantered on to my quarters without delay. Once more alone in silence, I sat down to commune with my far-off friends, and yet, with all my anxiety to hear of home, passed several minutes in turning over the letters, guessing from whom they might have come, and picturing to myself their probable contents. "Ah! Frank Webber, I recognize your slap-dash, bold hand without the aid of the initials in the corner; and this—what can this be?—this queer, misshapen thing, representing nothing save the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid, and the address seemingly put on with a cat's-tail dipped in lampblack? Yes! true enough, it is from Mister Free himself. And what have we here? this queer, quaint hand, is no new acquaintance; how many a time have I looked upon it as the *ne plus ultra* of caligraphy! But here is one I'm not so sure of: who could have written this bolt-upright, old-fashioned superscription, not a letter of which seems on speaking terms with its neighbor?—the very O absolutely turns its back upon the M in O'Malley, and the final Y wags his tail with a kind of independent shake, as if he did not care a curse for his predecessors! And the seal, too—surely I know that griffin's head, and that stern motto, '*Non*

rogo sed capio.' To be sure, it is Billy Considine's, the Count himself. The very paper, yellow and time-stained, looks coeval with his youth, and I could even venture to wager that his sturdy pen was nibbed half a century since. I'll not look further among this confused mass of three-cornered billets, and long, treacherous-looking epistles, the very folding of which denote the dun. Here goes for the Count?" So saying to myself, I drew closer to the fire, and began the following epistle:

"O'Malley Castle, Nov. 8.

"DEAR CHARLEY,—Here we sit in the little parlor, with your last letter, the *Times*, and a big map before us, drinking your health, and wishing you a long career of the same glorious success you have hitherto enjoyed. Old as I am—eighty-two or eighty-three (I forget which) in June—I envy you with all my heart. Luck has stood to you, my boy; and, if a French sabre or a bayonet finish you now, you've at least had a splendid burst of it. I was right in my opinion of you, and Godfrey himself owns it now;—a lawyer, indeed! Bad luck to them! we've had enough of lawyers. There's old Hennesy—honest Jack, as they used to call him—that your uncle trusted for the last forty years, has raised eighteen thousand pounds on the title-deeds and gone off to America. The old scoundrel! But it's no use talking: the blow is a sore one to Godfrey, and the gout more troublesome than ever. Drumgold is making a motion in Chancery about it, to break the sale, and the tenants are in open rebellion, and swear they'll murther a receiver, if one is sent down among them. Indeed, they came in such force into Galway during the assizes, and did so much mischief, that the cases for trial were adjourned, and the judges left, with a military escort to protect them. This, of course, is gratifying to our feelings; for, thank Providence, there is some good in the world yet. Kilmurry was sold last week for twelve thousand. Andy Blake would foreclose the mortgage, although we offered him every kind of satisfaction. This has done Godfrey a deal of harm; and some pitiful economy—taking only two bottles of claret after his dinner—has driven the gout to his head. They've been telling him he'd lengthen his days by this, and I tried it myself, and, faith, it was the longest day I ever spent in my life. I hope and trust you take your liquer like a gentleman—and an Irish gentleman.

"Kinshela, we hear, has issued an execution against the house and furniture; but the attempt to sell the demesne nearly killed your uncle. It was advertised in a London paper, and an offer made for it by an old general, whom you may remember when down here. Indeed, if I mistake not, he was rather kind to you in the beginning. It would appear he did not wish to have his name known, but we found him out, and such a letter as we sent him! It's little liking he'll have to buy a Galway gentleman's estate over his head, that same Sir George Dashwood! Godfrey offered to meet him anywhere he pleased, and, if the doctor thought he could bear the sea voyage, he'd even go over to Holyhead; but the sneaking fellow sent an apologetic kind of a letter, with some humbug excuse about very different motives, etc. But we've done with him, and I think he with us."

When I had read thus far, I laid down the letter, unable to go on; the accumulated misfortunes of one I loved best in the world, following so fast one upon another, the insult, unprovoked, gratuitous insult, to him upon whom my hopes of future happiness so much depended, completely overwhelmed me. I tried to continue: alas! the catalogue of evils went on; each line bore testimony to some further wreck of fortune—some clearer evidence of a ruined house.

All that my gloomiest and darkest forebodings had pictured was come to pass; sickness, poverty, harassing, unfeeling creditors, treachery, and ingratitude, were goading to madness and despair a spirit whose kindliness of nature was unequaled. The shock of blasted fortunes was falling upon the dying heart; the convictions which a long life had never brought home, that men were false, and their words a lie, were stealing over the man, upon the brink of the grave; and he who had loved his neighbor like a brother was to be taught, at the eleventh hour, that the beings he trusted were perjured and forsworn.

A more unsuitable adviser than Considine, in difficulties like these, there could not be; his very contempt for all the forms of law and justice was sufficient to embroil my poor uncle still further, so that I resolved at once to apply for leave, and, if refused, and no other alternative offered, to leave the service. It was not without a sense of sorrow, bordering on despair, that I came to this determination. My soldier's life had become a passion with me; I loved it for its bold and chivalrous enthusiasm; its hour of battle and strife; its days of endurance and hardship; its trials, its triumphs,—its very reverses were endeared

by those they were shared with,—and the spirit of adventure, and the love of danger —that most exciting of all gambling—had now entwined themselves in my very nature. To surrender all these at once, and to exchange the daily, hourly enthusiasm of a campaign for the prospects now before me, was almost maddening! But still, a sustaining sense of duty of what I owed to him who, in his love, had sacrificed all for me, overpowered every other consideration. My mind was made up.

Father Rush's letter was little more than a recapitulation of the Count's. Debt, distress, sickness, and the heart-burnings of altered fortunes filled it, and, when I closed it, I felt like one over all whose views in life a dark and ill-omened cloud was closing for ever. Webber's I could not read; the light and cheerful raillery of a friend would have seemed, at such a time, like the cold, unfeeling sarcasm of an enemy. I sat down, at last, to write to the General, inclosing my application for leave, and begging of him to forward it, with a favorable recommendation, to head-quarters.

This done, I lay down upon my bed, and, overcome by fatigue and fretting, fell asleep to dream of my home and those I had left there, which, strangely, too, were presented to my mind with all the happy features that made them so dear to my infancy.

CHAPTER CI

THE TRENCHES.

"I HAVE not had time, O'Malley, to think of your application," said Craufurd, "nor is it likely I can, for a day or two. Read that." So saying, he pushed toward me a note, written in pencil, which ran thus:

"Ciudad Rodrigo, Dec. 18.

DEAR C.,—Fletcher tells me that the breaches will be practicable by to-morrow evening, and I think so myself. Come over, then, at once, for we shall not lose any time. Yours,

"W."

"I have some dispatches for your regiment, but if you prefer coming along with me—"

"My dear General, dare I ask for such a favor?"

"Well, come along; only remember that, although my division will be engaged, I cannot promise you anything to do; so now, get your horses ready; let's away."

It was in the afternoon of the following day that we rode into the large plain before Ciudad Rodrigo, and in which the allied armies were now assembled to the number of twelve thousand men. The loud booming of the siege artillery had been heard by me for some hours before; but notwithstanding this prelude and my own high-wrought expectations, I was far from anticipating the magnificent spectacle which burst upon my astonished view. The air was calm and still; a clear blue wintry sky stretched overhead, but, below, the dense blue smoke of the deafening guns rolled in mighty volumes along the earth, and entirely concealed the lower part of the fortress; above this the tall towers and battlemented parapets rose into the thin transparent sky like fairy palaces. A bright flash of flame would now and then burst forth from the walls, and a clanging crash of the brass metal be heard; but the unceasing roll of our artillery nearly drowned all other sounds, save when a loud cheer would burst from the trenches; while the clattering fall of masonry, and the crumbling stones as they rolled down, bespoke the reason of the cry. The utmost activity prevailed on all sides; troops pressed forward to the reliefs in the parallels; ammunition wagons moved to the front; general and staff officers rode furiously about the plain; and all betokened that the hour of attack was no longer far distant.

While all parties were anxiously awaiting the decision of our chief, the general order was made known, which, after briefly detailing the necessary arrangements, concluded with the emphatic words, "Ciudad Rodrigo *must* be stormed to-night." All speculation as to the troops to be engaged in this daring enterprise was soon at an end; for, with his characteristic sense of duty, Lord Wellington made no invidious selection, but merely commanded that the attack should be made by whatever divisions might chance to be that day in the trenches. Upon the third and light divisions, therefore, this glorious task devolved. The former was to attack the main breach; to Craufurd's division was assigned the, if possible, more difficult enterprise of carrying the lesser one; while Pack's Portuguese brigade were to menace the convent of La Caridad by a feint attack, to be converted into a real one, if circumstances should permit.

The decision, however matured and comprehensive in all its details, was finally adopted so suddenly that every staff officer upon the ground was actively engaged during the entire evening in conveying the

orders to the different regiments. As the day drew to a close, the cannonade slackened on either side, a solitary gun would be heard at intervals, and, in the calm stillness around, its booming thunder re-echoed along the valleys of the Sierra; but, as the moon rose and night set in, these were no longer heard, and a perfect stillness and tranquillity prevailed around. Even in the trenches, crowded with armed and anxious soldiers, not a whisper was heard; and, amid that mighty host which filled the plain, the tramp of a patrol could be distinctly noted, and the hoarse voice of the French sentry upon the walls, telling that all was well in Ciudad Rodrigo.

The massive fortress looming larger as its dark shadow stood out from the sky, was still as the grave; while in the greater breach a faint light was seen to twinkle for a moment, and then suddenly to disappear, leaving all gloomy and dark as before.

Having been sent with orders to the third division, of which the Eighty-eighth formed a part, I took the opportunity of finding out O'Shaughnessy, who was himself to lead an escalade party in M'Kinnon's brigade. He sprang toward me as I came forward, and, grasping my hand with a more than usual earnestness, called out, "The very man I wanted! Charley, my boy, do us a service now!"

Before I could reply, he continued in a lower tone, "A young fellow of ours, Harry Beauclerc, has been badly wounded in the trenches, but by some blunder his injury is reported as a slight one, and although the poor fellow can scarcely stand, he insists upon going with the stormers."

"Come here, Major! come here!" cried a voice at a little distance.

"Follow me, O'Malley," cried O'Shaughnessy, moving in the direction of the speaker.

By the light of a lantern we could descry two officers kneeling upon the ground; between them on the grass lay the figure of a third, upon whose features, as the pale light fell, the hand of death seemed rapidly stealing. A slight froth, tinged with blood, rested on his lip, and the florid blood, which stained the buff facing of his uniform, indicated that his wound was through the lungs.

"He has fainted," said one of the officers, in a low tone.

"Are you certain it is fainting?" said the other, in a still lower.

"You see how it is, Charley," said O'Shaughnessy; "this poor boy must be carried to the rear. Will you then, like a kind fellow, hasten back to Colonel Campbell and mention the fact. It will kill Beauclerc, should any doubt rest upon his conduct, if he ever recover this."

While he spoke, four soldiers of the regiment placed the wounded officer in a blanket. A long sigh escaped him, and he muttered a few broken words.

"Poor fellow! it's his mother he's talking of. He only joined a month since, and is a mere boy. Come, O'Malley, lose no time. By Jove! it is too late, there goes the first rocket for the columns to form. In ten minutes more the stormers must fall in."

"What's the matter, Giles?" said he to one of the officers who had stopped the soldiers as they were moving off with their burden; "what is it?"

"I have been cutting the white tape off his arm; for, if he sees it on waking, he'll remember all about the storming."

"Quite right—thoughtfully done!" said the other; "but who is to lead his fellows? He was in the forlorn hope."

"I'll do it," cried I, with eagerness. "Come, O'Shaughnessy, you'll not refuse me?"

"Refuse you, boy!" said he, grasping my hand within both of his, "never! But you must change your coat. The gallant Eighty-eighth will never mistake their countryman's voice. But your uniform would be devilish likely to get you a bayonet through it; so come back with me, and we'll make you a Ranger in no time."

"I can give your friend a cap."

"And I," said the other, "a brandy flask, which, after all, is not the worst part of a storming equipage."

"I hope," said O'Shaughnessy, "they may find Maurice in the rear. Beauclerc's all safe in his hands."

"That they'll not," said Giles, "you may swear. Quill is this moment in the trenches, and will not be the last man at the breach."

"Follow me now, lads," said O'Shaughnessy, in a low voice. "Our fellows are at the angle of this trench. Who the deuce can that be, talking so loud?"

"It must be Maurice," said Giles.

The question was soon decided by the Doctor himself, who appeared giving directions to his hospital-sergeant.

"Yes, Peter, take the tools up to a convenient spot near the breach. There's many a snug corner there in the ruins; and, although we mayn't have as good an operation-room as in old 'Steevens's,' yet we'll beat them hollow in cases."

"Listen to the fellow," said Giles, with a shudder. "The thought of his con-

founded thumbscrews and tourniquets is worse to me than a French howitzer."

"The devil a kinder-hearted fellow than Maurice," said O'Shaughnessy, "for all that; and if his heart was to be known this moment, he'd rather handle a sword than a saw."

"True for you, Dennis," said Quill, overhearing him; "but we are both useful in our way, as the hangman said to Lord Clare."

"But should you not be in the rear, Maurice?" said I.

"You are right, O'Malley," said he, in a whisper; "but, you see, I owe the Cork Insurance Company a spite for making me pay a gout premium, and that's the reason I'm here. I warned them at the time that their stinginess would come to no good."

"I say, Captain O'Malley," said Giles, "I find I can't be as good as my word with you; my servant has moved to the rear with all my traps."

"What is to be done?" said I.

"Is it shaving utensils you want?" said Maurice. "Would a scalpel serve your turn?"

"No, Doctor, I'm going to take a turn of duty with your fellows to-night."

"In the breach—with the stormers?"

"With the forlorn hope," said O'Shaughnessy. "Beauclerc is so badly wounded that we've sent him back; and Charley, like a good fellow, has taken his place."

"Martin told me," said Maurice, "that Beauclerc was only stunned; but, upon my conscience, the hospital-mates, now-a-days, are no better than the watchmakers; they can't tell what's wrong with the instrument till they pick it to pieces. Whiz! there goes a blue light."

"Move on, move on," whispered O'Shaughnessy; "they're telling off the stormers. That rocket is the order to fall in."

"But what am I to do for a coat?"

"Take mine, my boy," said Maurice, throwing off an upper garment of coarse gray frieze as he spoke.

"There's a neat bit of uniform," continued he, turning himself round for our admiration; "don't I look mighty like the pictures of George the First at the battle of Dettingen?"

A burst of approving laughter was our only answer to this speech, while Maurice proceed to denude himself of his most extraordinary garment.

"What, in the name of Heaven, is it?" said I.

"Don't despise it, Charley; it knows the smell of gunpowder as well as any bit of scarlet in the service;" while he added, in a whisper, "it's the ould Roscommon Yeomanry. My uncle commanded them in the year '42, and this was his coat. I don't mean to say that it was new then; for you see it's a kind of heirloom in the Quill family; and it's not every one I'd be giving it to."

"A thousand thanks, Maurice," said I, as I buttoned it on, amid an ill-suppressed titter of laughter.

"It fits you like a senty-box," said Maurice, as he surveyed me with a lantern. "The skirts separate behind in the most picturesque manner; and when you button the collar, it will keep your head up so high, that the devil a bit you'll see except the blessed moon. It's a thousand pities you haven't the three-cocked hat, with the feather trimming. If you wouldn't frighten the French, my name's not Maurice. Turn about hero till I admire you. If you only saw yourself in a glass, you'd never join the dragoons again. And look now, don't be exposing yourself, for I wouldn't have those blue facings destroyed for a week's pay."

"Ah then, it's yourself is the darling, Doctor dear!" said a voice behind me. I turned round: it was Mickey Free, who was standing with a most profound admiration of Maurice beaming in every feature of his face. "It's yourself has a joke for every hour o' the day."

"Get to the rear, Mike—get to the rear with the cattle; this is no place for you or them."

"Good-night, Mickey," said Maurice.

"Good-night, your honor," muttered Mike to himself; "may I never die till you set a leg for me."

"Are you dressed for the ball?" said Maurice, fastening the white tape upon my arm. "There now, my boy, move on, for I think I hear Picton's voice; not that it signifies now, for he's always in a heavenly temper when any one's going to be killed. I'm sure he'd behave like an angel, if he only knew the ground was mined under his feet."

"Charley—Charley!" called out O'Shaughnessy, in a suppressed voice, "come up quickly."

"No. 24, John Forbes—here! Edward Gillespie—here!"

"Who leads this party, Major O'Shaughnessy?"

"Mr. Beauclerc, sir," replied O'Shaughnessy, pushing me forward by the arm while he spoke.

"Keep your people together, sir; spare the powder, and trust to your cold iron."

He grasped my hand within his iron grip, and rode on.

"Who was it, Dennis?" said I.

"Don't you know him, Charley? That was Picton."

CHAPTER CII.

THE STORMING OF CIUDAD RODRIGO.

WHATEVER the levity of the previous moment, the scene before us now repressed it effectually. The deep-toned bell of the cathedral tolled seven, and scarcely were its notes dying away in the distance, when the march of the columns was heard stealing along the ground. A low murmuring whisper ran along the advanced files of the forlorn hope; stocks were loosened, packs and knapsacks thrown to the ground; each man pressed his cap more firmly down upon his brow, and, with lip compressed and steadfast eye, waited for the word to move.

It came at last: the word "March!" passed in whispers from rank to rank, and the dark mass moved on. What a moment was that, as we advanced to the foot of the breach! The consciousness that, at the same instant, from different points of that vast plain, similar parties were moving on; the feeling that, at a word, the flame of the artillery and the flash of steel would spring from that dense cloud, and death and carnage, in every shape our imagination can conceive, be dealt on all sides; the hurried, fitful thought of home; the years long past, compressed into one minute's space; the last adieu of all we've loved, mingling with the muttered prayer to Heaven, while, high above all, the deep pervading sense that earth has no temptation strong enough to turn us from that path whose ending must be a sepulcher!

Each heart was too full for words. We followed noiselessly along the turf, the dark figure of our leader guiding us through the gloom. On arriving at the ditch, the party with the ladders moved to the front. Already some hay-packs were thrown in, and the forlorn hope sprang forward.

All was still and silent as the grave. "Quietly, my men—quietly!" said M'Kinnon; "don't press." Scarcely had he spoken when a musket, whose charge, contrary to orders, had not been drawn, went off. The whizzing bullet could not have struck the wall when suddenly a bright flame burst forth from the ramparts, and *shot* upward toward the sky. For an instant the whole scene before us was bright as noonday. On one side the dark ranks and glistening bayonets of the enemy; on the other, the red uniform of the British columns: compressed like some solid wall, they stretched along the plain.

A deafening roll of musketry from the extreme right announced that the third division was already in action, while the loud cry of our leader, as he sprang into the trench, summoned us to the charge. The leading sections, not waiting for the ladders, jumped down, others pressing rapidly behind them, when a loud, rumbling thunder crept along the earth, a hissing, crackling noise followed, and from the dark ditch a forked and livid lightning burst like the flame from a volcano, and a mine exploded. Hundreds of shells and grenades scattered along the ground were ignited at the same moment; the air sparkled with the whizzing fuses, the musketry plied incessantly from the walls, and every man of the leading company of the stormers was blown to pieces. While this dreadful catastrophe was enacting before our eyes, the different assaults were made on all sides; the whole fortress seemed girt around with fire. From every part arose the yells of triumph and the shouts of the assailants. As for us, we stood upon the verge of the ditch, breathless, hesitating, and horror-struck. A sudden darkness succeeded to the bright glare, but from the midst of the gloom the agonizing cries of the wounded and the dying rent our very hearts.

"Make way there! make way! here comes Mackie's party," cried an officer in the front, and as he spoke the forlorn hope of the Eighty-eighth came forward at a run; jumping recklessly into the ditch, they made toward the breach; the supporting division of stormers gave one inspiring cheer, and sprang after them. The rush was tremendous; for scarcely had we reached the crumbling ruins of the rampart, when the vast column, pressing on like some mighty torrent, bore down upon our rear. Now commenced a scene to which nothing I ever before conceived of war could in any degree compare: the whole ground, covered with combustibles of every deadly and destructive contrivance, was rent open with a crash; the huge masses of masonry bounded into the air like things of no weight; the ringing clangor of the iron howitzers, the crackling of the fuses, the blazing splinters, the shouts of defiance, the more than savage yell of those in whose ranks alone the dead and the dying were numbered, made

up a mass of sights and sounds almost maddening with their excitement. On we struggled; the mutilated bodies of the leading files almost filling the way.

By this time the third division had joined us, and the crush of our thickening ranks was dreadful; every moment some well-known leader fell dead or mortally wounded, and his place was supplied by some gallant fellow, who, springing from the leading files, would scarcely have uttered his cheer of encouragement, ere he himself was laid low. Many a voice, with whose notes I was familiar, would break upon my ear in tones of heroic daring, and the next moment burst forth in a death-cry. For above an hour the frightful carnage continued, fresh troops continually advancing, but scarcely a foot of ground was made; the earth belched forth its volcanic fires, and that terrible barrier did no man pass. In turn the bravest and the boldest would leap into the whizzing flame, and the taunting cheers of the enemy triumphed in derision at the effort.

"Stormers, to the front! only the bayonet! trust to nothing but the bayonet!" cried a voice, whose almost cheerful accents contrasted strangely with the death-notes around, and Gurwood, who led the forlorn hope of the Fifty-second, bounded into the chasm; all the officers sprang simultaneously after him: the men pressed madly on; a roll of withering musketry crashed upon them; a furious shout replied to it. The British, springing over the dead and dying, bounded like blood-hounds on their prey. Meanwhile, the ramparts trembled beneath the tramp of the light division, who, having forced the lesser breach, came down upon the flank of the French. The garrison, however, thickened their numbers, and bravely held their ground. Man to man now was the combat. No cry for quarter. No supplicating look for mercy; it was the death-struggle of vengeance and despair. At this instant, an explosion louder than the loudest thunder shook the air; the rent and torn up ramparts sprang into the sky; the conquering and the conquered were alike the victims; for one of the greatest magazines had been ignited by a shell; the black smoke, streaked with a lurid flame, hung above the dead and the dying. The artillery and the murderous musketry were stilled, paralyzed, as it were, by the ruin and devastation before them: both sides stood leaning upon their arms; the pause was but momentary; the cries of wounded comrades called upon their hearts. A fierce burst of vengeance rent the air; the British closed upon the foe; for one instant they were met; the next, the bayonets gleamed upon the ramparts, and Ciudad Rodrigo was won.

CHAPTER CIII.

THE RAMPART.

WHILE such were the scenes passing around me, of my own part in them I absolutely knew nothing; for, until the moment that the glancing bayonets of the light division came rushing on the foe, and the loud, long cheer of victory burst above us, I felt like one in a trance. Then I leaned against an angle of the rampart, overpowered and exhausted; a bayonet wound, which some soldier of our own ranks had given me when mounting the breach, pained me somewhat; my uniform was actually torn to rags; my head bare: of my sword, the hilt and four inches of the blade alone remained, while my left hand firmly grasped the rammer of a cannon, but why or wherefore I could not even guess. As thus I stood, the unceasing tide of soldiery pressed on; fresh divisions came pouring in, eager for plunder, and thirsting for the spoil. The dead and the dying were alike trampled beneath the feet of that remorseless mass, who, actuated by vengeance and by rapine, sprang fiercely up the breach.

Weak and exhausted, faint from my wound, and overcome by my exertions, I sank among the crumbling ruin. The loud shouts which rose from the town, mingled with cries and screams, told the work of pillage was begun; while still a dropping musketry could be heard on the distant rampart, where even yet the French made resistance. At last even this was hushed, but to it succeeded the far more horrifying sounds of rapine and of murder; the forked flames of burning houses rose here and there amid the black darkness of the night; and through the crackling of the timbers, and the falling crash of roofs, the heart-rending shriek of women rent the very air. Officers pressed forward, but in vain were their efforts to restrain their men—the savage cruelty of the moment knew no bounds of restraint. More than one gallant fellow perished in his fruitless endeavor to enforce obedience; and the most awful denunciations were now uttered against those before whom, at any other time, they dared not mutter.

Thus passed the long night, far more

terrible to me than all the dangers of the storm itself, with all its death and destruction dealing around it. I know not if I slept: if so, the horrors on every side were pictured in my dreams; and, when the gray dawn was breaking, the cries from the doomed city were still ringing in my ears. Close around me the scene was still and silent; the wounded had been removed during the night, but the thickly-packed dead lay side by side where they fell. It was a fearful sight to see them as, blood-stained and naked (for already the camp-followers had stripped the bodies), they covered the entire breach. From the rampart to the ditch, the ranks lay where they had stood in life. A faint phosphoric flame flickered above their ghastly corpses, making even death still more horrible. I was gazing steadfastly, with all that stupid intensity which imperfect senses and exhausted faculties possess, when the sound of voices near aroused me.

"Bring him along—this way, Bob. Over the breach with the scoundrel, into the fosse."

"He shall die no soldier's death, by Heaven!" cried another and a deeper voice, "if I lay his skull open with my axe."

"Oh, mercy, mercy! as you hope for—"

"Traitor! don't dare to mutter here!" As the last words were spoken, four infantry soldiers, reeling from drunkenness, dragged forward a pale and haggard wretch, whose limbs trailed behind him like those of palsy; his uniform was that of a French chasseur, but his voice bespoke him English.

"Kneel down there, and die like a man! You were one once!"

"Not so, Bill: never. Fix bayonets, boys! That's right! Now take the word from me."

"Oh, forgive me! for the love of Heaven, forgive me!" screamed the voice of the victim; but his last accents ended in a death-cry, for, as he spoke, the bayonets flashed for an instant in the air, and the next were plunged into his body. Twice I had essayed to speak, but my voice, hoarse from shouting, came not; and I could but look upon this terrible murder with staring eyes and burning brain. At last speech came, as if wrested by the very excess of my agony, and I muttered aloud, "O God!" The words were not well spoken, when the muskets were brought to the shoulders, and, reeking with the blood of the murdered man, their savage faces scowled at me as I lay.

A short and heartfelt prayer burst from my lips, and I was still. The leader of the party called out, "Be steady! and together. One, two! Ground arms, boys! Ground arms!" roared he, in a voice of thunder; "it's the Captain himself!" Down went the muskets with a crash; while, springing toward me, the fellows caught me in their arms, and with one jerk mounted me upon their shoulders, the cheer that accompanied the sudden movement seeming like the yell of maniacs. "Ha, ha, ha! we have him now!" sang their wild voices, as, with blood-stained hands and infuriated features, they bore me down the rampart. My sensations of disgust and repugnance to the party seemed at once to have evidenced themselves, for the corporal, turning abruptly round, called out,

"Don't pity *him*, Captain; the scoundrel was a deserter; he escaped from the picket two nights ago, and gave information of all our plans to the enemy."

"Ay," cried another, "and, what's worse, he fired through an embrasure near the breach, for two hours, upon his own regiment. It was there we found him. This way, lads."

So saying, they turned short from the walls, and dashed down a dark and narrow lane into the town. My struggles to get free were perfectly ineffectual, and to my entreaties they were totally indifferent.

In this way, therefore, we made our entrance into the Plaza, where some hundred soldiers, of different regiments, were bivouacked. A shout of recognition welcomed the fellows as they came; while, suddenly, a party of Eighty-eighth men, springing from the ground, rushed forward with drawn bayonets, calling out, "Give him up this minute, or, by the Father of Moses, we'll make short work of ye!"

The order was made by men who seemed well disposed to execute it; and I was accordingly grounded with a shock and a rapidity that savored much more of ready compliance than any respect for my individual comfort. A roar of laughter rang through the motley mass, and every powder-stained face around me seemed convulsed with merriment. As I sat passively upon the ground, looking ruefully about, whether my gestures or my words heightened the absurdity of my appearance, it is hard to say; but certainly the laughter increased at each moment, and the drunken wretches danced round me in ecstasy.

"Where is your Major? Major O'Shaughnessy, lads?" said I.

"He's in the church, with the General, your honor," said the sergeant of the regiment; upon whom the mention of his

officer's name seemed at once to have a sobering influence. Assisting me to rise (for I was weak as a child), he led me through the dense crowd, who, such is the influence of example, now formed into line, and, as well as their state permitted, gave me a military salute as I passed.

"Follow me, sir," said the sergeant; "this little dark street to the left will take us to the private door of the chapel."

"Wherefore are they there, sergeant?"

"There's a general of division mortally wounded."

"You did not hear his name?"

"No, sir. All I know is, he was one of the storming party at the lesser breach."

A cold, sickening shudder came over me; I durst not ask further, but pressed on with anxious steps toward the chapel.

"There, sir, yonder, where you see the light. That's the door."

So saying, the sergeant stopped suddenly, and placed his hand to his cap. I saw at once that he was sufficiently aware of his condition not to desire to appear before his officers; so, hurriedly thanking him, I walked forward.

"Halt, there! and give the countersign," cried a sentinel, who with fixed bayonet stood before the door.

"I am an officer," said I, endeavoring to pass in.

"Stand back, stand back!" said the harsh voice of the Highlander, for such he was.

"Is Major O'Shaughnessy in the church?"

"I dinna ken," was the short, rough answer.

"Who is the officer so badly wounded?"

"I dinna ken," repeated he, as gruffly as before; while he added, in a louder key, "Stand back, I tell ye, man! Dinna ye see the staff coming?"

I turned round hastily, and at the same instant several officers, who apparently from precaution had dismounted at the end of the street, were seen approaching. They came hurriedly forward, but without speaking. He who was in advance of the party wore a short, blue cape, over an undress uniform. The rest were in full regimentals. I had scarcely time to throw a passing glance upon him, when the officer I have mentioned as coming first, called out in a stern voice,

"Who are you, sir?"

I started at the sounds: it was not the first time those accents had been heard by me.

"Captain O'Malley, Fourteenth Light Dragoons."

"What brings you here, sir? Your regiment is at Caya."

"I have been employed as acting aide-de-camp to General Craufurd," said I, hesitatingly.

"Is that your staff uniform?" said he, as with compressed brow and stern look he fixed his eyes upon my coat. Before I had time to reply, or, indeed, before I well knew how to do so, a gruff voice from behind called out,

"Damn me! if that ain't the fellow that led the stormers through a broken embrasure! I say, my Lord, that's the yeoman I was telling you of. Is it not so, sir?" continued he, turning toward me.

"Yes, sir. I led a party of the Eighty-eighth at the breach."

"And devilish well you did it, too!" added Picton, for it was he who recognized me. "I saw him, my Lord, spring down from the parapet upon a French gunner, and break his sword as he cleft his helmet in two. Yes, yes; I shall not forget in a hurry how you laid about you with the rammer of the gun! By Jove! that's it he has in his hand!"

While Picton ran thus hurriedly on, Lord Wellington's calm but stern features never changed their expression. The looks of those around were bent upon me with interest and even admiration; but his evinced nothing of either.

Reverting at once to my absence from my post, he asked me,

"Did you obtain leave for a particular service, sir?"

"No, my Lord. It was simply from an accidental circumstance that—"

"Then, report yourself at your quarters as under arrest."

"But, my Lord—" said Picton. Lord Wellington waited not for the explanation, but walked firmly forward, and strode into the church. The staff followed in silence, Picton turning one look of kindness on me as he went, as though to say, "I'll not forget you."

"The devil take it," cried I, as I found myself once more alone, "but I'm unlucky. What would turn out with other men the very basis of their fortune, is ever with me the source of ill luck."

It was evident, from Picton's account, that I had distinguished myself in the breach; and yet, nothing was more clear than that my conduct had displeased the Commander-in-Chief. Picturing him ever to my mind's eye as the *beau idéal* of a military leader, by some fatality of fortune I was continually incurring his displeasure, for whose praise I would have risked my

life. "And this confounded costume—what, in the name of every absurdity, could have ever persuaded me to put it on? What signifies it, though a man should cover himself with glory, if in the end he is to be laughed at? Well, well, it matters not much; now my soldiering's over! And yet I could have wished that the last act of my campaigning had brought with it pleasanter recollections."

As thus I ruminated, the click of the soldier's musket near aroused me: Picton was passing out. A shade of gloom and depression was visible upon his features, and his lip trembled as he muttered some sentences to himself.

"Ha! Captain—I forget the name. Yes—Captain O'Malley; you are released from arrest. General Craufurd has spoken very well of you, and Lord Wellington has heard the circumstances of your case."

"Is it General Craufurd, then, that is wounded, sir?" said I, eagerly.

Picton paused for a moment, while with an effort he controlled his features into their stern and impassive expression, then added hurriedly and almost harshly:

"Yes, sir; badly wounded, through the arm, and in the lung. He mentioned you to the notice of the Commander-in-Chief, and your application for leave is granted. In fact, you are to have the distinguished honor of carrying back dispatches. There, now; you had better join your brigade."

"Could I not see my General once more? It may be for the last time."

"No, sir!" sternly replied Picton. "Lord Wellington believes you under arrest. It is as well he should suppose you obeyed his orders."

There was a tone of sarcasm in these words that prevented my reply; and, muttering my gratitude for his well-timed and kindly interference in my behalf, I bowed deeply, and turned away.

"I say, sir," said Picton, as he returned toward the church, "should anything befall—that is, if, unfortunately, circumstances should make you in want and desirous of a staff appointment, remember that you are known to General Picton."

Downcast and depressed by the news of my poor General, I wended my way, with slow and uncertain steps, toward the rampart. A clear, cold, wintry sky, and a sharp, bracing air, made my wound, slight as it was, more painful, and I endeavored to reach the reserves, where I knew the hospital-staff had established, for the present, their quarters. I had not gone far when, from a marauding party, I learned that my man, Mike, was in search of me through the plain. A report of my death had reached him, and the poor fellow was half distracted.

Longing anxiously to allay his fears on my account, which I well knew might lead him into any act of folly or insanity, I pressed forward; besides—shall I confess it?—amid the manifold thoughts of sorrow and affliction which weighed me down, I could not divest myself of the feeling that, so long as I wore my present absurd costume, I could be nothing but an object of laughter and ridicule to all who met me.

I had not long to look for my worthy follower, for I soon beheld him cantering about the plain. A loud shout brought him beside me; and truly the poor fellow's delight was great and sincere. With a thousand protestations of his satisfaction, and reiterated assurances of what he would not have done to the French prisoners if anything had happened me, we took our way together toward the camp.

CHAPTER CIV.

THE DISPATCH.

I WAS preparing to visit the town on the following morning, when my attention was attracted by a dialogue which took place beneath my window.

"I say, my good friend," cried a mounted orderly to Mike, who was busily employed in brushing a jacket—"I say, are you Captain O'Malley's man?"

"The least taste in life o' that same," replied he, with a half jocular expression.

"Well, then," said the other, "take up these letters to your master. Be alive, my fine fellow, for they are dispatches, and I must have a written return for them."

"Won't ye get off, and take a drop of somethin' refreshin'; the air is cowld this morning."

"I can't stay, my good friend, but thank you all the same: so be alive, will you!"

"Arrah! there's no hurry in life. Sure, it's an invitation to dinner to Lord Wellington, or a tea-party at Sir Denny's; sure, my master's bothered with them every day o' th' week; that's the misfortune of being an agreeable creature; and I'd be led into dissipation myself, if I wasn't rear'd prudent."

"Well, come along, take these letters, for I must be off; my time is short."

"That's more nor your nose is, honey," said Mike, evidently piqued at the little

effect his advances had produced upon the Englishman. "Give them here," continued he, while he turned the various papers in every direction, affecting to read their addresses.

"There's nothing for me here, I see. Did none of the generals ask after me?"

"You *are* a queer one!" said the dragoon, not a little puzzled what to make of him.

Mike meanwhile thrust the papers carelessly into his pocket, and strode into the house, whistling a quick-step as he went, with the air of a man perfectly devoid of care or occupation. The next moment, however, he appeared at my door, wiping his forehead with the back of his hand, and apparently breathless with haste.

"Dispatches, Mister Charles—dispatches from Lord Wellington. The orderly is waiting below for a return."

"Tell him he shall have it in one moment," replied I. "And now bring me a light."

Before I had broken the seal of the envelope, Mike was once more at the porch.

"My master is writing a few lines to say he'll do it. Don't be talking of it," added he, dropping his voice, "but they want him to take another fortress."

What turn the dialogue subsequently took, I cannot say, for I was entirely occupied by a letter which accompanied the dispatches. It ran as follows:

"DEAR SIR,—The Commander-in-Chief has been kind enough to accord you the leave of absence you applied for, and takes the opportunity of your return to England to send you the accompanying letters for his Royal Highness the Duke of York. To his approval of your conduct in the assault last night you owe this distinguished mark of Lord Wellington's favor, which, I hope, will be duly appreciated by you, and serve to increase your zeal for that service in which you have already distinguished yourself.

"Believe me that I am most happy in being made the medium of this communication, and have the honor to be,

"Very truly yours,
"T. PICTON.

"Quarter-General,
"Ciudad Rodrigo, Jan. 20, 1812."

I read and re-read this note again and again. Every line was conned over by me, and every phrase weighed and balanced in my mind. Nothing could be more gratifying, nothing more satisfactory to my feelings; and I would not have exchanged its possession for the brevet of a lieutenant-colonel.

"Halloo, orderly!" cried I, from the window, as I hurriedly sealed my few words of acknowledgment, "take this note back to General Picton, and here's a guinea for yourself." So saying, I pitched into his ready hand one of the very few which remained to me in the world. "This is, indeed, good news!" said I to myself; "this is, indeed, a moment of unmixed happiness!"

As I closed the window, I could hear Mike pronouncing a glowing eulogium upon my liberality, from which he could not, however, help in some degree detracting, as he added:

"But the devil thank him, after all! sure, it's himself has the illigant fortune and the fine place of it!"

Scarcely were the last sounds of the retiring horseman dying away in the distance, when Mike's meditations took another form, and he muttered between his teeth—"Oh! holy Agatha; a guinea, a raal gold guinea to a thief of a dragoon that come with the letter, and here am I wearing a picture of the holy family for a back to my waistcoat, all out of economy; and sure, God knows, but maybe they'll take their dealing trick out of me in purgatory for this hereafter; and faith, it's a beautiful pair of breeches I'd have had, if I wasn't ashamed to put the twelve apostles on my legs."

While Mike ran on at this rate, my eyes fell upon a few lines of postscript in Picton's letter, which I had not previously noticed.

"The official dispatches of the storming are of course intrusted to senior officers, but I need scarcely remind you, that it will be a polite and proper attention to his Royal Highness, to present your letters with as little delay as possible. Not a moment is to be lost on your landing in England."

"Mike!" cried I, "how look the cattle for a journey?"

"The chestnut is a little low in flesh, but in great wind, your honor; and the black horse is jumping like a filly."

"And Badger?" said I.

"Howld him, if you can, that's all; but it's murthering work this, carrying dispatches day after day."

"This time, however, Mike, we must not grumble."

"Maybe it isn't far?"

"Why, as to that, I shall not promise much. I'm bound for England, Mickey."

"For England!"

"Yes, Mike, and for Ireland."

"For Ireland! whoop!" shouted he, as he shied his cap into one corner of the room, the jacket he was brushing into the other, and began dancing round the table with no bad imitation of an Indian war dance.

"How I'll dance like a fairy,
To see could Dunleary,
And think twice ere I leave it to be a dragoon."

"Oh! blessed hour! isn't it beautiful to think of the illuminations, and dinners, and speeches, and shaking of hands, huzzaing, and hip, hipping. Maybe there won't be pictures of us in all the shops—Mister Charles and his man Mister Free. Maybe they won't make plays out of us; myself dressed in the gray coat with the red cuffs, the cords, the tops, and the Caroline hat a little cocked, with a phiz in the side of it." Here he made a sign with his expanded fingers to represent a cockade, which he designated by this word. "I think I see myself dining with the Corporation, and the Lord Mayor of Dublin getting up to propose the health of the hero of El Bodon, Mr. Free! and three times three, hurrah! hurrah! hurrah! Musha, but it's dry I am gettin' with the thoughts of the punch and the poteen negus."

"If you go on at this rate, we're not likely to be soon at our journey's end; so be alive now; pack up my kit; I shall start by twelve o'clock."

With one spring Mike cleared the stairs, and, overthrowing everything and everybody in his way, hurried toward the stable, chanting at the top of his voice the very poetical strain he had indulged me with a few minutes before.

My preparations were rapidly made: a few hurried lines of leave-taking to the good fellows I had lived so much with and felt so strongly attached to, with a firm assurance that I should join them again ere long, was all that my time permitted. To Power I wrote more at length, detailing the circumstances which my own letters informed me of, and also those which invited me to return home. This done, I lost not another moment, but set out upon my journey.

CHAPTER CV.

THE LEAVE.

After an hour's sharp riding we reached the Aguada, where the river was yet fordable; crossing this, we mounted the Sierra by a narrow and winding pass which leads through the mountains toward Almeida. Here I turned once more to cast a last and farewell look at the scene of our late encounter. It was but a few hours that I had stood almost on the same spot, and yet how altered was all around. The wide plain, then bustling with all the life and animation of a large army, was now nearly deserted; some dismounted guns, some broken up, dismantled batteries, around which a few sentinels seemed to loiter rather than to keep guard; a strong detachment of infantry could be seen wending their way toward the fortress, and a confused mass of camp-followers, sutlers, and peasants, following their steps for protection against the pillagers and the still ruder assaults of their own Guerillas. The fortress, too, was changed indeed. Those mighty walls before whose steep sides the bravest fell back baffled and beaten, were now a mass of ruin and decay: the muleteer could be seen driving his mule along through the rugged ascent of that breach, to win whose top the best blood of Albion's chivalry was shed; and the peasant child looked timidly from those dark inclosures in the deep fosse below, where perished hundreds of our best and bravest. The air was calm, clear, and unclouded; no smoke obscured the transparent atmosphere; the cannon had ceased; and the voices that rang so late in accents of triumphant victory were stilled in death. Everything, indeed, had undergone a mighty change; but nothing brought the altered fortunes of the scenes so vividly to my mind as when I remembered that when last I had seen those walls, the dark shako of the French grenadiers peered above their battlements, and now the gay tartan of the Highlander fluttered above them, and the red flag of England waved boldly in the breeze.

Up to that moment my sensations were those of unmixed pleasure: the thought of my home, my friends, my country, the feeling that I was returning with the bronze of the battle upon my cheek, and the voice of praise still ringing in my heart; these were proud thoughts, and my bosom heaved short and quickly, as I revolved them; but, as I turned my gaze for the last time toward the gallant army I was leaving, a pang of sorrow, of self-reproach, shot through me, and I could not help feeling how far less worthily was I acting in yielding to the impulse of my wishes, than had I remained to share the fortunes of the campaign.

So powerfully did these sensations pos-

sess me, that I sat motionless for some time, uncertain whether to proceed; forgetting that I was the bearer of important information, I only remembered that by my own desire I was there; my reason but half convinced me that the part I had adopted was right and honorable, and more than once my resolution to proceed hung in the balance. It was just at this critical moment of my doubts that Mike, who had been hitherto behind, came up.

"Is it the upper road, sir?" said he, pointing to a steep and rugged path which led by a zigzag ascent toward the crest of the mountain.

I nodded in reply, when he added:

"Doesn't this remind your honor of Sieibh More, above the Shannon, where we used to be grouse-shooting? And there's the keeper's house in the valley; and that might be your uncle, the master himself, waving his hat to you."

Had he known the state of my conflicting feelings at the moment, he could not more readily have decided this doubt. I turned abruptly away, put spurs to my horse, and dashed up the steep pass at a pace which evidently surprised, and as evidently displeased, my follower.

How natural it is ever to experience a reaction of depression and lowness after the first burst of unexpected joy! The moment of happiness is scarce experienced ere come the doubts of its reality, the fears for its continuance; the higher the state of pleasurable excitement, the more painful and the more pressing the anxieties that await on it; the tension of delighted feelings cannot last, and our overwrought faculties seek repose in regrets. Happy he who can so temper his enjoyments as to view them in their shadows as in their sunshine; he may not, it is true, behold the landscape in the blaze of its noonday brightness, but he need not fear the thunder-cloud nor the hurricane. The calm autumn of *his* bliss, if it dazzle not in its brilliancy, will not any more be shrouded in darkness and in gloom.

My first burst of pleasure over, the thought of my uncle's changed fortunes pressed deeply on my heart, and a hundred plans suggested themselves in turn to my mind to relieve his present embarrassments; but I knew how impracticable they would all prove when opposed by his prejudices. To sell the old home of his forefathers, to wander from the roof which had sheltered his name for generations, he would never consent to; the law might by force expel him, and drive him a wanderer and an exile, but of his own free will the thing was hopeless. Considine, too, would encourage rather than repress such feelings; his feudalism would lead him to any lengths; and, in defense of what he would esteem a right, he would as soon shoot a sheriff as a snipe, and, old as he was, ask for no better amusement than to arm the whole tenantry and give battle to the king's troops on the wide plain of Scariff.

Amid such conflicting thoughts, I traveled on moodily and in silence, to the palpable astonishment of Mike, who could not help regarding me as one from whom fortune met the most ungrateful returns. At every new turn of the road he would endeavor to attract my attention by the objects around; no white-turreted chateau, no tapered spire in the distance, escaped him; he kept up a constant ripple of half-muttered praise and censure upon all he saw, and instituted unceasing comparisons between the country and his own, in which, I am bound to say, Ireland rarely, if ever, had to complain of his patriotism.

When we arrived at Almeida, I learned that the *Medea* sloop of war was lying off Oporto, and expected to sail for England in a few days. The opportunity was not to be neglected; the official dispatches, I was aware, would be sent through Lisbon, where the *Gorgon* frigate was in waiting to convey them; but should I be fortunate enough to reach Oporto in time, I had little doubt of arriving in England with the first intelligence of the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo. Reducing my luggage, therefore, to the smallest possible compass, and having provided myself with a juvenile guide for the pass of La Reyna, I threw myself, without undressing, upon the bed, and waited anxiously for the break of day to resume my journey.

As I ruminated over the prospect my return presented, I suddenly remembered Frank Webber's letter, which I had hastily thrust into a portfolio without reading, so occupied was I by Considine's epistle; with a little searching I discovered it, and, trimming my lamp, as I felt no inclination to sleep, I proceeded to the examination of what seemed a more than usually voluminous epistle. It contained four closely-written pages, accompanied by something like a plan in an engineering sketch. My curiosity becoming further stimulated by this, I sat down to peruse it. It began thus:

"Official Dispatch of Lieutenant-General Francis Webber to Lord Castlereagh, detailing the assault and capture of the old pump, in Trinity College, Dublin, on the night of the second of December, eigh-

teen hundred and eleven, with returns of killed, wounded, and missing, with other information from the seat of war.

"Head-quarters, No. 2, Old Square.

"My Lord,—In compliance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's dispatch of the twenty-first ultimo, I concentrated the force under my command, and, assembling the generals of division, made known my intentions in the following general order:

"A. G. O.

"The following troops will this evening assemble at head-quarters, and, having partaken of a sufficient dinner for the next two days, with punch for four, will hold themselves in readiness to march, in the following order:

"Harry Nesbitt's brigade of Incorrigibles will form a blockading force, in the line extending from the Vice-Provost's house to the library. The light division, under Mark Waller, will skirmish from the gate toward the middle of the square, obstructing the march of the Cuirassiers of the Guard, which, under the command of old Duncan, the porter, are expected to move in that direction. Two columns of attack will be formed by the senior sophisters of the Old Guard, and a forlorn hope of the 'cautioned' men at the last four examinations will form, under the orders of Timothy O'Rourke, beneath the shadow of the dining-hall.

"At the signal of the Dean's bell the stormers will move forward. A cheer from the united corps will then announce the moment of attack.

"The word for the night will be, 'May the devil admire me!'

"The Commander of the Forces desires that the different corps should be as strong as possible, and expects that no man will remain, on any pretense whatever, in the rear, with the lush. During the main assault, Cecil Cavendish will make a feint upon the Provost's windows, to be converted into a real attack if the ladies scream.

"GENERAL ORDER.

"The Commissary-General Foley will supply the following articles for the use of the troops:—Two hams, eight pair of chickens, the same to be roasted; a devilled turkey; sixteen lobsters; eight hundred of oysters, with a proportionate quantity of cold sherry and hot punch.

"The army will get drunk by ten o'clock to-night.

"Having made these dispositions, my Lord, I proceeded to mislead the enemy as to our intentions, in suffering my servant to be taken with an intercepted dispatch. This, being a prescription by Doctor Colles, would convey to the Dean's mind the impression that I was still upon the sick list. This being done, and four canisters of Dartford gunpowder being procured on tick, our military chest being in a most deplorable condition, I waited for the moment of attack.

"A heavy rain, accompanied with a frightful hurricane, prevailed during the entire day, rendering the march of the troops who came from the neighborhood of Merrion square and Fitzwilliam street a service of considerable fatigue. The outlying pickets in College green, being induced, probably, by the inclemency of the season, were rather tipsy on joining, and having engaged in a skirmish with old M'Calister, tying his red uniform over his head, the moment of attack was precipitated, and we moved to the trenches by half-past nine o'clock.

"Nothing could be more orderly, nothing more perfect than the march of the troops. As we approached the corner of the commons'-hall a skirmish on the rear apprised us that our intentions had become known; and I soon learned from my aide-de-camp, Bob Moore, that the attack was made by a strong column of the enemy, under the command of Old Fitzgerald.

"Perpendicular (as your Lordship is aware he is styled by the army) came on in a determined manner, and before many minutes had elapsed had taken several prisoners, among others Tom Drummond—Long Tom—who, having fallen on all fours, was mistaken for a long eighteen. The success, however, was but momentary; Nesbitt's brigade attacked them in flank, rescued the prisoners, extinguished the Dean's lantern, and, having beaten back the heavy porters, took Perpendicular himself prisoner.

"An express from the left informed me that the attack upon the Provost's house had proved equally successful: there wasn't a whole pane of glass in the front, and from a footman who deserted, it was learned that Mrs. Hutchinson was in hysterics.

"While I was reading this dispatch, a strong feeling of the line toward the right announced that something was taking place in that direction. Bob Moore, who rode by on Drummond's back, hurriedly informed me that Williams had put the lighted end of his cigar to one of the fuses, but the powder, being wet, did not ex-

plode, notwithstanding his efforts to effect it. Upon this, I hastened to the front, where I found the individual in question kneeling upon the ground, and endeavoring, as far as punch would permit him, to kindle a flame at the port-fire. Before I could interfere, the spark had caught; a loud, hissing noise followed; the different magazines successively became ignited, and at length the fire reached the great four-pound charge.

"I cannot convey to your Lordship, by any words of mine, an idea of this terrible explosion; the blazing splinters were hurled into the air and fell in fiery masses on every side from the park to King William; Ivey, the bell-ringer, was precipitated from the scaffold beside the bell, and fell headlong into the mud beneath; the surrounding buildings trembled at the shock; the windows were shattered, and in fact, a scene of perfect devastation ensued on all sides.

"When the smoke cleared away, I rose from my recumbent position, and perceived with delight that not a vestige of the pump remained. The old iron handle was imbedded in the wall of the dining-hall, and its round knob stood out like the end of a queue.

"Our loss was, of course, considerable; and, ordering the wounded to the rear, I proceeded to make an orderly and regular retreat. At this time, however, the enemy had assembled in force. Two battalions of porters, led on by Dr. Dobbin, charged us on the flank; a heavy brigade poured down upon us from the battery, and, but for the exertions of Harry Nesbitt, our communication with our reserves must have been cut off. Cecil Cavendish also came up; for, although beaten in his great attack, the forces under his command had penetrated by the kitchen windows, and carried off a considerable quantity of cold meat.

"Concentrating the different corps, I made an echelon movement upon the chapel, to admit of the light division coming up. This they did in a few moments, informing me that they had left Perpendicular in the haha, which, as your Lordship is aware, is a fosse of the very greenest and most stagnant nature. We now made good our retreat upon number "2," carrying our wounded with us: the plunder we also secured, but we kicked the prisoners and suffered them to escape.

"Thus terminated, my Lord, one of the brightest achievements of the under-graduate career. I inclose a list of the wounded, as also an account of the various articles returned in the Commissary-General's list.

"Harry Nesbitt: severely wounded; no coat nor hat; a black eye; left shoe missing.

"Cecil Cavendish: face severely scratched; supposed to have received his wound in the attack upon the kitchen.

"Tom Drummond: not recognizable by his friends; his features resembling a transparency disfigured by the smoke of the preceding night's illumination.

"Bob Moore: slightly wounded.

"I would beg particularly to recommend all these officers to your Lordship's notice; indeed, the conduct of Moore, in kicking the Dean's lantern out of the porter's hand, was marked by great promptitude and decision. This officer will present to H.R.H. the following trophies, taken from the enemy: The Dean's cap and tassel; the key of his chambers; Dr. Dobbin's wig and bands; four porters' helmets, and a book on the cellar.

"I have the honor to remain, my Lord, etc., FRANCIS WEBBER.

"G. O.

"The commander of the forces returns his thanks to the various officers and soldiers employed in the late assault, for their persevering gallantry and courage. The splendor of the achievement can only be equaled by the humanity and good conduct of the troops. It only remains for him to add, that the less they say about the transaction, and the sooner they are severally confined to their beds with symptoms of contagious fever, the better.

"Meanwhile, to concert upon the future measures of the campaign, the army will sup to-night at Morrison's."

Here ended this precious epistle, rendering one fact sufficiently evident — that, however my worthy friend advanced in years, he had not grown in wisdom.

While ruminating upon the strange infatuation which could persuade a gifted and an able man to lavish upon dissipation and reckless absurdity the talents that must, if well directed, raise him to eminence and distinction, a few lines of a newspaper paragraph fell from the paper I was reading. It ran thus:

"LATE OUTRAGE IN TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

"We have great pleasure in stating that the serious disturbance which took place within the walls of our University a few

evenings since, was in no wise attributable to the conduct of the students. A party of ill-disposed townspeople were, it would appear, the instigators and perpetrators of the outrage. That their object was the total destruction of our venerated University there can be but little doubt. Fortunately, however, they did not calculate upon the *esprit de corps* of the students, a body of whom, under the direction of Mr. Webber, successfully opposed the assailants, and finally drove them from the walls.

"It is, we understand, the intention of the board to confer some mark of approbation upon Mr. Webber, who, independently of this, has strong claims upon their notice, his collegiate success pointing him out as the most extraordinary man of his day."

"This, my dear Charley, will give you some faint conception of one of the most brilliant exploits of modern days. The bulletin, believe me, is not Napoleonized into any bombastic extravagance of success. The thing was splendid; from the brilliant firework of the old pump itself to the figure of Perpendicular dripping with duckweed, like an insane river-god, it was unequaled. Our fellows behaved like trumps; and, to do them justice, so did the enemy. But unfortunately, notwithstanding this, and the plausible paragraphs of the morning papers, I have been summoned before the board for Tuesday next.

"Meanwhile, I employ myself in throwing off a shower of small squibs for the journals, so that if the board deal not mercifully with me, I may meet with sympathy from the public. I have just dispatched a little editorial bit for the *Times*, calling, in terms of parental tenderness, upon the University to say—

"'How long will the extraordinary excesses of a learned functionary be suffered to disgrace college? Is Doctor —— to be permitted to exhibit an example of more riotous insubordination than would be endured in an undergraduate? More on this subject hereafter.'

"'*Saunders' News-letter.*—Doctor Barret appeared at the head police-office, before Alderman Darley, to make oath that neither he nor Catty were concerned in the late outrage upon the pump,' etc. etc.

"Paragraphs like these are flying about in every provincial paper of the empire. People shake their heads when they speak of the University, and respectable females rather cross over by King William and the Bank than pass near its precincts.

"Tuesday Evening.

"Would you believe it, they've expelled me! Address your next letter as usual, for they haven't got rid of me yet.

"Yours, F. W."

"So I shall find him in his old quarters," thought I, "and evidently not much altered since we parted." It was not without a feeling of (I trust pardonable) pride that I thought over my own career in the interval. My three years of campaigning life had given me some insight into the world, and some knowledge of myself, and conferred upon me a boon, of which I know not the equal—that, while yet young, and upon the very threshold of life, I should have tasted the enthusiastic pleasures of a soldier's fortune and braved the dangers and difficulties of a campaign at a time when, under other auspices, I might have wasted my years in unprofitable idleness or careless dissipation.

CHAPTER CVI.

LONDON.

TWELVE hours after my arrival in England I entered London. I cannot attempt to record the sensations which thronged my mind, as the din and tumult of that mighty city awoke me from a sound sleep I had fallen into in the corner of the chaise. The seemingly interminable lines of lamplight, the crash of carriages, the glare of the shops, the buzz of voices, made up a chaotic mass of sights and sounds, leaving my efforts at thought vain and fruitless.

Obedient to my instructions, I lost not a moment in my preparations to deliver my dispatches. Having dressed myself in the full uniform of my corps, I drove to the Horse Guards. It was now nine o'clock, and I learned that his Royal Highness had gone to dinner at Carlton House. In a few words which I spoke with the aide-de-camp, I discovered that no information of the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo had yet reached England. The greatest anxiety prevailed as to the events of the Peninsula, from which no dispatches had been received for several weeks past.

To Carlton House I accordingly bent my steps, without any precise determination how I should proceed when there, nor knowing how far etiquette might be an obstacle to the accomplishment of my mis-

sion. The news of which I was the bearer was, however, of too important a character to permit me to hesitate, and I presented myself to the aide-de-camp in waiting, simply stating that I was intrusted with important letters to his Royal Highness the purport of which did not admit of delay.

"They have not gone to dinner yet," lisped out the aide-de-camp, "and if you would permit me to deliver the letters—"

"Mine are dispatches," said I, somewhat proudly, and in no wise disposed to cede to another the honor of personally delivering them into the hands of the Duke.

"Then you had better present yourself at the levee to-morrow morning," replied he carelessly, while he turned into one of the window recesses, and resumed the conversation with one of the gentlemen in waiting.

I stood for some moments uncertain and undecided; reluctant on the one part to relinquish my claim as the bearer of dispatches, and equally unwilling to defer their delivery till the following day.

Adopting the former alternative, I took my papers from my sabretasche, and was about to place them in the hands of the aide-de-camp, when the folding-doors at the end of the apartment suddenly flew open, and a large and handsome man, with a high, bald forehead, entered hastily.

The different persons in waiting sprang from their lounging attitudes upon the sofas, and bowed respectfully as he passed on toward another door. His dress was a plain blue coat, buttoned to the collar, and his only decoration a brilliant star upon the breast. There was that air, however, of high birth and bearing about him that left no doubt upon my mind he was of the blood royal.

As the aide-de-camp to whom I had been speaking opened the door for him to pass out, I could hear some words in a low voice, in which the phrases "letters of importance" and "your Royal Highness" occurred. The individual addressed turned suddenly about, and, casting a rapid glance around the room, without deigning a word in reply, walked straight up to where I was standing.

"Dispatches for me, sir?" said he, shortly, taking, as he spoke, the packet from my hand.

"For his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief," said I, bowing respectfully, and still uncertain in whose presence I was standing. He broke the seal without answering, and, as his eye caught the first lines of the dispatch, broke out into an exclamation of—

"Ha! Peninsula news! When did you arrive, sir?"

"An hour since, sir."

"And these letters are from—"

"General Picton, your Royal Highness."

"How glorious—how splendidly done!" muttered he to himself, as he ran his eyes rapidly over the letter. "Are you Captain O'Malley, whose name is mentioned here so favorably?"

I bowed deeply in reply.

"You are most highly spoken of, and it will give me sincere pleasure to recommend you to the notice of the Prince Regent. But stay a moment." So saying, hurriedly he passed from the room, leaving me overwhelmed at the suddenness of the incident, and a mark of no small astonishment to the different persons in waiting, who had hitherto no other idea but that my dispatches were from Hounslow or Knightsbridge.

"Captain O'Malley," said an officer covered with decorations, and whose slightly foreign accent bespoke the Hanoverian, "his Royal Highness requests you will accompany me." The door opened as he spoke, and I found myself in a most splendidly lit-up apartment; the walls covered with pictures, and the ceiling divided into panels, resplendent with the richest gilding. A group of persons, in court dresses, were conversing in a low tone as we entered, but suddenly ceased, and, saluting my conductor respectfully, made way for us to pass on. The folding-doors again opened as we approached, and we found ourselves in a long gallery, whose sumptuous furniture and costly decorations shone beneath the rich tints of a massive luster of ruby glass, diffusing a glow resembling the most gorgeous sunset. Here also some persons in handsome uniform were conversing, one of whom accosted my companion by the title of "Baron;" nodding familiarly as he muttered a few words in German, he passed forward, and the next moment the doors were thrown suddenly wide, and we entered the drawing-room.

The buzz of voices and the sound of laughter reassured me as I came forward, and, before I had well time to think where and why I was there, the Duke of York advanced toward me, with a smile of peculiar sweetness in its expression, and said, as he turned toward one side:

"Your Royal Highness—Captain O'Malley!"

As he spoke, the Prince moved forward, and bowed slightly.

"You've brought us capital news, Mr. O'Malley. May I beg, if you're not too

much tired, you'll join us at dinner. I am most anxious to learn the particulars of the assault."

As I bowed my acknowledgments to the gracious invitation, he continued:

"Are you acquainted with my friend here?—but of course you can scarcely be—you began too early as a soldier. So let me present you to my friend, Mr. Tierney," a middle-aged man, whose broad, white forehead and deep-set eyes gave a character to features that were otherwise not remarkable in expression, and who bowed rather stiffly.

Before he had concluded a somewhat labored compliment to me, we were joined by a third person, whose strikingly-handsome features were lit up with an expression of the most animated kind. He accosted the Prince with an air of easy familiarity, and, while he led him from the group, appeared to be relating some anecdote, which actually convulsed his Royal Highness with laughter.

Before I had time or opportunity to inquire who the individual could be, dinner was announced, and the wide folding-doors being thrown open, displayed the magnificent dining-room of Carlton House, in all the blaze and splendor of its magnificence.

The sudden change from the rough vicissitudes of campaigning life to all the luxury and voluptuous elegance of a brilliant court, created too much confusion in my mind to permit of my impressions being the most accurate or most collected. The splendor of the scene, the rank, but, even more, the talent of the individuals by whom I was surrounded, had all their full effect upon me; and, although I found, from the tone of the conversation about, how immeasurably I was their inferior, yet, by a delicate and courteous interest in the scene of which I had lately partaken, they took away the awkwardness which, in some degree, was inseparable from the novelty of my position among them.

Conversing about the Peninsula with a degree of knowledge which I could in no wise comprehend from those not engaged in the war, they appeared perfectly acquainted with all the details of the campaign; and I heard on every side of me anecdotes and stories which I scarcely believed known beyond the precincts of a regiment. The Prince himself—the grace and charm of whose narrative talents have seldom been excelled—was particularly conspicuous, and I could not help feeling struck with his admirable imitations of voice and manner. The most accomplished *actor* could not have personated the cannie, calculating spirit of the Scot, or the rollicking recklessness of the Irishman, with more tact and *finesse*. But far above all this shone the person I have already alluded to as speaking to his Royal Highness in the drawing-room; combining the happiest conversational eloquence with a quick, ready, and brilliant fancy. He threw from him in all the careless profusion of boundless resource a shower of pointed and epigrammatic witticisms: now, illustrating a really difficult subject by one happy touch, as the blaze of the lightning will light up the whole surface of the dark landscape beneath it; now, turning the force of an adversary's argument by some fallacious but unanswerable jest, accompanying the whole by those fascinations of voice, look, gesture, and manner, which have made those who once have seen, never able to forget Brinsley Sheridan.

I am not able, were I even disposed, to record more particularly the details of that most brilliant evening of my life. On every side of me I heard the names of those whose fame as statesmen, or whose repute as men of letters, was ringing throughout Europe; they were then, too, not in the easy indolence of ordinary life, but displaying with their utmost effort those powers of wit, fancy, imagination, and eloquence, which had won for them elsewhere their high and exalted position. The masculine understanding and powerful intellect of Tierney vied with the brilliant and dazzling conceptions of Sheridan. The easy *bonhomie* and English heartiness of Fox contrasted with the cutting sarcasm and sharp raillery of O'Kelly. While contesting the palm with each himself, the Prince evinced powers of mind and eloquent facilities of expression that, in any walk of life, must have made their possessor a most distinguished man. Politics, war, women, literature, the turf, the navy, the opposition, architecture, and the drama, were all discussed with a degree of information and knowledge that proved to me how much of real acquirements can be obtained by those whose exalted station surrounds them with the collective intellect of a nation. As for myself, the time flew past unconsciously. So brilliant a display of all that was courtly and fascinating in manner, and all that was brightest in genius, was so novel to me, that I really felt like one entranced. To this hour, my impression, however confused in details, is as vivid as though that evening were but yesternight; and although since that period I have enjoyed numerous opportunities of meeting with the great and the gifted, yet I treasure the

memory of that evening as by far the most exciting of my whole life.

While I abstain from any mention of the many incidents of the evening, I cannot pass over one which, occurring to myself, is valuable but as showing, by one slight and passing trait, the amiable and kind feeling of one whose memory is hallowed in the service.

A little lower than myself, on the opposite side of the table, I perceived an old military acquaintance whom I had first met in Lisbon: he was then on Sir Charles Stewart's staff, and we met almost daily. Wishing to commend myself to his recollection, I endeavored for some time to catch his eye, but in vain; but at last, when I thought I had succeeded, I called to him,

"I say, Fred, a glass of wine with you."

When suddenly the Duke of York, who was speaking to Lord Hertford, turned quickly round, and, taking the decanter in his hand, replied,

"With pleasure, O'Malley; what shall it be, my boy?"

I shall never forget the manly good-humor of his look as he sat waiting for my answer. He had taken my speech as addressed to himself, and concluding that, from fatigue, the novelty of the scene, my youth, etc., I was not over collected, vouchsafed in this kind way to receive it.

"So," said he, as I stammered out my explanation, "I was deceived; however, don't cheat me out of my glass of wine. Let us have it now."

With this little anecdote, whose truth I vouch for, I shall conclude. More than one now living was a witness to it, and my only regret in the mention of it is my inability to convey the readiness with which he seized the moment of apparent difficulty to throw the protection of his kind and warm-hearted nature over the apparent folly of a boy.

It was late when the party broke up, and, as I took my leave of the Prince, he once more expressed himself in gracious terms toward me, and gave me personally an invitation to a breakfast at Hounslow on the following Saturday.

CHAPTER CVII.

THE BELL AT BRISTOL.

On the morning after my dinner at Carlton House, I found my breakfast-table covered with cards and invitations. The news of the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo was published in all the morning papers, and my own humble name, in letters of three feet long, was exhibited in placards throughout the city. Less to this circumstance, however, than to the kind and gracious notice of the Prince, was I indebted for the attentions which were shown me by every one; and, indeed, so flattering was the reception I met with, and so overwhelming the civility showered on me from all sides, that it required no small effort on my part not to believe myself as much a hero as they would make me. An eternal round of dinners, balls, breakfasts, and entertainments, filled up the entire week. I was included in every invitation to Carlton House, and never appeared without receiving from his Royal Highness the most striking marks of attention. Captivating as all this undoubtedly was, and fascinating as I felt in being the lion of London, the courted and sought after by the high, the titled, and the talented of the great city of the universe, yet, amid all the splendor and seduction of that new world, my heart instinctively turned from the glare and brilliancy of gorgeous saloons—from the soft looks and softer voice of beauty—from the words of praise, as they fell from the lips of those whose notice was fame itself—to my humble home amid the mountains of the west. Delighted and charmed as I felt by that tribute of flattery which associated my name with one of the most brilliant actions of my country, yet hitherto I had experienced no touch of home or fatherland. England was to me as the high and powerful head of my house, whose greatness and whose glory shed a halo far and near, from the proudest to the humblest of those that call themselves Britons; but Ireland was the land of my birth—the land of my earliest ties, my dearest associations—the kind mother, whose breath had fanned my brow in infancy; and for her in my manhood my heart beat with every throb of filial affection. Need I say, then, how ardently I longed to turn homeward; for, independent of all else, I could not avoid some self-reproach on thinking what might be the condition of those I prized the most on earth, at that very moment I was engaging in all the voluptuous abandonment, and all the fascinating excesses of a life of pleasure. I wrote several letters home, but received no answer; nor did I, in the whole round of London society, meet with a single person who could give me information of my family or my friends. The Easter recess had sent the different

members of Parliament to their homes; and thus, within a comparatively short distance of all I cared for, I could learn nothing of their fate.

The invitations of the Prince Regent, which were, of course, to be regarded as commands, still detained me in London; and I knew not in what manner to escape from the fresh engagements which each day heaped upon me. In my anxiety upon the subject, I communicated my wishes to a friend on the Duke's staff, and the following morning, as I presented myself at his levee, he called me toward him, and addressed me:

"What leave have you got, Captain O'Malley?"

"Three months, your Royal Highness."

"Do you desire an unattached troop? for, if so, an opportunity occurs just at this moment."

"I thank you most sincerely, sir, for your condescension in thinking of me, but my wish is to join my regiment at the expiration of my leave."

"Why, I thought they told me you wanted to spend some time in Ireland?"

"Only sufficient to see my friends, your Royal Highness. That done, I'd rather join my regiment immediately."

"Ah! that alters the case. So then, probably, you'd like to leave us at once. I see how it is; you've been staying here against your will all this while. Then, don't say a word. I'll make your excuses at Carlton House; and, the better to cover your retreat, I'll employ you on service. Here, Gordon, let Captain O'Malley have the dispatches for Sir Henry Howard at Cork." As he said this, he turned toward me with an air of affected sternness in his manner, and continued: "I expect, Captain O'Malley, that you will deliver the dispatches intrusted to your care without a moment's loss of time. You will leave London within an hour. The instructions for your journey will be sent to your hotel. And now," said he, again changing his voice to its natural tone of kindliness and courtesy—"and now, my boy, good-by, and a safe journey to you. These letters will pay your expenses, and the occasion save you all the worry of leave-taking."

I stood confused and speechless, unable to utter a single word of gratitude for such unexpected kindness. The Duke saw at once my difficulty, and, as he shook me warmly by the hand, added, in a laughing tone,

"Don't wait, now. You mustn't forget that your dispatches are pressing."

I bowed deeply, attempted a few words of acknowledgment, hesitated, blundered, and broke down; and at last got out of the room, Heaven knows how! and found myself running toward Long's at the top of my speed. Within that same hour I was rattling along toward Bristol as fast as four posters could burn the pavement, thinking with ecstasy over the pleasures of my reception in England; but, far more than all, of the kindness evinced toward me by him who, in every feeling of his nature, and in every feature of his deportment, was "every inch a prince."

However astonished I had been at the warmth by which I was treated in London, I was still less prepared for the enthusiasm which greeted me in every town through which I passed. There was not a village where we stopped to change horses whose inhabitants did not simultaneously pour forth to welcome me with every demonstration of delight. That the fact of four horses and a yellow chaise should have elicited such testimonies of satisfaction, was somewhat difficult to conceive; and, even had the important news that I was the bearer of dispatches been telegraphed from London by successive postboys, still the extraordinary excitement was unaccountable. It was only on reaching Bristol that I learned to what circumstance my popularity was owing. My friend Mike, in humble imitation of election practices, had posted a large placard on the back of the chaise, announcing, in letters of portentous length, something like the following:

"Bloody news! Fall of Ciudad Rodrigo! Five thousand prisoners and two hundred pieces of cannon taken!"

This veracious and satisfactory statement, aided by Mike's personal exertions, and an unwearied performance on the trumpet he had taken from the French dragoon, had roused the population of every hamlet, and made our journey from London to Bristol one scene of uproar, noise, and confusion. All my attempts to suppress Mike's oratory or music were perfectly unavailing. In fact, he had pledged my health so many times during the day—he had drunk so many toasts to the success of the British arms—so many to the English nation—so many in honor of Ireland—and so many in honor of Mickey Free himself, that all respect for my authority was lost in his enthusiasm for my greatness, and his shouts became wilder, and the blasts from the trumpet more fearful and incoherent; and finally, on the last stage of our journey, having exhausted as it were every tribute of his lungs, he seemed

(if I were to judge by the evidence of my ears) to be performing something very like a hornpipe on the roof of the chaise.

Happily for me, there is a limit to all human efforts, and even *his* powers at length succumbed; so that, when we arrived at Bristol, I persuaded him to go to bed, and I once more was left to the enjoyment of some quiet. To fill up the few hours which intervened before bedtime, I strolled into the coffee-room. The English look of every one, and everything around, had still its charm for me; and I was contemplating, with no small admiration, the air of neatness and propriety so observant from the bright-faced clock, that ticked unwearily upon the mantelpiece, to the trim waiter himself, with noiseless step, and that mixed look of vigilance and vacancy. The perfect stillness struck me, save when a deep voice called for "another brandy-and-water," and some more modestly-toned request would utter a desire for "more cream." The attention of each man, absorbed in the folds of his voluminous newspaper, scarcely deigning a glance at the new comer who entered, were all in keeping; giving, in their solemnity and gravity, a character of almost religious seriousness, to what, in any other land, would be a scene of riotous noise and discordant tumult. I was watching all these with a more than common interest, when the door opened, and the waiter entered with a large placard. He was followed by another with a ladder, by whose assistance he succeeded in attaching the large square of paper to the wall, above the fireplace. Every one about rose up, curious to ascertain what was going forward; and I myself joined in the crowd around the fire. The first glance of the announcement showed me what it meant; and it was with a strange mixture of shame and confusion I read:

"Fall of Ciudad Rodrigo; with a full and detailed account of the storming of the great breach—capture of the enemy's cannon, etc.—by Michael Free, 14th Light Dragoons."

Leaving the many around me busied in conjecturing who the aforesaid Mr. Free might be, and what peculiar opportunities he might have enjoyed for his report, I hurried from the room and called the waiter.

"What's the meaning of the announcement you've just put up in the coffee-room? Where did it come from?"

"Most important news, sir; exclusively in the columns of the *Bristol Telegraph;* the gentleman has just arrived—"

"Who, pray? What gentleman?"

"Mr. Free, sir, No. 13—large bedroom—blue damask—supper for two—oysters—a devil—brandy-and-water—mulled port."

"What the devil do you mean? Is the fellow at supper?"

Somewhat shocked by the tone I ventured to assume toward the illustrious narrator, the waiter merely bowed his reply.

"Show me to his room," said I; "I should like to see him."

"Follow me, if you please, sir—this way—what name shall I say, sir?"

"You need not mind announcing me—I'm an old acquaintance—just show me the room."

"I beg pardon, sir, but Mr. Meekins, the editor of the *Telegraph,* is engaged with him at present; and positive orders are given not to suffer any interruption."

"No matter: do as I bid you. Is that it? Oh! I hear his voice. There, that will do. You may go down-stairs, I'll introduce myself."

So saying, and slipping a crown into the waiter's hand, I proceeded cautiously toward the door, and opened it stealthily. My caution was, however, needless; for a large screen was drawn across this part of the room, completely concealing the door; closing which behind me, I took my place beneath the shelter of this ambuscade, determined on no account to be perceived by the parties.

Seated in a large arm-chair, a smoking tumbler of mulled port before him, sat my friend Mike, dressed in my full regimentals, even to the helmet, which, unfortunately, however, for the effect, he had put on back foremost; a short "dudeen" graced his lip, and the trumpet, so frequently alluded to, lay near him.

Opposite him sat a short, puny, round-faced little gentleman, with rolling eyes and a turned-up nose. Numerous sheets of paper, pens, etc., lay scattered about; and he evinced, by his air and gesture, the most marked and eager attention to Mr. Free's narrative, whose frequent interruptions, caused by the drink and the oysters, were viewed with no small impatience by the anxious editor.

"You must remember, Captain, time's passing; the placards are all out; must be at press before one o'clock to-night; the morning edition is everything with us. You were at the first parallel, I think."

"Devil a one o' me knows. Just ring that bell near you. Them's elegant oysters; and you're not taking your drop of liquor. Here's a toast for you: 'May—' whoop—raal Carlingfords, upon my con-

science. See now, if I won't hit the little black chap up there, the first shot."

Scarcely were the words spoken, when a little painted bust of Shakspeare fell in fragments on the floor as an oyster-shell laid him low.

A faint effort at a laugh at the eccentricities of his friend was all the poor editor could accomplish, while Mike's triumph knew no bounds.

"Didn't I tell you? But come now, are you ready? Give the pen a drink, if you won't take one yourself."

"I'm ready, quite ready," responded the editor.

"Faith, and it's more nor I am. See now, here it is: The night was murthering dark; you could not see a stim."

"Not see a—a what?"

"A stim, bad luck to you; don't you know English? Hand me the hot water. Have you that down yet?"

"Yes. Pray proceed."

"The fifth division was orthered up, bekase they were fighting chaps; the Eighty-eighth was among them; the Rangers—Oh! upon my soul, we must drink the Rangers. Here, divil a one o' me will go on till we give them all the honors—hip—begin."

"Hip," sighed the luckless editor, as he rose from his chair, obedient to the command.

"Hurra--hurra—hurra! Well done, there's stuff in you yet, ould foolscap! The little bottle's empty—ring again, if ye plaze."

"Oh, Father Magan
Was a beautiful man,
But a bit of a rogue, a bit of a rogue.
He was just six feet high,
Had a cast in his eye,
And an illigint brogue, an illigint brogue.

"He was born in Killarney,
And reared up in blarney—"

"Arrah, don't be looking miserable and dissolute that way. Sure I'm only screwing myself up for you; besides, you can print the song av you like: it's a sweet tune—'Teddy, you Gander.'"

"Really, Mr. Free, I see no prospect of our ever getting done."

"The saints in heaven forbid," interrupted Mike, piously; "the evening's young, and drink plenty. Here now, make ready!"

The editor once more made a gesture of preparation.

"Well, as I was saying," resumed Mike, "it was pitch dark when the columns moved up, and a cold, raw night, with a little thin rain falling. Have you that down?"

"Yes. Pray go on."

"Well, just as it might be here, at the corner of the trench I met Dr. Quill. 'They're waiting for you, Mr. Free,' says he, 'down there. Picton's asking for you.' 'Faith an he must wait,' says I, 'for I'm terrible dry.' With that, he pulled out his canteen and mixed me a little brandy-and-water. Are you taking it without a toast?' says Doctor Maurice. 'Never fear,' says I; 'here's Mary Brady—'"

"But, my dear sir," interposed Mr. Meekins, "pray *do* remember this is somewhat irrelevant. In fifteen minutes it will be twelve o'clock."

"I know it, ould boy, I know it. I see what you're at. You were going to observe how much better we'd be for a broiled bone."

"Nothing of the kind, I assure you. For Heaven's sake, no more eating and drinking."

"No more eating nor drinking! Why not? You've a nice notion of a convivial evening. Faith, we'll have the broiled bone sure enough, and, what's more, a half-gallon of the strongest punch they can make us; an' I hope that, grave as you are, you'll favor the company with a song."

"Really, Mr. Free—"

"Arrah! none of your blarney. Don't be misthering me. Call me Mickey, or Mickey Free, if you like better."

"I protest," said the editor, with dismay, "that here we are two hours at work, and we haven't got to the foot of the great breach."

"And wasn't the army three months and a half in just getting that far, with a battering train, and mortars, and the finest troops ever were seen? and there you sit, a little fat creature, with your pen in your hand, grumbling that you can't do more than the whole British army. Take care you don't provoke me to beat you; for I am quiet till I'm roused. But, by the Rock o' Cashel—"

Here he grasped the brass trumpet with an energy that made the editor spring from his chair.

"For mercy's sake, Mr. Free—"

"Well, I won't; but sit down there, and don't be bothering me about sieges, and battles, and things you know nothing about."

"I protest," rejoined Mr. Meekins, "that, had you not sent to my office intimating your wish to communicate an account of the siege, I never should have

"THE FIFTH DIVISION WAS ORTHERED UP, BEKASE THEY WERE FIGHTING CHAPS." (P. 982.)

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thought of intruding myself upon you. And now, since you appear indisposed to afford the information in question, if you will permit me, I'll wish you a very good-night."

"Faith, and so you shall, and help me to pass one too; for not a step out o' that chair shall you take till morning. Do ye think I am going to be left here by myself, all alone?"

"I must observe," said Mr. Meekins—

"To be sure, to be sure," said Mickey; "I see what you mean. You're not the best of company, it's true; but at a pinch like this—There now, take your liquor."

"Once for all, sir," said the editor, "I would beg you to recollect that, on the faith of your message to me, I have announced an account of the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo for our morning edition. Are you prepared, may I ask, for the consequences of my disappointing ten thousand readers?"

"It's little I care for one of them. I never knew much of reading myself."

"If you think to make a jest of me," interposed Mr. Meekins, reddening with passion—

"A jest of you! Troth it's little fun I can get out of you; you're as tiresome a creature as ever I spent an evening with. See now, I told you before not to provoke me: we'll have a little more drink; ring the bell: who knows but you'll turn out better by-and-by!"

As Mike rose at these words to summon the waiter, Mr. Meekins seized the opportunity to make his escape. Scarcely had he reached the door, however, when he was perceived by Mickey, who hurled the trumpet at him with all his force, while he uttered a shout that nearly left the poor editor lifeless with terror. This time, happily, Mr. Free's aim failed him, and, before he could arrest the progress of his victim, he had gained the corridor, and, with one bound, cleared the first flight of the staircase, his pace increasing every moment as Mike's denunciations grew louder and louder, till at last, as he reached the street, Mr. Free's delight overcame his indignation, and he threw himself upon a chair and laughed immoderately.

"Oh, may I never! if I didn't frighten the editor. The little spalpeen couldn't eat his oysters and take his punch like a man. But sure if he didn't, there's more left for his betters." So saying, he filled himself a goblet and drank it off. "Mr. Free, we won't say much for your inclinations, for maybe they are not the best; but here's bad luck to the fellow that doesn't think you good company; and here," added he, again filling his glass—"and here's may the devil take editors, and authors, and compositors, that won't let us alone, but must be taking our lives, and our songs, and our little devilments, that belongs to one's own family, and tell them all over the world. A lazy set of thieves you are, every one of you; spending your time inventing lies, devil a more nor less; and here"—this time he filled again—"and here's a hot corner and Kilkenny coals, that's half sulphur, to the villain—"

For what particular class of offenders Mike's penal code was now devised, I was not destined to learn; for, overcome by punch and indignation, he gave one loud whoop, and measured his length upon the floor. Having committed him to the care of the waiters, from whom I learned more fully the particulars of his acquaintance with Mr. Meekins, I enjoined them, strictly, not to mention that I knew anything of the matter; and betook myself to my bed, sincerely rejoicing that in a few hours more Mike would be again in that land where even his eccentricities and excesses would be viewed with a favorable and forgiving eye.

CHAPTER CVIII.

IRELAND.

"You'd better call your master up," said the Skipper to Mickey Free, on the second evening after our departure from Bristol; "he said he'd like to have a look at the coast."

The words were overheard by me, as I lay between sleeping and waking in the cabin of the packet, and without waiting for a second invitation, I rushed upon deck. The sun was setting, and one vast surface of yellow golden light played upon the water, as it rippled beneath a gentle gale. The white foam curled at our prow, and the rushing sound told the speed we were going at. The little craft was staggering under every sheet of her canvas, and her spars creaked as her white sails bent before the breeze. Before us, but to my landsman's eyes scarcely perceptible, were the ill-defined outlines of cloudy darkness they called land, and which I continued to gaze at with a strange sense of interest, while I heard the names of certain well-known headlands assigned to apparently mere masses of fog-bank and vapor.

He who has never been separated in early years, while yet the budding affections

of his heart are tender shoots, from the land of his birth and of his home, knows nothing of the throng of sensations that crowd upon him as he nears the shore of his country. The names, familiar as household words, come with a train of long-buried thoughts; the feeling of attachment to all we call our own—that patriotism of the heart—stirs strongly within him, as the mingled thrills of hope and fear alternately move him to joy or sadness.

Hard as are the worldly struggles between the daily cares of him who carves out his own career and fortune, yet he has never experienced the darkest poverty of fate who has not felt what it is to be a wanderer, without a country to lay claim to. Of all the desolations that visit us, this is the gloomiest and the worst. The outcast from the land of his fathers, whose voice must never be heard within the walls where his infancy was nurtured, nor his step be free upon the mountains where he gambolled in his youth, this is indeed wretchedness. The instinct of country grows and strengthens with our years; the joys of early life are linked with it; the hopes of age point toward it; and he who knows not the thrill of ecstasy some well-remembered, long-lost-sight-of place can bring to his heart when returning after years of absence, is ignorant of one of the purest sources of happiness of our nature.

With what a yearning of the heart, then, did I look upon the dim and misty cliffs, that mighty framework of my island home, their stern sides lashed by the blue waters of the ocean, and their summits lost within the clouds! With what an easy and natural transition did my mind turn from the wild mountains and the green valleys to their hardy sons, who toiled beneath the burning sun of the Peninsula! and how, as some twinkling light of the distant shore would catch my eye, did I wonder within myself whether beside that hearth and board there might not sit some, whose thoughts were wandering over the sea beside the bold steeps of El Bodon, or the death-strewn plain of Talavera! their memories calling up some trait of him who was the idol of his home; whose closing lids some fond mother had watched over; above whose peaceful slumber her prayers had fallen; but whose narrow bed was now beneath the breach of Badajos, and his sleep the sleep that knows not waking.

I know not if in my sad and sorrowing spirit I did not envy him who thus had met a soldier's fate,—for what of promise had my own! My hopes of being in any way instrumental to my poor uncle's happiness grew hourly less. His prejudices were deeply rooted and of long standing: to have asked him to surrender any of what he looked upon as the prerogatives of his house and name, would be to risk the loss of his esteem. What then remained for me? Was I to watch, day by day and hour by hour, the falling ruin of our fortunes? Was I to involve myself in the petty warfare of unavailing resistance to the law? and could I stand aloof from my best, my truest, my earliest friend, and see him, alone and unaided, oppose his weak and final struggle to the unrelenting career of persecution? Between these two alternatives the former could be my only choice; and what a choice!

Oh, how I thought over the wild heroism of the battle-field, the reckless fury of the charge, the crash, the death-cry, and the sad picture of the morrow, when all was past, and a soldier's glory alone remained to shed its high halo over the faults and the follies of the dead.

As night fell, the twinkling of the distant lighthouses,—some throwing a column of light from the very verge of the horizon, others shining brightly, like stars, from some lofty promontory,—marked the different outlines of the coast, and conveyed to me the memory of that broken and wild mountain tract that forms the bulwark of the Green Isle against the waves of the Atlantic. Alone and silently I trod the deck, now turning to look toward the shore, where I thought I could detect the position of some well-known headland, now straining my eyes seaward to watch some bright and flitting star, as it rose from or merged beneath the foaming water, denoting the track of the swift pilot-boat, or the hardy lugger of the fisherman; while the shrill whistle of the floating sea-gull was the only sound, save the rushing waves that broke in spray upon our quarter.

What is it that so inevitably inspires sad and depressing thoughts, as we walk the deck of some little craft, in the silence of the night's dark hours? No sense of danger near, we hold on our course swiftly and steadily, cleaving the dark waves, and bending gracefully beneath the freshening breeze. Yet still the motion which, in the bright sunshine of the noonday tells of joy and gladness, brings now no touch of pleasure to our hearts. The dark and frowning sky, the boundless expanse of gloomy water, spread like some gigantic pall around us, and our thoughts either turn back upon the saddest features of the

past, or look forward to the future with a sickly hope that all may not be as we fear it.

Mine were indeed of the gloomiest, and the selfishness alone of the thought prevented me from wishing that, like many another, I had fallen by a soldier's death on the plains of the Peninsula!

As the night wore on, I wrapped myself in my cloak and lay down beneath the bulwark. The whole of my past life came in review before me, and I thought over my first meeting with Lucy Dashwood; the thrill of boyish admiration gliding into love; the hopes, the fears, that stirred my heart; the firm resolve to merit her affection, which made me a soldier. Alas! how little thought she of him to whose whole life she had been a guide-star and a beacon! And, as I thought over the hard-fought fields, the long, fatiguing marches, the nights around the watch-fires, and felt how, in the whirl and enthusiasm of a soldier's life, the cares and sorrows of everyday existence are forgotten, I shuddered to reflect upon the career that might now open before me. To abandon, perhaps forever, the glorious path I had been pursuing for a life of indolence and weariness, while my name, that had already, by the chance of some fortunate circumstances, begun to be mentioned with a testimony of approval, should be lost in oblivion, or remembered but as that of one whose early promise was not borne out by the deeds of his manhood.

As day broke, overcome by watching, I slept; but was soon awoke by the stir and bustle around me. The breeze had freshened, and we were running under a reefed mainsail and foresail; and, as the little craft bounded above the blue water, the white foam crested above her prow, and ran in boiling rivulets along toward the after-deck. The tramp of the seamen, the hoarse voice of the captain, the shrill cry of the sea-birds, betokened, however, nothing of dread or danger; and listlessly I leant upon my elbow, and asked what was going forward.

"Nothing, sir; only making ready to drop our anchor."

"Are we so near shore, then?" said I.

"You've only to round that point to windward, and have a clear run into Cork harbor."

I sprang at once to my legs; the landfog prevented my seeing anything whatever, but I thought that in the breeze, fresh and balmy as it blew, I could feel the wind off shore.

"At last," said I, "at last!" as I stepped into the little wherry which shot alongside of us, and we glided into the still basin of Cove. How I remember every white-walled cottage, and the beetling cliffs, and that bold headland beside which the valley opens, with its dark green woods; and then Spike Island. And what a stir is yonder, early as it is; the men-of-war tenders seem alive with people, while still the little village is sunk in slumbers, not a smoke-wreath rising from its silent hearths; every plash of the oars in the calm water, as I neared the land, every chance word of the bronzed and hardy fisherman, told upon my heart. I felt it was my home.

"Isn't it beautiful, sir? isn't it illigint?" said a voice behind me, which there could be little doubt in my detecting, although I had not seen the individual since I left England.

"Is not what beautiful?" replied I, rather harshly, at the interruption of my own thoughts.

"Ireland, to be sure; and long life to her!" cried he, with a cheer, that soon found its responsive echoes in the hearts of our sailors, who seconded the sentiment with all their energy.

"How am I to get up to Cork, lads?" said I; "I am pressed for time, and must get forward."

"We'll row your honor the whole way, av it's plazing to you."

"Why, thank you, I'd rather find some quicker mode of proceeding."

"Maybe you'd have a chaise; there's an elegant one at M'Cassidy's."

"Sure the blind mare's in foal," said the bow oar; "the divil a step she can go out of a walk; so, your honor, take Tim Riley's car, and you'll get up cheap. Not that you care for money; but he's going up at eight o'clock with two young ladies."

"Oh! be-gorra," said the other, "and so he is; and faix ye might do worse—they're nice craytures."

"Well," said I, "your advice seems good; but perhaps they might object to my company."

"I've no fear; they're always with the officers. Sure the Miss Dalrymples—"

"The Miss Dalrymples!—Push ahead, boys! it must be later than I thought; we must get the chaise; I can't wait."

Ten minutes more brought us to land.

* * * * *
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My arrangements were soon made, and, as my impatience to press forward became greater the nearer I drew to my destination, I lost not a moment.

The yellow chaise—sole glory of Cove—was brought forth at my request; and, by good fortune, four posters which had been down the preceding evening from Cork to some gentleman's seat near, were about to return. These were also pressed into my service; and just as the first early riser of the little village was drawing his curtain to take a half-closed eye-glance upon the breaking morning, I rattled forth upon my journey at a pace which, could I only have secured its continuance, must soon have terminated my weary way.

Beautiful as the whole line of country is, I was totally unconscious of it; and even Mike's conversational powers, divided as they were between myself and the two postilions, were fruitless in arousing me from the deep preoccupation of my mind by thoughts of home.

It was, then, with some astonishment I heard the boy upon the wheeler ask whither he should drive me to.

"Tell his honor to wake up, we're in Cork now."

"In Cork! impossible already."

"Faith, maybe so—but it's Cork sure enough."

"Drive to the 'George;' it's not far from the Commander-in-Chief's quarters."

"'Tis five minutes' walk, sir; you'll be there before they're put to again."

"Horses for Fermoy!" shouted out the postilions, as we tore up to the door in a gallop. I sprang out, and, by the assistance of the waiter, discovered Sir Henry Howard's quarters, to whom my dispatches were addressed. Having delivered them into the hands of an aide-de-camp, who sat bolt upright in his bed, rubbing his eyes to appear awake, I again hurried down-stairs, and, throwing myself into the chaise, continued my journey.

"Them's beautiful streets, anyhow!" said Mike, "av they wasn't kept so dirty, and the houses so dark, and the pavement bad. That's Mr. Beamish's—that fine house there, with the brass rapper and the green lamp beside it; and there's the hospital; faix! and there's the place we beat the police, when I was here before; and the house with the sign of the Highlander is thrown down—and what's the big building with the stone posts at the door?"

"The bank, sir," said the postilion, with a most deferential air, as Mike addressed him.

"What bank, acushla?"

"Not a one of me knows, sir; but they call it the bank, though it's only an empty house."

"Cary and Moore's bank, perhaps?" said I, having heard that in days long past some such names had failed in Cork for a large amount.

"So it is; your honor's right," cried the postilion; while Mike, standing up on the box, and menacing the house with his clenched fist, shouted out at the very top of his voice,

"Oh, bad luck to your cobwebbed windows and iron railings! sure it's my father's son ought to hate the sight of you."

"I hope, Mike, your father never trusted his property in such hands?"

"I don't suspect he did, your honor; he never put much belief in the banks; but the house cost him dear enough without that."

As I could not help feeling some curiosity in this matter, I pressed Mickey for an explanation.

"But maybe it's not Cary and Moore's after all; and I'm, maybe, cursing dacent people."

Having reassured his mind, by telling him that the reservation he made by the doubt would tell in their favor should he prove mistaken, he afforded me the following information:

"When my father—the heavens be his bed!—was in the 'Cork,' they put him one night on guard at that same big house you just passed—av it was the same; but, if it wasn't that, it was another; and it was a beautiful fine night in August, and the moon up, and plenty of people walking about, and all kinds of fun and devilment going on—drinking and dancing, and everything.

"Well, my father was stuck up there, with his musket, to walk up and down, and not say, 'God save you kindly,' or the time of day, or anything, but just march as if he was in the barrack-yard; and by reason of his being the man he was he didn't like it half, but kept cursing and swearing to himself like mad when he saw pleasant fellows and pretty girls going by, laughing and joking.

"'Good evening, Mickey,' says one; 'fine sport ye have all to yourself, with your long feather in your cap.'

"'Arrah, look how proud he is,' says another, 'with his head up as if he didn't see a body.'

"'Shoulder hoo!' cried a drunken chap, with a shovel in his hand. They all began laughing away at my father.

"'Let the dacent man alone,' said an ould fellow in a wig; 'isn't he guarding the bank, wid all the money in it?'

"'Faix he isn't,' says another, 'for there's none left.'

"'What's that you're saying?' says my father.

"'Just that the bank's broke, devil a more,' says he.

"'And there's no goold in it?' says my father.

"'Divil a guinea.'

"'Nor silver?'

"'No, nor silver, nor as much as sixpence, either.'

"'Didn't ye hear, that all day yesterday, when the people was coming in with their notes, the chaps there were heating the guineas in a frying-pan, pretending that they were making them as fast as they could; and sure, when they had a batch red-hot they spread them out to cool; and what betune the hating and the cooling, and the burning the fingers counting them, they kept the bank open to three o'clock, and then they ran away.'

"'Is it truth yer telling?' says my father.

"'Sorra word o' lie in it! myself had two-and-fourpence of their notes.'

"'And so they're broke,' says my father, 'and nothing left?'

"'Not a brass farden.'

"'And what am I staying here for, I wonder, if there's nothing to guard?'

"'Faix, if it isn't for the pride of the thing—'

"'Oh, sorra taste.'

"'Well, maybe for divarsion.'

"'Nor that either.'

"'Faix! then, you're a droll man, to spend the evening that way,' says he; and all the crowd—for there was a crowd—said the same. So with that my father unscrewed his bayonet, and put his piece on his shoulder, and walked off to his bed in the barrack as peaceable as need be. But well, when they came to relieve him, wasn't there a raal commotion? and faith, you see, it went mighty hard with my father the next morning; for the bank was open just as usual, and my father was sintinced to fifty lashes, but got off with a week in prison, and three more, rowling a big stone in the barrack-yard."

Thus chatting away, the time passed over, until we arrived at Fermoy. Here there was some little delay in procuring horses; and during the negotiation, Mike, who usually made himself master of the circumstances of every place through which he passed, discovered that the grocer's shop of the village was kept by a namesake, and possibly a relation of his own.

"I always had a notion, Mister Charles, that I came from a good stock; and sure enough, here's 'Mary Free' over the door there, and a beautiful place inside; full of tay and sugar, and gingerbread, and glue, and coffee, and bran, pickled herrings, soap, and many other commodities."

"Perhaps you'd like to claim kindred, Mike," said I, interrupting; "I'm sure she'd feel flattered to discover a relative in a Peninsula hero."

"It's just what I'm thinking; av we were going to pass the evening here, I'd try if I couldn't make her out a second cousin at least."

Fortune, upon this occasion, seconded Mike's wishes, for when the horses made their appearance, I learned to my surprise that the near side one would not bear a saddle, and the off-sider could only run on his own side. In this conjuncture, the postilion was obliged to drive from what, *Hibernicè* speaking, is called the perch; no ill-applied denomination to a piece of wood, which, about the thickness of one's arm, is hung between the two fore-springs, and serves as a resting-place, in which the luckless wight, weary of the saddle, is not sorry to repose himself.

"What's to be done?" cried I. "There's no room within: my traps barely leave space for myself amongst them."

"Sure, sir," said the postilion, "the other gentleman can follow in the morning coach; and if any accident happens to yourself on the road, by reason of a breakdown, he'll be there as soon as yourself."

This, at least, was an agreeable suggestion, and, as I saw it chimed with Mike's notions, I acceded at once; he came running up at the moment.

"I had a peep at her through the window, Mister Charles, and, faix, she has a great look of the family."

"Well, Mickey, I'll leave you twenty-four hours to cultivate the acquaintance; and to a man like you the time, I know, is ample. Follow me by the morning's coach. Till then, good-by."

Away we rattled once more, and soon left the town behind us. The wild mountain tract which stretched on either side of the road presented one bleak and brown surface, unrelieved by any trace of tillage or habitation; an apparently endless succession of fern-clad hills lay on every side; above, the gloomy sky of leaden, lowering aspect frowned darkly; the sad and wailing cry of the pewet or the plover was the only sound that broke the stillness, and, far as the eye could reach, a dreary waste extended. The air, too, was cold and chilly; it was one of those days which, in our springs, seemed to cast a retrospective glance toward the winter they have left

behind them. The prospect was no cheering one; from heaven above or earth below there came no sight nor sound of gladness. The rich glow of the Peninsular landscape was still fresh in my memory—the luxurious verdure—the olive, the citron, and the vine—the fair valleys teeming with abundance—the mountains terraced with their vineyards—the blue transparent sky spreading o'er all—while the very air was rife with the cheering song of birds that peopled every grove. What a contrast was here! We traveled on for miles, but no village nor one human face did we see. Far in the distance a thin wreath of smoke curled upward: but it came from no hearth; it arose from one of those field-fires by which spendthrift husbandry cultivates the ground. It was, indeed, sad; and yet, I know not how, it spoke more home to my heart than all the brilliant display and all the voluptuous splendor I had witnessed in London. By degrees some traces of wood made their appearance, and, as we descended the mountain toward Cahir, the country assumed a more cultivated and cheerful look—patches of corn or of meadow-land stretched on either side, and the voice of children, and the lowing of oxen, mingled with the cawing of the rooks as, in dense clouds, they followed the plowman's track. The changed features of the prospect resembled the alternate phases of temperament of the dweller in the soil—the gloomy determination—the smiling carelessness—the dark spirit of boding—the reckless jollity—the almost savage ferocity of purpose, followed by a child-like docility and a womanly softness—the grave, the gay, the resolute, the fickle—the firm, the yielding, the unsparing, and the tender-hearted, blending their contrarieties into one nature, of whose capabilities one cannot predicate the bounds, but to whom, by some luckless fatality of fortune, the great rewards of life have been generally withheld, until one begins to feel that the curse of Swift was less the sarcasm wrung from indignant failures than the cold and stern prophecy of the moralist.

But how have I fallen into this strain? Let me rather turn my eyes forward toward my home. How shall I find all there? Have his altered fortunes damped the warm ardor of my poor uncle's heart? Is his smile sicklied over by sorrow? Or shall I hear his merry laugh, and his cheerful voice, as in days of yore? How I longed to take my place beside that hearth, and, in the same oak-chair where I have sat telling the bold adventures of a fox-chase or some long day upon the moors, speak of the scenes of my campaigning life, and make known to him those gallant fellows by whose side I have charged in battle, or sat in the bivouac! How will he glory in the soldier-like spirit and daring energy of Fred Power! How will he chuckle over the blundering earnestness and Irish warmth of O'Shaughessy! How will he laugh at the quaint stories and quainter jests of Maurice Quill! And how often will he wish once more to be young in hand as in heart to mingle with such gay fellows, with no other care, no other sorrow to depress him save the passing fortune of a soldier's life.

CHAPTER CIX.

THE RETURN.

A RUDE shock awoke me, as I lay asleep in the corner of the chaise; a shout followed, and the next moment the door was torn open, and I heard the postilion's voice crying to me:

"Spring out! jump out quickly, sir!"

A whole battery of kicks upon the front panel drowned the rest of his speech; but before I could obey his injunction, he was pitched upon the road, the chaise rolled over, and the pole snapped short in the middle, while the two horses belabored the carriage and each other with all their might. Managing, as well as I was able, to extricate myself, I leaped out upon the road, and by the aid of a knife, and at the cost of some bruises, succeeded in freeing the horses from their tackle. The post-boy, who had escaped without any serious injury, labored manfully to aid me, blubbering the whole time upon the consequences his misfortune would bring down upon his head.

"Bad luck to ye!" cried he, apostrophizing the off-horse, a tall, raw-boned beast, with a Roman nose, a dipped back, and a tail ragged and jagged like a hand-saw. "Bad luck to ye! there never was a good one of your color!"

This, for the information of the "unjockeyed," I may add, was a species of brindled gray.

"How did it happen, Patsey—how did it happen, my lad?"

"It was the heap o' stones they left in the road since last autumn; and though I riz him at it fairly, he dragged the ould mare over it and broke the pole. Oh, wirra, wirra!" cried he, wringing his

hands in an agony of grief, "sure there's neither luck nor grace to be had with ye since the day ye drew the judge down to the last assizes!"

"Well! what's to be done?"

"Sorra a bit o' me knows; the shay's ruined intirely, and the ould devil there knows he's conquered us. Look at him there, listening to every word we're saying! You eternal thief! maybe it's plowing you'd like better."

"Come, come," said I, "this will never get us forward. What part of the country are we in?"

"We left Banagher about four miles behind us; that's Killimur you see with the smoke there in the hollow."

Now, although I did not see Killimur (for the gray mist of the morning prevented me recognizing any object a few hundred yards distant), yet, from the direction in which he pointed, and from the course of the Shannon, which I could trace indistinctly, I obtained a pretty accurate notion of where we were.

"Then, we are not very far from Portumna?"

"Just a pleasant walk before your breakfast."

"And is there not a short cut to O'Malley castle over that mountain?"

"Faix and so there is; and ye can be no stranger to these parts if ye know that."

"I have traveled it before now. Just tell me, is the wooden bridge standing over the little stream? It used to be carried away every winter, in my time."

"It's just the same now. You'll have to pass by the upper ford; but it comes to the same, for that will bring you to the back gate of the demesne, and one way is just as short as the other."

"I know it, I know it; so now, do you follow me with my luggage to the castle, and I'll set out on foot."

So saying, I threw off my cloak, and prepared myself for a sharp walk of some eight miles over the mountain. As I reached the little knoll of land which, overlooking the Shannon, affords a view of several miles in every direction, I stopped to gaze upon the scene where every object around was familiar to me from infancy. The broad, majestic river, sweeping in bold curves between the wild mountains of Connaught and the wooded hills and cultivated slopes of the more fertile Munster—the tall chimneys of many a house rose above the dense woods, where in my boyhood I had spent hours and days of happiness. One last look I turned toward the scene of my late catastrophe, ere I began to descend the mountain. The post-boy, with the happy fatalism of his country, and a firm trust in the future, had established himself in the interior of the chaise, from which a blue curl of smoke wreathed upward from his pipe; the horses grazed contentedly by the roadside, and, were I to judge from the evidence before me, I should say that I was the only member of the party inconvenienced by the accident. A thin sleeting of rain began to fall, the wind blew sharply in my face, and the dark clouds collecting in masses above, seemed to threaten a storm. Without stopping for even a passing look at the many well-known spots about, I pressed rapidly on. My old experience upon the moors had taught me that sling trot in which, jumping from hillock to hillock, over the boggy surface, you succeed in accomplishing your journey not only with considerable speed, but perfectly dryshod.

By the lonely path which I traveled, it was unlikely I should meet any one; it was rarely traversed except by the foot of the sportsman, or some stray messenger from the castle to the town of Banagher. Its solitude, however, was in no wise distasteful to me; my heart was full to bursting. Each moment as I walked, some new feature of my home presented itself before me. Now, it was all happiness and comfort; the scene of its ancient hospitable board, its warm hearth, its happy faces, and its ready welcome, were all before me, and I increased my speed to the utmost, when suddenly a sense of sad and sorrowing foreboding would draw around me, and the image of my uncle's sick-bed; his worn features, his pallid look, his broken voice would strike upon my heart, and all the changes that poverty, desertion, and decay can bring to pass would fall upon my heart, and, weak and trembling, I would stand for some moments unable to proceed.

Oh! how many a reproachful thought came home to me at what I scrupled not to call to myself the desertion of my home. Oh! how many a prayer I uttered in all the fervor of devotion, that my selfish waywardness, and my yearning for ambition, might not bring upon me, in after-life, years of unavailing regret! As I thought thus, I reached the brow of a little mountain ridge, beneath which, at the distance of scarcely more than a mile, the dark woods of O'Malley Castle stretched before me. The house itself was not visible, for it was situated in a valley beside the river; but there lay the whole scene of my boy-

hood, there the little creek where my boat was kept, and where I landed on the morning after my duel with Bodkin; there stretched, for many a mile, the large, callow meadows, where I trained my horses, and schooled them for the coming season; and far in the distance, the brown and rugged peak of old Scariff was lost in the clouds. The rain by this time had ceased, the wind had fallen, and an almost unnatural stillness prevailed around. But yet the heavy masses of vapor frowned ominously, and the leaden hue of land and water wore a gloomy and depressing aspect. My impatience to get on increased every moment, and, descending the mountain at the top of my speed, I at length reached the little oak paling that skirted the wood, opened the little wicket, and entered the path. It was the self-same one I had trod in reverie and meditation the night before I left my home. I remember, too, sitting down beside the little well which, inclosed in a frame of rock, ran trickling across the path, to be lost among the gnarled roots and fallen leaves around. Yes, this was the very spot.

Overcome for the instant by my exertion and by my emotion, I sat down upon the stone, and, taking off my cap, bathed my heated and throbbing temples in the cold spring. Refreshed at once, I was about to rise and press onward, when suddenly my attention was caught by a sound which, faint from distance, scarce struck upon my ear. I listened again, but all was still and silent, the dull plash of the river, as it broke upon the reedy shore, was the only sound I heard. Thinking it probably some mere delusion of my heated imagination, I rose to push forward; but at the moment a slight breeze stirred in the leaves around me, the light branches rustled and bent beneath it, and a low, moaning sound swelled upward, increasing each instant as it came: like the distant roar of some mighty torrent it grew louder as the wind bore it toward me, and now falling, now swelling, it burst forth into one loud, prolonged cry of agony and grief. Oh, God! it was the death-wail! I fell upon my knees, my hands clasped in agony, the sweat of misery dropped off my brow, and with a heart bleeding and breaking, I prayed—I know not what. Again the terrible cry smote upon my ear, and I could mark the horrible cadences of the death-song, as the voices of the mourners joined in chorus.

My suspense became too great to bear: I dashed madly forward, one sound still ringing in my ears, one horrid image before my eyes. I reached the garden-wall, I cleared the little rivulet beside the flower-garden, I traversed its beds (neglected and decayed), I gained the avenue, taking no heed of the crowds before me—some on foot, some on horseback, others mounted upon the low country car, many seated in groups upon the grass, their heads bowed upon their bosoms, silent and speechless. As I neared the house, the whole approach was crowded with carriages and horsemen; at the foot of the large flight of steps stood the black and mournful hearse, its plumes nodding in the breeze. With the speed of madness and the recklessness of despair I tore my way through the thickly-standing groups upon the steps; I could not speak, I could not utter. Once more the frightful cry swelled upward, and in its wild notes seemed to paralyze me; for, with my hands upon my temples, I stood motionless and still. A heavy footfall, as of persons marching in procession, came nearer and nearer, and, as the sounds without sank into sobs of bitterness and woe, the black pall of a coffin, borne on men's shoulders, appeared at the door, and an old man, whose gray hair floated in the breeze, and across whose stern features a struggle for self-mastery—a kind of spasmodic effort—was playing, held out his hand to inforce silence. His eye, lackluster and dimmed with age, roved over the assembled multitude, but there was no recognition in his look until at last he turned it on me. A slight hectic flush colored his pale cheek, his lip trembled, he essayed to speak but could not. I sprang toward him, but, choked by agony, I could not utter; my look, however, spoke what my tongue could not: he threw his arms around me, and, muttering the words "Poor Godfrey!" pointed to the coffin.

CHAPTER CX.

HOME.

MANY, many years have passed away since the time I am now about to speak of, and yet I cannot revert, even for a moment, to the period, without a sad and depressing feeling at my heart. The wreck of fortune, the thwarting of ambition, the failure in enterprise, great though they be, are endurable evils. The never-dying hope that youth is blessed with will find its resting-place still within the breast, and the baffled and beaten will struggle on unconquered; but for the death of friends, for

the loss of those in whom our dearest affections were centered, there is no solace; the terrible "never" of the grave knows no remorse, and even memory, that in our saddest hours can bring bright images and smiling faces before us, calls up here only the departed shade of happiness, a passing look at that Eden of our joys from which we are separated forever. And the desolation of the heart is never perfect till it has felt the echoes of a last farewell on earth reverberating within it.

Oh, with what tortures of self-reproach we think of all former intercourse with him that is gone! How would we wish to live our lives once more, correcting each passage of unkindness or neglect! How deeply do we blame ourselves for occasions of benefit lost, and opportunities unprofited by; and how unceasingly, through after-life, the memory of the departed recurs to us! In all the ties which affection and kindred weave around us,one vacant spot is there, unseen and unknown by others, which no blandishments of love, no caresses of friendship can fill up; although the rank grass and the tall weeds of the churchyard may close around the humble tomb, the cemetery of the heart is holy and sacred, pure from all the troubled thoughts and daily cares of the busy world. To that hallowed spot do we retire as into our chamber, and when unrewarded efforts bring discomfiture and misery to our minds, when friends are false and cherished hopes are blasted, we think on those who never ceased to love till they had ceased to live; and in the lonely solitude of our affliction we call upon those who hear not, and may never return.

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Mine was a desolate hearth. I sat moodily down in the old oak parlor, my heart bowed down with grief. The noiseless steps, the mourning garments of the old servants, the unnatural silence of those walls within which from my infancy the sounds of merriment and mirth had been familiar, the large old-fashioned chair where he was wont to sit, now placed against the wall—all spoke of the sad past. Yet, when some footsteps would draw near, and the door would open, I could not repress a thrill of hope that he was coming; more than once I rushed to the window and looked out; I could have sworn I heard his voice.

The old cob pony he used to ride was grazing peacefully before the door; poor Carlo, his favorite spaniel, lay stretched upon the terrace, turning ever and anon a look toward the window, and then, as if wearied of watching for him who came not, he would utter a long, low, wailing cry, and lie down again to sleep. The rich lawn, decked with field flowers of many a hue, stretched away toward the river, upon whose calm surface the white-sailed lugger scarce seemed to move; the sounds of a well-known Irish air came, softened by distance, as some poor fisherman sat mending his net upon the bank, and the laugh of children floated on the breeze. Yes, they were happy!

Two months had elapsed since my return home; how passed by me, I know not; a lethargic stupor had settled upon me. Whole days long I sat at the window, looking listlessly at the tranquil river, and watching the white foam as, borne down from the rapids, it floated lazily along. The Count had left me soon, being called up to Dublin by some business, and I was utterly alone. The different families about called frequently to ask after me, and would, doubtless, have done all in their power to alleviate my sorrow, and lighten the load of my affliction; but, with a morbid fear, I avoided every one, and rarely left the house except at nightfall, and then only to stroll by some lonely and deserted path.

Life had lost its charm for me; my gratified ambition had ended in the blackest disappointment, and all for which I had labored and longed was only attained that I might feel it valueless.

Of my circumstances as to fortune I knew nothing, and cared not more; poverty and riches could matter little now; all my day-dreams were dissipated now, and I only waited for Considine's return to leave Ireland forever. I had made up my mind, if, by any unexpected turn of fate, the war should cease in the Peninsula, to exchange into an Indian regiment. The daily association with objects which recalled but one image to my brain, and that ever accompanied by remorse of conscience, gave me not a moment's peace. My every thought of happiness was mixed up with scenes which now presented nothing but the evidences of blighted hope: to remain, then, where I was, would be to sink into the heartless misanthropist, and I resolved that, with my sword, I would carve out a soldier's fortune and a soldier's grave.

Considine came at last. I was sitting alone, at my usual post beside the window, when the chaise rattled up to the door; for an instant I started to my legs; a vague sense of something like hope shot through me; the whole might be a dream, and *he*—

The next moment I became cold and sick, a faintish giddiness obscured my sight, and, though I felt his grasp as he took my hand, I saw him not.

An indistinct impression still dwells upon my mind of his chiding me for my weakness in thus giving way; of his calling upon me to assert my position, and discharge the duties of him whose successor I now was. I heard him in silence; and, when he concluded, faintly pledging myself to obey him, I hurried to my room, and throwing myself upon my bed, burst into an agony of tears. Hitherto my pent-up sorrow had wasted me day by day; but the rock was now smote, and in that gush of misery my heart found relief.

When I appeared the following morning, the Count was struck with my altered looks: a settled sorrow could not conceal the changes which time and manhood had made upon me; and as from a kind of fear of showing how deeply I grieved, I endeavored to conceal it, by degrees I was enabled to converse calmly and dispassionately upon my fortunes.

"Poor Godfrey," said he, "appointed me his sole executor a few days before it happened; he knew the time was drawing near, and, strange enough, Charley, though he heard of your return to England, he would not let us write. The papers spoke of you as being at Carlton House almost daily; your name appeared at every great festival; and, while his heart warmed at your brilliant success, he absolutely dreaded your coming home. 'Poor fellow,' he would say, 'what a change for him, to leave the splendor and magnificence of his Prince's board for our meager fare and altered fortunes! And then,' he added, 'as for me—God forgive me! I can go now—but how should I bear to part with him if he comes back to me.' And now," said the Count, when he had concluded a detailed history of my dear uncle's last illness—"and now, Charley, what are your plans?"

Briefly, and in a few words, I stated to him my intentions. Without placing much stress upon the strongest of my reasons—my distaste to what had once been home—I avowed my wish to join my regiment at once.

He heard me with evident impatience, and, as I finished, seized my arm in his strong grasp. "No, no, boy, none of this; your tone of assumed composure cannot impose on Bill Considine. You must not return to the Peninsula—at least not yet awhile; the disgust of life may be strong at twenty, but it's not lasting; besides, Charley"—here his voice faltered slightly—"*his* wishes you'll not treat lightly. Read this."

As he spoke, he took a blotted and ill-written letter from his breast-pocket, and handed it to me. It was in my poor uncle's hand, and dated the very morning of his death. It ran thus:

"DEAR BILL,—Charley must never part with the old house, come what will; I leave too many ties behind for a stranger's heritage; he must live among my old friends, and watch, protect, and comfort them. He has done enough for fame; let him now do something for affection. We have none of us been over good to these poor people; one of the name must try and save our credit. God bless you both! It is, perhaps, the last time I shall utter it. G. O'M."

I read these few and, to me, affecting lines over and over, forgetful of all save of him who penned them; when Considine, who supposed that my silence was attributable to doubt and hesitation, called out:

"Well, what now?"

"I remain," said I, briefly.

He seized me in his arms with transport, as he said:

"I knew it, boy—I knew it. They told me you were spoiled by flattery, and your head turned by fortune; they said that home and country would weigh lightly in the balance against fame and glory; but I said no, I knew you better. I told them indignantly that I had nursed you on my knee; that I watched you from infancy to boyhood, from boy to man; that he of whose stock you came had one feeling paramount to all, his love of his own fatherland, and that you would not disgrace him. Besides, Charley, there's not an humble hearth for many a long mile around us, where, amid the winter's blast—tempered, not excluded, by frail walls and poverty—there's not one such but where poor Godfrey's name rises each night in prayer, and blessings are invoked on him by those who never felt them themselves."

"I'll not desert them."

"I know you'll not, boy—I know you'll not. Now for the means."

Here he entered into a long and complicated exposure of my dear uncle's many difficulties; by which it appeared that, in order to leave the estate free of debt to me, he had, for years past, undergone severe privations. These, however—such is the misfortune of unguided effort—had but ill succeeded; and there was scarcely a farm on the property without its mortgage.

Upon the house and demesne a bond for three thousand pounds still remained; and to pay off this, Considine advised my selling a portion of the property.

"It's old Blake lent the money; and, only a week before your uncle died, he served a notice for repayment. I never told Godfrey; it was no use; it could only imbitter his last few hours; and, besides, we had six months to think of it. The half of that time has now elapsed, however; we must see to this."

"And did Blake really make this demand, knowing my poor uncle's difficulties?"

"Why, I half think he did not, for Godfrey was too fine a fellow ever to acknowledge anything of the sort. He had twelve sheep killed for the poor in Scariff, at a time when not a servant of the house tasted meat for months; ay, and our own table, too, none of the most abundant, I assure you."

What a picture was this! and how forcibly did it remind me of what I had witnessed in times past. Thus meditating, we returned to the house; and Considine, whose activity never slumbered, sat down to con over the rent-roll with old Maguire the steward.

When I joined the Count in the evening, I found him surrounded by maps, rent-rolls, surveys, and leases. He had been poring over these various documents, to ascertain from which portion of the property we could best recruit our falling finances: to judge from the embarrassed look and manner with which he met me, the matter was one of no small difficulty. The incumbrances upon the estate had been incurred with an unsparing hand: and except where some irreclaimable tract of bog or mountain rendered a loan impracticable, each portion of the property had its share of debt.

"You can't sell Killantry, for Basset has above six thousand pounds on it already; to be sure, there's the Priest's Meadows—fine land and in good heart; but Malony was an old tenant of the family, and I cannot recommend your turning him over to a stranger; the widow M'Bride's farm is perhaps the best, after all, and it would certainly bring the sum we want; still, poor Mary was your nurse, Charley, and it would break her heart to do it."

Thus, wherever we turned, some obstacle presented itself, if not from moneyed causes, at least from those ties and associations which, in an attached and faithful tenantry, are sure to grow up between them and the owner of the soil.

Feeling how all-important these things were—endeavoring as I was to fulfill the will and work out the intentions of my uncle—I saw at once, that to sell any portion of the property must separate me, to a certain extent, from those who long looked up to our house, and who, in the feudalism of the west, could ill withdraw their allegiance from their own chief to swear fealty to a stranger. The richer tenants were those whose industry and habits rendered them objects of worth and attachment; to the poorer ones, to whose improvidence and whose follies (if you will) their poverty was owing, I was bound by those ties which the ancient habit of my house had contracted for centuries; the bond of benefit conferred can be stronger than the debt of gratitude itself. What was I then to do? My income would certainly permit of my paying the interest upon the several mortgages, and still retaining wherewithal to live; the payment of Blake's bond was my only difficulty, and, small as it was, it was still a difficulty.

"I have it, Charley!" said Considine; "I've found out the way of doing it. Blake will have no objection, I'm sure, to take the widow's farm in payment of his debt, giving you a power of redemption within five years. In that time, what with economy—some management—perhaps," added he, smiling slightly—"perhaps a wife with money, may relieve all your embarrassments at once. Well, well, I know you are not thinking of that just now; but come, what say you to my plan?"

"I know not well what to say. It seems to be the best: but still I have my misgivings."

"Of course you have, my boy; nor could I love you if you'd part with an old and faithful follower without them. But, after all, she is only a hostage to the enemy: we'll win her back, Charley."

"If you think so—"

"I do. I know it."

"Well, then, be it so; only one thing I bargain—she must herself consent to this change of masters. It will seem to her a harsh measure that the child she had nursed and fondled in her arms, should live to disunite her from those her oldest attachments upon earth. We must take care, sir, that Blake cannot dispossess her; this would be too hard."

"No, no; that we'll guard against; and now, Charley, with prudence and caution, we'll clear off every incumbrance, and O'Malley Castle shall yet be what it was in days of yore. Ay, boy! with the descendant of the old house for its master, and

not that general—how do you call him?—that came down here to contest the county, who, with his offer of thirty thousand pounds, thought to uproot the oldest family of the west. Did I ever show you the letter we wrote him?"

"No, sir," replied I, trembling with agitation as I spoke; "you merely alluded to it in one of yours."

"Look here, lad!" said he, drawing it from the recesses of a black leather pocket-book. "I took a copy of it; read that."

The document was dated "O'Malley Castle, Dec. 9th." It ran thus:

"SIR,—I have this moment learned from my agent, that you, or some one empowered by you for the purpose, made an offer of several thousand pounds to buy up the different mortgages upon my property, with a subsequent intention of becoming its possessor. Now, sir, I beg to tell you, that if your ungentlemanlike and underhand plot had succeeded, you dared not darken with your shadow the door-sill of the house you purchased. Neither your gold nor your flattery—and I hear you are rich in both—could wipe out from the minds and hearts of my poor tenantry the kindness of centuries. Be advised then, sir; withdraw your offer; let a Galway gentleman settle his own difficulties his own way; his troubles and cares are quite sufficient, without your adding to them. There can be but one mode in which your interference with him could be deemed acceptable: need I tell you, sir, who are a soldier, how that is? As I know your official duties are important, and as my nephew—who feels with me perfectly in this business—is abroad, I can only say that failing health and a broken frame shall not prevent my undertaking a journey to England, should my doing so meet your wishes on this occasion.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,
"GODFREY O'MALLEY."

"This letter," continued Considine, "I inclosed in an envelope, with the following few lines of my own:

"'Count Considine presents his compliments to Lieutenant-General Dashwood; and feeling that, as the friend of Mr. Godfrey O'Malley, the mild course pursued by that gentleman may possibly be attributed to his suggestion, he begs to assure General Dashwood that the reverse was the case, and that he strenuously counseled the propriety of laying a horsewhip upon the General's shoulders, as a preliminary step in the transaction.

"'Count Considine's address is No. 16, Kildare street.'"

"Great God!" said I, "is this possible?"

"Well may you say so, my boy: for—would you believe it?—after all that, he writes a long blundering apology, protesting I know not what about motives of former friendship, and terminating with a civil hint that we have done with him forever. And of my paragraph he takes no notice; and thus ends the whole affair."

"And with it my last hope also!" muttered I to myself.

That Sir George Dashwood's intentions had been misconstrued and mistaken I knew perfectly well; that nothing but the accumulated evils of poverty and sickness could have induced my poor uncle to write such a letter I was well aware; but now, the mischief was accomplished, the evil was done, and nothing remained but to bear with patience and submission, and to endeavor to forget what thus became irremediable.

"Sir George Dashwood made no allusion to me, sir, in his reply?" inquired I, catching at anything like a hope.

"Your name never occurs in his letter. But you look pale, boy: all these discussions come too early upon you; besides, you stay too much at home, and take no exercise."

So saying, Considine bustled off toward the stables to look after some young horses that had just been taken up; and I walked out alone to ponder over what I had heard, and meditate on my plans for the future.

CHAPTER CXI.

AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

As I wandered on, the irritation of my spirit gradually subsided. It was, to be sure, distressing to think over the light in which my uncle's letter had placed me before Sir George Dashwood, had even my reputation only with him been at stake; but, with my attachment to his daughter, it was almost maddening. And yet there was nothing to be done; to disavow my participation would be to throw discredit upon my uncle. Thus were my hopes blighted; and thus, at that season when life was opening upon me, did I feel careless and indifferent to everything. Had

my military career still remained to me, that, at least, would have suggested scenes sufficient to distract me from the past; but now my days must be spent where every spot teemed with memories of bygone happiness and joys never to come back again.

My mind was, however, made up; and, without speaking a word to Considine, I turned homeward, and sat down at my writing-table. In a few brief lines I informed my army agent of my intention of leaving the service, and desired that he would sell out for me at once. Fearing lest my resolution might not be proof against the advice and solicitation of my friends, I cautioned him against giving my address, or any clue by which letters might reach me.

This done, I addressed a short note to Mr. Blake, requesting to know the name of his solicitor, in whose hands the bond was placed, and announcing my intention of immediate repayment.

Trifling as these details were in themselves, I cannot help recording how completely they changed the whole current of my thoughts. A new train of interests began to spring up within me; and where so lately the clang of the battle—the ardor of the march—the careless ease of the bivouac—had ingrossed every feeling, now more humble and homely thoughts succeeded; and, as my personal ambition had lost its stimulant, I turned with pleasure to those of whose fate and fortunes I was in some sort the guardian. There may be many a land where the verdure blooms more in fragrance and in richness,—where the clime breathes softer, and a brighter sky lights up the landscape; but there is none—I have traveled through many a one—where more touching and heart-bound associations are blended with the features of the soil than in Ireland, and cold must be the spirit, and barren the affections of him who can dwell amid its mountains and its valleys, its tranquil lakes, its wooded fens, without feeling their humanizing influence upon him. Thus gradually new impressions and new duties succeeded; and, ere four months elapsed, the quiet monotony of my daily life healed up the wounds of my suffering, and, in the calm current of my present existence, a sense of content, if not of happiness, crept gently over me, and I ceased to long for the clash of arms and the loud blast of the trumpet.

Unlike all my former habits, I completely abandoned the sports of the field. He who had participated in them with me was no longer there; and the very sight of the tackle itself suggested sad and depressing thoughts.

My horses I took but little pleasure in. To gratify the good and kind people about, I would walk through the stables, and make some passing remark, as if to show some interest; but I felt it not. No: it was only by the total change of all the ordinary channels of my ideas that I could bear up; and now my days were passed in the fields, either listlessly strolling along, or in watching the laborers as they worked. Of my neighbors I saw nothing; returning their cards, when they called upon me, was the extent of our intercourse; and I had no desire for any further. As Considine had left me to visit some friends in the south, I was quite alone; and, for the first time in my life, felt how soothing can be such solitude. In each happy face—in every grateful look around me—I felt that I was fulfilling my uncle's last behest; and the sense of duty, so strong when it falls upon the heart accompanied by the sense of power, made my days pass rapidly away.

It was toward the close of autumn, when I one morning received a letter from London, informing me that my troop had been sold, and the purchase-money—above four thousand pounds—lodged to my credit at my banker's.

As Mr. Blake had merely answered my former note by a civil message that the matter in question was by no means pressing, I lost not a moment, when this news reached me, to dispatch Mike to Gurt-na-morra with a few lines, expressing my anxious desire to finish the transaction, and begging of Mr. Blake to appoint a day for the purpose.

To this application Mr. Blake's reply was, that he would do himself the honor of waiting upon me the following day, when the arrangements I desired could be agreed upon. Now this was exactly what I wished, if possible, to avoid. Of all my neighbors, he was the one I predetermined to have no intercourse with: I had not forgotten my last evening at his house, nor had I forgiven his conduct to my uncle. However, there was nothing for it but submission; the interview need not be a long, and it should be a last one. Thus resolving, I waited in patience for the morrow.

I was seated at my breakfast the next morning, conning between whiles the columns of the last paper, and feeding my spaniel, who sat upon a large chair beside me, when the door opened, and the servant announced "Mr. Blake;" and the instant after that gentleman bustled in, holding

out both his hands with all evidences of most friendly warmth, and calling out,

"Charles O'Malley, my lad! I'm delighted to see you at last!"

Now, although the distance from the door to the table at which I sat was not many paces, yet it was quite sufficient to chill down all my respectable relative's ardor before he approached; his rapid pace became gradually a shuffle, a slide, and finally a dead stop; his extended arms were reduced to one hand, barely advanced beyond his waistcoat; his voice, losing the easy confidence of its former tone, got husky and dry, and broke into a cough; and all these changes were indebted to the mere fact of my reception of him consisting in a cold and distant bow, as I told the servant to place a chair and leave the room.

Without any preliminary whatever, I opened the subject of our negotiation, expressed my regret that it should have waited so long, and my desire to complete it.

Whether it was that the firm and resolute tone I assumed had its effect at once, or that, disappointed at the mode in which I received his advances, he wished to conclude our interview as soon as need be, I know not; but he speedily withdrew from a capacious pocket a document in parchment, which having spread at large upon the table, and having leisurely put on his spectacles, he began to hum over its contents to himself in an undertone.

"Yes, sir, here it is," said he. "'Deed of conveyance between Godfrey O'Malley, of O'Malley Castle, Esq., on the one part'—perhaps you'd like your solicitor to examine it,—'and Blake, of Gurt'—because there is no hurry, Captain O'Malley,—'on the other.' In fact, after all, it is a mere matter of form between relatives," said he, as I declined the intervention of a lawyer. "I'm not in want of the money—'all the lands and tenements adjoining, in trust, for the payment of the said three thousand'—thank God, Captain, the sum is a trifle that does not inconvenience me: the boys are provided for; and the girls—the pickpockets, as I call them, ha, ha, ha!—not ill off neither;—'with rights of turbary on the said premises'—who are most anxious to have the pleasure of seeing you. Indeed, I could scarcely keep Jane from coming over to-day. 'Sure he's my cousin,' says she; 'and what harm would it be if I went to see him?' Wild, good-natured girls, Captain! And your old friend Matthew—you haven't forgot Matthew?—has been keeping three coveys of partridge for you this fortnight. 'Charley,' says he—they call you Charley still, Captain—'shall have them, and no one else.' And poor Mary—she was a child when you were here—Mary is working a sash for you. But I'm forgetting—I know you have so much business on your hands—"

"Pray, Mr. Blake, be seated. I know nothing of any more importance than the matter before us. If you will permit me to give you a check for this money. The papers, I'm sure, are perfectly correct."

"If I only thought it did not inconvenience you—"

"Nothing of the kind, I assure you. Shall I say at sight, or in ten days hence?"

"Whenever you please, Captain. But it's sorry I am to come troubling you about such things, when I know you're thinking of other matters. And, as I said before, the money does not signify to me; the times, thank God, are good, and I've never been very improvident."

"I think you'll find that correct."

"Oh, to be sure it is! Well, well; I'm going away without saying half what I intended."

"Pray do not hurry yourself. I have not asked have you breakfasted, for I remember Galway habits too well for that. But if I might offer you a glass of sherry and water after your ride?"

"Will you think me a beast if I say yes, Captain? Time was when I didn't care for a canter of ten or fifteen miles in the morning no more than yourself; and that's no small boast: God forgive me, but I never see that clover field where you pounded the Englishman, without swearing there never was a leap made before or since. Is this Mickey, Captain? Faith, and it's a fine, brown, hearty-looking chap you're grown, Mickey. That's mighty pleasant sherry, but where would there be good wine if it wasn't here? Oh! I remember now what it was I wanted. Peter—my son Peter, a slip of a boy—he's only sixteen—well, d'you see, he's downright deranged about the army: he used to see your name in the papers every day, and that terrible business at—what's the name of the place?—where you rode on the chap's back up the breach."

"Ciudad Rodrigo, perhaps," said I, scarcely able to repress a laugh.

"Well, sir, since that, he'll hear of nothing but going into the army; ay, and into the dragoons too. Now, Captain, isn't it mighty expensive in the dragoons?"

"Why, no, not particularly so—at least in the regiment I served with."

"I promised him I'd ask you; the boy's

mad, that's the fact. I wish, Captain, you'd just reason with him a little; he'll mind what *you* say, there's no fear of that; and you see, though I'd like to do what's fair, I'm not going to cut off the girls for the sake of the boys; with the blessing of Providence, they'll never be able to reproach me for that. What I say is this: treat *me* well, and I'll treat you the same. Marry the man my choice would pick out for you, and it's not a matter of a thousand or two I'll care for. There was Bodkin—you remember him?" said he, with a grin; "he proposed for Mary, but since the quarrel with you, she could never bear the sight of him, and Alley wouldn't come down to dinner if he was in the house. Mary's greatly altered. I wish you heard her sing 'I'd mourn the hopes that leave me;' queer girl she is; she was little more than a child when you were here, and she remembers you just as if it was yesterday."

While Mr. Blake ran on at this rate, now dilating upon my own manifold virtues and accomplishments, now expatiating upon the more congenial theme—the fascinations of his fair daughters, and the various merits of his sons—I could not help feeling how changed our relative position was since our last meeting; the tone of cool and vulgar patronage he then assumed toward the unformed country lad was now converted into an air of fawning and deferential submission, still more distasteful.

Young as I was, however, I had already seen a good deal of the world; my soldiering had at least taught me something of men, and I had far less difficulty in deciphering the intentions and objects of my worthy relative, than I should have had in the enigmatical mazes of the parchment bond of which he was the bearer. After all, to how very narrow an extent in life are we fashioned by our own estimate of ourselves! My changed condition affected me but little until I saw how it affected others; that the position I occupied should seem better, now that life had lost the great stimulus of ambition, was somewhat strange; and that flattery should pay its homage to the mourning coat which it would have refused to my soldier's garb, somewhat surprised me; still my bettered fortunes shone only brightly by reflected light; for in my own heart I was sad, spiritless, and oppressed.

Feeling somewhat ashamed at the coldness with which I treated a man so much my elder, I gradually assumed toward Mr. Blake a manner less reserved. He quickly availed himself of the change, and launched out into an eloquent *exposé* of my advantages and capabilities; the only immediate effect of which was to convince me that my property and my prospects must have been very accurately conned over and considered by that worthy gentleman before he could speak of the one or the other with such perfect knowledge.

"When you get rid of these little incumbrances, your rent-roll will be close on four thousand a year. There's Basset, sure, by only reducing his interest from ten to five per cent., will give you a clear eight hundred per annum; let him refuse, and I'll advance the money. And, besides, look at Freney's farm; there's two hundred acres let for one-third of the value, and you must look to these things; for, you see, Captain, we'll want you to go into Parliament; you can't help coming forward at the next election, and by the great gun of Athlone, we'll return you."

Here Mr. Blake swallowed a full bumper of sherry, and, getting up a little false enthusiasm for the moment, grasped me by both hands and shook me violently; this done, like a skillful general, who, having fired the last shot of his artillery, takes care to secure his retreat, he retired toward the door, where his hat and coat were lying.

"I've a hundred apologies to make for incroaching upon your time; but, upon my soul, Captain, you are so agreeable, and the hours have passed away so pleasantly—May I never, if it is not one o'clock!—but you must forgive me."

My sense of justice, which showed me that the agreeability had been all on Mr. Blake's side, prevented me from acknowledging this compliment as it deserved; so I merely bowed stiffly, without speaking. By this time he had succeeded in putting on his great-coat, but still, by some mischance or other, the moment of his leave-taking was deferred; one time he buttoned it awry, and had to undo it all again; then, when it was properly adjusted, he discovered that his pocket-handkerchief was not available, being left in the inner coat pocket; to this succeeded a doubt as to the safety of the check, which instituted another search, and it was full ten minutes before he was completely caparisoned and ready for the road.

"Good-by, Captain; good-by!" said he, warmly, yet warily, not knowing at what precise temperature the metal of my heart was fusible. At a mild heat I had been evidently unsinged, and the white glow of his flattery seemed only to harden me. The interview was now over, and, as I thought

sufficient had been done to convince my friend that the terms of distant acquaintance were to be the limits of our future intercourse, I assumed a little show of friendliness, and shook his hand warmly.

"Good-by, Mr. Blake; pray present my respectful compliments to your friends. Allow me to ring for your horse; you are not going to have a shower, I hope."

"No, no, Captain, only a passing cloud," said he, warming up perceptibly under the influence of my advances, "nothing more. Why, what is it I'm forgetting now! Oh, I have it! Maybe I'm too bold; but sure an old friend and relation may take a liberty sometimes. It was just a little request of Mrs. Blake, as I was leaving the house." He stopped here as if to take soundings, and perceiving no change in my countenance, continued, "It was just to beg, that, in a kind and friendly way, you'd come over and eat your dinner with us on Sunday—nobody but the family, not a soul—Mrs. Blake and the girls—a boiled leg of mutton—Matthew—a fresh trout, if we can catch one—plain and homely—but a hearty welcome, and a bottle of old claret, maybe, too—ah! ah! ah!"

Before the cadence of Mr. Blake's laugh had died away, I politely but resolutely declined the proffered invitation, and, by way of setting the question at rest forever, gave him to understand that, from impaired health and other causes, I had resolved upon strictly confining myself to the limits of my own house and grounds, at least for the present.

Mr. Blake then saluted me for the last time, and left the room. As he mounted his hackney, I could not help overhearing an abortive effort he made to draw Mike into something like conversation; but it proved an utter failure, and it was evident he deemed the man as incorrigible as the master.

"A very fine young man the Captain is—remarkable!—and it's proud I am to have him for a nephew!"

So saying, he cantered down the avenue, while Mickey, as he looked after him, muttered between his teeth, "And faix, it's prouder you'd be av he was your son-in-law!"

Mike's soliloquy seemed to show me, in a new light, the meaning of my relative's manner. It was for the first time in my life that such a thought had occurred to me, and it was not without a sense of shame that I now admitted it.

If there be something which elevates and exalts us in our esteem, tinging our hearts with heroism and our souls with pride, in the love and attachment of some fair and beautiful girl, there is something equally humiliating in being the object of cold and speculative calculation to a match-making family. Your character studied, your pursuits watched, your tastes conned over, your very temperament inquired into—surrounded by snares, environed by practiced attentions—one eye fixed upon the registered testament of your relative, the other riveted upon your own caprices; and then those thousand little cares and kindnesses which come so pleasurably upon the heart when the offspring of true affection, perverted as they are by base views and sordid interest, are so many shocks to the feeling and understanding. Like the Eastern sirocco, which seems to breathe of freshness and of health, and yet bears but pestilence and death upon its breezes—so these calculated and well-considered traits of affection only render callous and harden the heart which had responded warmly, openly, and abundantly to the true outpourings of affection. At how many a previously happy hearth has the seed of this fatal passion planted its discord! How many a fair and lovely girl, with beauty and attractions sufficient to win all that her heart could wish of fondness and devotion, has, by this pernicious passion, become a cold, heartless, worldly coquette, weighing men's characters by the adventitious circumstances of their birth and fortune, and scrutinizing the eligibility of a match with the practiced acumen with which a notary investigates the solvency of a creditor. How do the traits of beauty, gesture, voice, and manner become converted into the common-place and distasteful trickery of the world! The very hospitality of the house becomes suspect, their friendship is but fictitious; those rare and goodly gifts of fondness and sisterly affection which grow up in happier circumstances, are here but rivalry, envy, and ill-conceived hatred. The very accomplishments which cultivate and adorn life, that light but graceful frieze which girds the temple of homely happiness, are here but the meditated and well-considered occasions of display. All the bright features of womanhood, all the freshness of youth, and all its fascinations, are but like those richly colored and beautiful fruits, seductive to the eye and fair to look upon, but which within contain nothing but a core of rottenness and decay.

No, no; unblessed by all which makes a hearth a home, I may travel on my weary way through life—but such a one as this I will not make the partner of my sorrows and my joys, come what will of it!

CHAPTER CXII.

A SURPRISE.

FROM the hour of Mr. Blake's departure, my life was no longer molested. My declaration, which had evidently, under his auspices, been made the subject of conversation through the country, was at least so far successful, as it permitted me to spend my time in the way I liked best, and without the necessity of maintaining the show of intercourse, when in reality I kept up none, with the neighborhood. While thus, therefore, my life passed on equably and tranquilly, many months glided over, and I found myself already a year at home, without it appearing more than a few weeks. Nothing seems so short in retrospect as monotony; the number, the variety, the interest of the events which occupy us, making our hours pass glibly and flowingly, will still suggest to the mind the impressions of a longer period than when the daily routine of our occupations assumes a character of continued uniformity. It seems to be the *amende* made by hours of weariness and tedium, that, in looking back upon them, they appear to have passed rapidly over. Not that my life, at the period I speak of, was devoid of interest; on the contrary, devoting myself with zeal and earnestness to the new duties of my station, I made myself thoroughly acquainted with the condition of my property, the interests of my tenantry, their prospects, their hopes, their objects. Investigating them as only he can who is the owner of the soil, I endeavored to remedy the ancient vices of the land—the habits of careless, reckless waste, of indifference for the morrow; and, by instilling a feature of prudent foresight into that boundless confidence in the future upon which every Irishman of every rank lives and trusts, I succeeded at last in so far ameliorating their situation, that a walk through my property, instead of presenting—as it at first did—a crowd of eager and anxious supplicants, entreating for abatements in rent, succor for their sick, and sometimes even food itself, showed me now a happy and industrious people, confident in themselves, and firmly relying on their own resources.

Another spring was now opening, and a feeling of calm and tranquil happiness, the result of my successful management of my estate, made my days pass pleasantly along. I was sitting at a late breakfast in my little library; the open window afforded a far and wide prospect of the country, blooming in all the promise of the season, while the drops of the passing shower still lingered upon the grass, and were sparkling like jewels under the bright sunshine. Masses of white and billowy cloud moved swiftly through the air, coloring the broad river with many a shadow as they passed. The birds sang merrily, the trees shook their leaves in concert, and there was that sense of movement in everything on earth and sky which gives to spring its character of lightness and exhilaration. The youth of the year, like the youth of our own existence, is beautiful in the restless activity which marks it. The tender flower, that seems to open as we look; the grass, that springs before our eyes; all speak of promise. The changing phases of the sky, like the smiles and tears of infancy, excite without weariness, and, while they engage our sympathies, they fatigue not our compassion.

Partly lost in thought as I looked upon the fair and varied scene before me, now turning to the pages of the book upon the breakfast-table, the hours of the morning passed quickly over, and it was already beyond noon. I was startled from my reverie by sounds which I could scarcely trust my ears to believe real. I listened again, and thought I could detect them distinctly. It seemed as though some one were rapidly running over the keys of a pianoforte, essaying with the voice to follow the notes, and sometimes striking two or three bold and successive chords—then a merry laugh would follow, and drown all other sounds. "What can it be?" thought I. "There is, to be sure, a pianoforte in the large drawing-room; but then, who would venture upon such a liberty as this? Besides, who is capable of it? There! it can be no inexperienced performer gave that shake; my worthy housekeeper never accomplished that." So saying, I jumped from the breakfast-table, and set off in the direction of the sound. A small drawing-room and the billiard-room lay between me and the large drawing-room; and, as I traversed them, the music grew gradually louder. Conjecturing that, whoever it might be, the performance would cease on my entrance, I listened for a few moments before opening the door. Nothing could be more singular—nothing more strange—than the effect of those unaccustomed sounds in that silent and deserted place. The character of the music, too, contributed not a little to this: rapidly passing from grave to gay—from the melting softness of some plaintive air to the reckless hurry and confusion of an Irish jig—the player

seemed, as it were, to run wild through all the floating fancies of his memory; now breaking suddenly off in the saddest cadence of a song, the notes would change into some quaint old-fashioned crone, in which the singer seemed so much at home, and gave the queer drollery of the words that expression of archness so eminently the character of certain Irish airs. "But what the deuce is this?" said I, as, rattling over the keys with a flowing but brilliant finger, she—for it was unquestionably a woman—with a clear and sweet voice, broken by laughter, began to sing the words of Mr. Bodkin's song, "The Man for Galway." When she had finished the last verse, her hand strayed, as it were, carelessly across the instrument, while she herself gave way to a free burst of merriment; and then, suddenly resuming the air, she chanted forth the following words, with a spirit and effect I can convey no idea of:

"To live at home,
And never roam;
To pass his days in sighing;
To wear sad looks,
Read stupid books,
And look half dead or dying:
Not show his face,
Nor join the chase,
But dwell a hermit alway:
Oh! Charley dear!
To me 'tis clear,
You're not the man for Galway!"

"You're not the man for Galway!" repeated she once more, while she closed the piano with a loud bang.

"And why not, my dear—why not the man for Galway?" said I, as, bursting open the door, I sprang into the room.

"Oh! it's you, is it?—at last. So I've unearthed you, have I?"

With these words she burst into an immoderate fit of laughter; leaving me, who intended to be the party giving the surprise, amazed, confused, and speechless, in the middle of the floor.

That my reader may sympathize a little in my distresses, let me present him with the *tableau* before me. Seated upon the piano-stool was a young lady of at most eighteen years: her face, had it not been for its expression of exuberant drollery and malicious fun, would have been downright beautiful; her eyes, of the deepest blue, and shaded by long lashes, instead of indulging the character of pensive and thoughtful beauty for which Nature destined them, sparkled with a most animated brightness; her nose, which, rather short, was still beautifully proportioned, gave, with her well-curled upper lip, a look of sauciness to the features quite bewitching; her hair—that brilliant auburn we see in a *Carlo Dolci*—fell in wild and massive curls upon her shoulders. Her costume was a dark-green riding-habit, not of the newest in its fashion, and displaying more than one rent in its careless folds; her hat, whip, and gloves lay on the floor beside her, and her whole attitude and bearing indicated the most perfect ease and carelessness.

"So you are caught—taken alive!" said she, as she pressed her hands upon her sides in a fresh burst of laughter.

"By Jove! this is a surprise indeed!" said I. "And, pray, into whose fair hands have I fallen a captive?" recovering myself a little, and assuming a half air of gallantry.

"So you don't know me, don't you?"

"Upon my life I do not."

"How good! Why, I'm Baby Blake."

"Baby Blake?" said I; thinking that a rather strange appellation for one whose well-developed proportions betokened nothing of infancy. "Baby Blake?"

"To be sure; your cousin Baby."

"Indeed!" said I, springing forward. "Let me embrace my relative."

Accepting my proffered salutation with the most exemplary coolness, she said:

"Get a chair, now, and let's have a talk together."

"Why the devil do they call you Baby?" said I, still puzzled by this palpable misnomer.

"Because I am the youngest, and I was always the baby," replied she, adjusting her ringlets with a most rural coquetry. "Now, tell me something. Why do you live shut up here like a madman, and not come near us at Gurt-na-morra?"

"Oh! that's a long story, Baby. But, since we are asking questions, how did you get in here?"

"Just through the window, my dear; and I've torn my habit, as you see."

So saying, she exhibited a rent of about two feet long, thrusting through it a very pretty foot and ankle at the same time.

"As my inhospitable customs have cost you a habit, you must let me make you a present of one."

"No! will you though? That's a good fellow. Lord! I told them I knew you weren't a miser; that you were only odd, that's all."

"And how did you come over, Baby?"

"Just cantered over with little Paddy Byrne. I made him take all the walls and ditches we met, and they're scraping the mud off him ever since. I'm glad I made

you laugh, Charley; they say you are so sad. Dear me, how thirsty I am! Have you any beer?"

"To be sure, Baby. But wouldn't you like some luncheon?"

"Of all things. Well, this is fun!" said she, as, taking my arm, I led her from the drawing-room. "They don't know where I'm gone—not one of them; and I've a great mind not to tell them, if you wouldn't blab."

"Would it be quite proper?"

"Proper!" cried she, imitating my voice; "I like that! as if I was going to run away with you. Dear me! what a pretty house! and what nice pictures! Who is the old fellow up there in the armor?"

"That's Sir Hildebrand O'Malley," said I, with some pride, in recognizing an ancestor of the thirteenth century.

"And the other old fright with the wig, and his hands stuck in his pockets?"

"My grandfather, Baby."

"Lord! how ugly he is! Why, Charley, he hasn't a look of you; one would think, too, he was angry at us. Ay, old gentleman! you don't like to see me leaning on cousin Charley's arm. That must be the luncheon; I'm sure I hear knives and forks rattling there."

The old butler's astonishment was not inferior to my own a few minutes before, when I entered the dining-room with my fair cousin upon my arm. As I drew a chair toward the table, a thought struck me that possibly it might only be a due attention to my fair guest if I invited the housekeeper, Mrs. Magra, to favor us with her presence; and accordingly, in an undertone, so as not to be overheard by old Simon, I said,

"Perhaps, Baby, you'd like to have Mrs. Magra to keep us company?"

"Who's she?" was the brief answer.

"The housekeeper; a very respectable old matron."

"Is she funny?"

"Funny! not a bit."

"Oh, then, never mind her. What made you think of her?"

"Why, I thought—perhaps you'd think—that is, people might say—in fact, I was doing a little bit proper on your account."

"Oh! that was it, was it? Thank you for nothing, my dear; Baby Blake can take care of herself. And now just help me to that wing there. Do you know, cousin Charley, I think you're an old quiz, and not half as good a fellow as you used to be."

"Come, come, Baby, don't be in such a hurry to pronounce upon me. Let us take a glass of wine. Fill Miss Blake's glass, Simon."

"Well, you may be better when one comes to know you. I detest sherry; no, never mind, I'll take it, as it's here. Charley, I'll not compliment you upon your ham; they don't know how to save them here. I'll give you such a receipt when you come over to see us. But will you come? that's the question."

"How can you ask me! Don't you think I'll return your visit?"

"Oh! hang your ceremony. Come and see us, like a good-natured fellow, that knew us since we played together, and quarreled over our toys on the grass. Is that your sword up there? Did you hear that noise? that was thunder: there it comes. Look at that!"

As she spoke, a darkness like night overspread the landscape; the waves of the river became greatly agitated, and the rain, descending in torrents, beat with tremendous force against the windows; clap after clap of thunder followed; the lightning flashed fearfully through the gloom, and the wind, growing every moment stronger, drove the rain with redoubled violence against the glass. For a while we amused ourselves with watching the effects of the storm without; the poor laborers flying from their work; the dripping figures seeking shelter beneath the trees; the barks; the very loaded carts themselves, all interested Miss Baby, whose eye roved from the shore to the Shannon, recognizing, with a practiced eye, every house upon its banks, and every bark that rocked and pitched beneath the gale.

"Well, this is pleasant to look out at," said she, at length, and after the storm had lasted for above an hour, without evincing any show of abatement; "but what's to become of *me?*"

Now, that was the very question I had been asking myself for the last twenty minutes, without ever being able to find the answer.

"Eh, Charley, what's to become of me?"

"Oh, never fear: one thing's quite certain, you cannot leave this in such weather; the river is certainly impassable by this time at the ford, and to go by the road is out of the question; it is fully twelve miles. I have it, Baby; you, as I've said before, can't leave this, but I can. Now, I'll go over to Gurtna-Morra, and return in the morning to bring you back; it will be fine by that time."

"Well, I like your notion; you'll leave

me all alone here to drink tea, I suppose, with your friend Mrs. Magra; a pleasant evening I'd have of it: not a bit—"

"Well, Baby, don't be cross; I only meant this arrangement really for your sake. I needn't tell you how very much I'd prefer doing the honors of my poor house in person."

"Oh, I see what you mean—more propers. Well, well, I've a great deal to learn; but, look, I think it's growing lighter."

"No, far from it; it's only that gray mass along the horizon that always bodes continual rain."

As the prospects without had little cheering to look upon, we sat down beside the fire, and chatted away, forgetting very soon, in a hundred mutual recollections and inquiries, the rain and the wind, the thunder and the hurricane. Now and then, as some louder crash would resound above our heads, for a moment we would turn to the window, and comment upon the dreadful weather; but the next, we had forgotten all about it, and were deep in our confabulations.

As for my fair cousin, who at first was full of contrivances to pass the time—such as the piano; a game at backgammon; chicken hazard; battledore—she at last became mightily interested in some of my soldiering adventures, and it was six o'clock ere we again thought that some final measure must be adopted for restoring Baby to her friends, or, at least, guarding against the consequences her simple and guileless nature might have involved her in.

Mike was called into the conference, and, at his suggestion, it was decided that we should have out the phaeton, and that I should myself drive Miss Blake home; a plan which offered no other difficulties than this one, namely, that of above thirty horses in my stables, I had not a single pair which had ever been harnessed.

This, so far from proving the obstacle I deemed it, seemed, on the contrary, to overwhelm Baby with delight.

"Let's have them. Come, Charley; this will be rare fun; we couldn't have a team of four, could we?"

"Six, if you like it, my dear coz—only, who's to hold them?—they're young thorough-breds; most of them never backed; some not bitted. In fact, I know nothing of my stable. I say, Mike, is there anything fit to take out?"

"Yes, sir; there's Miss Wildespin: she's in training, to be sure; but we can't help that; and the brown colt they call 'Billy the Bolter:' they're the likeliest we have; without your honor would take the two chestnuts we took up last week; they're raal devils to go; and, if the tackle will hold them, they'll bring you to Mr. Blake's door in forty minutes."

"I vote for the chestnuts," said Baby, slapping her boot with her horse-whip.

"I move an amendment in favor of Miss Wildespin," said I, doubtfully.

"He'll never do for Galway," sang Baby, laying her whip on my shoulder with no tender hand; "yet you used to cross the country in good style when you were here before."

"And might do so again, Baby."

"Ah, no; that vile dragoon seat, with your long stirrup, and your heel dropped, and your elbow this way, and your head that! How could you ever screw your horse up to his fence, lifting him along as you came up through the heavy ground, and with a stroke of your hand sending him pop over, with his hind legs well under him?" Here she burst into a fit of laughter at my look of amazement, as with voice, gesture, and look, she actually dramatized the scene she described.

By the time that I had costumed my fair friend in my dragoon cloak and a foraging cap, with a gold band around it, which was the extent of muffling my establishment could muster, a distant noise without apprised us that the phaeton was approaching. Certainly, the mode in which that equipage came up to the door, might have inspired sentiments of fear in any heart less steeled against danger than my fair cousin's. The two blood chestnuts (for it was those Mike harnessed, having a groom's dislike to take a racer out of training) were surrounded by about twenty people: some at their heads; some patting them on the flanks; some spoking the wheels; and a few, the more cautious of the party, standing at a respectable distance, and offering advice. The mode of progression was simply a spring, a plunge, a rear, a lounge, and a kick; and, considering it was the first time they ever performed together, nothing could be more uniform than their display; sometimes the pole would be seen to point straight upward, like a lightning conductor, while the infuriated animals appeared sparring with their fore legs at an imaginary enemy. Sometimes, like the pictures in a school-book on mythology, they would seem in the act of diving, while with their hind legs they dashed the splash-board into fragments behind them; their eyes flashing fire, their nostrils distended, their flanks heaving, and every limb trembling with passion and excitement.

"That's what I call a rare turn-out,"

said Baby, who enjoyed the proceeding amazingly.

"Yes; but remember," said I, "we're not to have all these running footmen the whole way."

"I like that near sider with the white fetlock."

"You're right, Miss," said Mike, who entered at the moment, and felt quite gratified at the criticism. "You're right, Miss; it's himself can do it."

"Come, Baby, are you ready?"

"All right, sir," said she, touching her cap knowingly with her forefinger.

"Will the tackle hold, Mike?" said I.

"We'll take this with us, at any rate," pointing, as he spoke, to a considerable coil of rope, a hammer, and a basket of nails, he carried on his arm. "It's the break harness we have, and it ought to be strong enough; but sure, if the thunder comes on again, they'd smash a chain cable."

"Now, Charley," cried Baby, "keep their heads straight; for when they go that way, they mean going."

"Well, Baby, let's start; but pray remember one thing. If I'm not as agreeable on the journey as I ought to be; if I don't say as many pretty things to my pretty coz, it's because these confounded beasts will give me as much as I can do."

"Oh yes, look after the cattle, and take another time for squeezing my hand. I say, Charley, you'd like to smoke, now, wouldn't you? if so, don't mind me."

"A thousand thanks for thinking of it; but I'll not commit such a trespass on good breeding."

When we reached the door, the prospect looked dark and dismal enough; the rain had almost ceased, but masses of black cloud were hurrying across the sky, and the low rumbling noise of a gathering storm crept along the ground. Our panting equipage, with its two mounted grooms behind,—for, to provide against all accidents, Mike ordered two such to follow us,—stood in waiting; Miss Blake's horse, held by the smallest imaginable bit of boyhood, bringing up the rear.

"Look at Paddy Byrne's face," said Baby, directing my attention to the little individual in question.

Now, small as the aforesaid face was, it contrived, within its limits, to exhibit an expression of unqualified fear. I had no time, however, to give a second look, when I jumped into the phaeton and seized the reins. Mike sprang up behind at a look from me, and, without speaking a word, the stablemen and helpers flew right and left. The chestnuts, seeing all free before them, made one tremendous plunge, carrying the fore-carriage clear off the ground, and straining every nut, bolt, screw, and strap about us with the effort.

"They're off, now," cried Mickey.

"Yes, they are off, now," said Baby, "Keep them going."

Nothing could be easier to follow than this advice; and, in fact, so little merit had I in obeying it, that I never spoke a word. Down the avenue we went, at the speed of lightning, the stones, and the water from the late rain, flying and splashing about us. In one series of plunges, agreeably diversified by a strong bang upon the splash-board, we reached the gate. Before I had time to utter a prayer for our safety, we were through, and fairly upon the high-road.

"Musha, but the master's mad!" cried the old dame of the gate-lodge; "he wasn't out of this gate for a year and a half, and look now—"

The rest was lost in the clear ringing laugh of Baby, who clapped her hands in ecstasy and delight.

"What a spanking pair they are! I suppose you wouldn't let me get my hand on them?" said she, making a gesture as if to take the reins.

"Heaven forbid, my dear," said I; "they've nearly pulled my wrists off already."

Our road, like many in the west of Ireland, lay through a level tract of bog; deep ditches, half filled with water, on either side of us, but, fortunately, neither hill nor valley for several miles.

"There's the mail," said Baby, pointing to a dark speck at a long distance off.

Ere many minutes elapsed, our stretching gallop, for such had our pace sobered into, brought us up with it, and as we flew by, at top speed, Baby jumped to her feet, and turning a waggish look at our beaten rivals, burst out into a fit of triumphant laughter.

Mike was correct as to time; in some few seconds less than forty minutes we turned into the avenue of Gurt-na-Morra. Tearing along like the very moment of their starting, the hot and fiery animals galloped up the approach, and at length came to a stop in a deep plowed field, into which, fortunately for us, Mr. Blake, animated less by the picturesque than the profitable, had converted his green lawn. This check, however, was less owing to my agency than to that of my servants; for, dismounting in haste, they flew to the horses' heads, and with ready tact, and be-

fore I had helped my cousin to the ground, succeeded in unharnessing them from the carriage, and led them, blown and panting, covered with foam, and splashed with mud, into the space before the door.

By this time we were joined by the whole Blake family, who poured forth in astonishment at our strange and sudden appearance. Explanation on my part was unnecessary, for Baby, with a volubility quite her own, gave the whole recital in less than three minutes. From the moment of her advent to her departure, they had it all; and while she mingled her ridicule at my surprise, her praise of my luncheon, her jests at my prudence, the whole family joined heartily in her mirth, while they welcomed, with most unequivocal warmth, my first visit to Gurt-na-Morra.

I confess it was with no slight gratification I remarked that Baby's visit was as much a matter of surprise to them as to me. Believing her to have gone to visit at Portumna Castle, they felt no uneasiness at her absence; so that, in her descent upon me, she was really only guided by her own willful fancy, and that total absence of all consciousness of wrong which makes a truly innocent girl the hardiest of all God's creatures. I was reassured by this feeling, and satisfied that, whatever the intentions of the elder members of the Blake family, Baby was, at least, no participator in their plots, or sharer in their intrigues.

CHAPTER CXIII.

NEW VIEWS.

When I found myself the next morning at home, I could not help ruminating over the strange adventures of the preceding day, and felt a kind of self-reproach at the frigid manner in which I had hitherto treated all the Blake advances, contrasting so ill for me with the unaffected warmth and kind good-nature of their reception. Never alluding, even by accident, to my late estrangement; never, by a chance speech, indicating that they felt any soreness for the past,—they talked away about the gossip of the country,—its feuds, its dinners, its assizes, its balls, its garrisons,—all the varied subjects of country life were gayly and laughingly discussed; and when, as I entered my own silent and deserted home, and contrasted its look of melancholy and gloom with the gay and merry scene I so lately parted from; when my echoing steps reverberated along the flagged hall, I thought of the happy family picture I left behind me, and could not help avowing to myself that the goods of fortune I possessed were but ill dispensed, when, in the midst of every means and appliance for comfort and happiness, I lived a solitary man, companionless and alone.

I arose from breakfast a hundred times; now walking impatiently toward the window, now strolling into the drawing-room. Around, on every side, lay scattered the prints and drawings, as Baby had thrown them carelessly upon the floor: her handkerchief was also there. I took it up; I know not why: some lurking leaven of old romance perhaps suggested it; but I hoped it might prove of delicate texture, and bespeaking that lady-like coquetry which so pleasantly associates with the sex in our minds. Alas! no. Nothing could be more palpably the opposite: torn, and with a knot—some hint to memory—upon one corner, it was no aid to my careering fancy. And yet—and yet, what a handsome girl she is! how finely, how delicately formed that Greek outline of forehead and brow! how transparently soft that downy pink upon her cheek! with what varied expression those eyes can beam!—ay, that they can: but, confound it! there's this fault,—their very archness—their sly malice—will be interpreted by the ill-judging world to any but the real motive. "How like a flirt!" will one say; "how impertinent! how ill-bred!" The conventional stare of cold, patched, and painted beauty, upon whose unblushing cheek no stray tinge of modesty has wandered, will be tolerated—even admired; while the artless beamings of the soul upon the face of rural loveliness will be condemned without appeal.

Such a girl may a man marry who destines his days to the wild west; but woe unto him!—woe unto him! should he migrate among the more civilized and less charitable *coteries* of our neighbors.

"Ah! here are the papers, and I was forgetting. Let me see—'Bayonne'—ay, 'march of the troops—sixth corps.' What can that be without? I say, Mike, who is cantering along the avenue?"

"It's me, sir. I'm training the brown filly for Miss Mary, as your honor bid me last night."

"Ah, very true. Does she go quietly?"

"Like a lamb, sir; barrin' she does give a kick now and then at the sheet, when it bangs against her legs."

"Am I to go over with the books now,

sir?" said a wild-looking shock-head appearing within the door.

"Yes, take them over, with my compliments; and say I hope Miss Mary Blake has caught no cold."

"You were speaking about a habit and hat, sir?" said Mrs. Magra, courtesying as she entered.

"Yes, Mrs. Magra; I want your advice. Oh, tell Barnes I really cannot be bored about those eternal turnips every day of my life. And, Mike, I wish you'd make them look over the four-horse harness. I want to try those grays; they tell me they'll run well together. Well, Freney, more complaints I hope? nothing but trespasses; I don't care, so you'd not worry me, if they eat up every blade of clover in the grounds: I'm sick of being bored this way. Did you say that we'd eight couple of good dogs?—quite enough to begin with. Tell Jones to ride into Banagher and look after that box: Buckmaster sent it from London two months ago, and it has been lying there ever since. And, Mrs. Magra, pray let the windows be opened, and the house well aired: that drawing-room would be all the better for new papering."

These few and broken directions may serve to show my readers—what certainly they failed to convince myself of—that a new chapter of my life had opened before me; and that, in proportion to the length of time my feelings had found neither vent nor outlet, they now rushed madly, tempestuously into their new channels, suffering no impediment to arrest, no obstacle to oppose their current.

Nothing can be conceived more opposite to my late, than my present habits now became; the house, the grounds, the gardens, all seemed to participate in the new influence which beamed upon myself; the stir and bustle of active life was everywhere perceptible; and, amid numerous preparations for the moors and the hunting-field, for pleasure parties upon the river, and fishing excursions up the mountains, my days were spent. The Blakes, without even for a moment pressing their attentions upon me, permitted me to go and come amongst them unquestioned and unasked. When, nearly every morning, I appeared in the breakfast-room, I felt exactly like a member of the family: the hundred little discrepancies of thought and habit which struck me forcibly at first looked daily less apparent; the careless inattentions of my fair cousins as to dress, their free-and-easy boisterous manner, their very accents, which fell so harshly on my ear, gradually made less and less impression, until at last, when a raw English ensign, just arrived in the neighborhood, remarked to me in confidence, "What devilish fine girls they were, if they were not so confoundedly Irish!" I could not help wondering what the fellow meant, and attributed the observation more to his ignorance than to its truth.

Papa and Mamma Blake, like prudent generals, so long as they saw the forces of the enemy daily wasting before them—so long as they could with impunity carry on the war at his expense—resolved to risk nothing by a pitched battle. Unlike the Dalrymples, they could leave all to time.

Oh! tell me not of dark eyes swimming in their own ethereal essence; tell me not of pouting lips, of glossy ringlets, of taper fingers, and well-rounded insteps; speak not to me of soft voices, whose seductive sounds ring sweetly in our hearts; preach not of those thousand womanly graces so dear to every man, and doubly to him who lives apart from all their influences and their fascinations; neither dwell upon congenial temperament, similarity of taste, of disposition, and of thought; these are not the great risks a man runs in life. Of all the temptations, strong as these may be, there is one greater than them all, and that is—propinquity!

Show me the man who has ever stood this test; show me the man, deserving the name of such, who has become daily and hourly exposed to the breaching artillery of flashing eyes, of soft voices, of winning smiles, and kind speeches, and who hasn't felt, and that too soon too, a breach within the rampart of his heart. He may, it is true—nay, he will, in many cases—make a bold and vigorous defense; sometimes will he reintrench himself within the stockades of his prudence, but, alas! it is only to defer the moment when he must lay down his arms. He may, like a wise man, who sees his fate inevitable, make a virtue of necessity, and surrender at discretion; or, like a crafty foe, seeing his doom before him, under the cover of the night he may make a sortie from the garrison, and run for his life. Ignominious as such a course must be, it is often the only one left.

But to come back. Love, like the smallpox, is most dangerous when you take it in the natural way. Those made matches, which Heaven is supposed to have a hand in, when placing an unmarried gentleman's property in the neighborhood of an unmarried lady's, which destine two people for each other in life, because their well-judging friends have agreed "they'll

do very well; they were made for each other,"—these are the mild cases of the malady; this process of friendly vaccination takes out the poison of the disease, substituting a more harmless and less exciting affection; but the really dangerous instances are those from contact, that same propinquity, that confounded tendency every man yields to, to fall into a railroad of habit; that is the risk, that is the danger. What a bore it is to find that the absence of one person, with whom you're in no wise in love, will spoil your morning's canter, or your rowing party upon the river! How much put out are you, when she, to whom you always gave your arm in to dinner, does not make her appearance in the drawing-room; and your tea, too, some careless one, indifferent to your taste, puts a lump of sugar too little, or cream too much, while she— But no matter; habit has done for you what no direct influence of beauty could do, and, a slave to your own selfish indulgences, and the cultivation of that case you prize so highly, you fall over head and ears in love.

Now, you are not, my good reader, by any means to suppose that this was my case. No, no; I was too much what the world terms the "old soldier" for that. To continue my illustration: like the fortress that has been often besieged, the sentry upon the walls keeps more vigilant watch; his ear detects the far-off clank of the dread artillery; he marks each parallel; he notes down every breaching battery; and, if he be captured, at least it is in fair fight.

Such were some of my reflections as I rode slowly home one evening from Gurtna-Morra. Many a time, latterly, had I contrasted my own lonely and deserted hearth with the smiling looks, the happy faces, and the merry voices I had left behind me; and many a time did I ask myself, "Am I never to partake of a happiness like this?" How many a man is seduced into matrimony from this very feeling! How many a man whose hours have passed fleetingly at the pleasant tea-table, or by the warm hearth of some old country-house, going forth into the cold and cheerless night, reaches his far-off home only to find it dark and gloomy, joyless and companionless? How often has the hard-visaged look of his old butler, as, with sleepy eyes and yawning face, he hands a bedroom candle, suggested thoughts of married happiness? Of the perils of propinquity I have already spoken; the risks of contrast are also great. Have you never, in strolling through some fragrant and rich conservatory, fixed your eye upon a fair and lovely flower, whose blossoming beauty seems to give all the luster and all the incense of the scene around? and how have you thought it would adorn and grace the precincts of your home, diffusing fragrance on every side. Alas! the experiment is not always successful. Much of the charm and many of the fascinations which delight you are the result of association of time and of place. The lovely voice, whose tones have spoken to your heart, may, like some instrument, be delightful in the harmony of the orchestra, but, after all, prove a very middling performer in a duet.

I say not this to deter men from matrimony, but to warn them from a miscalculation which may mar their happiness. Flirtation is a very fine thing, but it's only a state of transition, after all. The tadpole existence of the lover would be great fun, if one was never to become a frog under the hands of the parson. I say all this dispassionately and advisedly. Like the poet of my country, for many years of my life,

"My only books were woman's looks,"

and certainly I subscribed to a circulating library.

All this long digression may perhaps bring the reader to where it brought me—the very palpable conviction, that, though not in love with my cousin Baby, I could not tell when I might eventually become so.

CHAPTER CXIV.

A RECOGNITION.

THE most pleasing part about retrospect is the memory of our by-gone hopes. The past, however happy, however blissful, few would wish to live over again; but who is there that does not long for, does not pine after the day-dream which gilded the future—which looked ever forward to the time to come as to a realization of all that was dear to us; lightening our present cares, soothing our passing sorrows by that one thought.

Life is marked out in periods in which, like stages in a journey, we rest and repose ourselves, casting a look, now back upon the road we have been traveling, now throwing a keener glance toward the path left us. It is at such spots as these remembrance comes full upon us, and that we feel how little our intentions have

swayed our career or influenced our actions; the aspirations, the resolves of youth, are either looked upon as puerile follies, or a most distant day settled on for their realization. The principles we fondly looked to, like our guide-stars, are dimly visibly, not seen; the friends we cherished are changed and gone; the scenes themselves seem no longer the sunshine and the shade we loved; and, in fact, we are living in a new world, where our own altered condition gives the type to all around us; the only link that binds us to the past being that same memory, that, like a sad curfew, tolls the twilight of our fairest dreams and most cherished wishes.

That these glimpses of the by-gone season of our youth should be but fitful and passing—tinging, not coloring the landscape of our life—we should be engaged in all the active bustle and turmoil of the world, surrounded by objects of hope, love, and ambition, stemming the strong tide in whose fountain is fortune.

He, however, who lives apart, a dreamy and a passionless existence, will find that in the past, more than in the future, his thoughts have found their resting-place; memory usurps the place of hope, and he travels through life like one walking onward; his eyes still turning toward some loved forsaken spot, teeming with all the associations of his happiest hours, and preserving, even in distance, the outline that he loved.

Distance in time, as in space, smooths down all the inequalities of surface; and, as the cragged and rugged mountain, darkened by cliff and precipice, shows to the far-off traveler but some blue and misty mass, so the long-lost-sight-of hours lose all the cares and griefs that tinged them; and, to our mental eye, are but objects of uniform loveliness and beauty: and if we do not think of

"The smiles—the tears
Of boyhood's years,"

it is because, like April showers, they but checker the spring of our existence.

For myself, baffled in hope at a period when most men but begin to feel it, I thought myself much older than I really was; the disappointments of the world, like the storms of the ocean, impart a false sense of experience to the young heart, as he sails forth upon his voyage; and it is an easy error to mistake trials for time.

The goods of fortune by which I was surrounded took nothing from the bitterness of my retrospect: on the contrary, I could not help feeling that every luxury of my life was bought by my surrender of that career which had elated me in my own esteem, and which, setting a high and noble ambition before me, taught me to be a man.

To be happy, one must not only fulfill the duties and exactions of his station, but the station itself must answer to his views and aspirations in life. Now, mine did not sustain this condition: all that my life had of promise was connected with the memory of her who never could share my fortunes; of her for whom I had earned praise and honor; becoming ambitious as the road to her affection, only to learn after, that my hopes were but a dream, and my paradise a wilderness.

While thus the inglorious current of my life ran on, I was not indifferent to the mighty events the great continent of Europe was witnessing: the successes of the Peninsular campaign; the triumphant entry of the British into France; the downfall of Napoleon; the restoration of the Bourbons, followed each other with the rapidity of the most common-place occurrences; and in the few short years in which I had sprung from boyhood to man's estate, the whole condition of the world was altered. Kings deposed; great armies disbanded; rightful sovereigns restored to their dominions; banished and exiled men returned to their country, invested with rank and riches; and peace, in the fullest tide of its blessings, poured down upon the earth devastated and blood-stained.

Years passed on; and between the careless abandonment to the mere amusement of the hour, and the darker meditation upon the past, time slipped away. From my old friends and brother officers I heard but rarely. Power, who at first wrote frequently, grew gradually less and less communicative. Webber, who had gone to Paris at the peace, had written but one letter; while, from the rest, a few straggling lines was all I received. In truth be it told, my own negligence and inability to reply cost me this apparent neglect.

It was a fine evening in May, when, rigging up a spritsail, I jumped into my yawl, and dropped easily down the river. The light wind gently curled the crested water, the trees waved gently and shook their branches in the breeze, and my little bark, bending slightly beneath, rustled on her foamy track with that joyous bounding motion so inspiriting to one's heart. The clouds were flying swiftly past, tinging with their shadows the mountains beneath; the Munster shore, glowing with a rich sunlight, showed every sheep-cot and every

hedge-row clearly out, while the deep shadow of tall Scariff darkened the silent river where Holy Island, with its ruined churches and melancholy tower, were reflected in the still water.

It was a thoroughly Irish landscape: the changeful sky; the fast-flitting shadows; the brilliant sunlight; the plenteous fields, the broad and swelling stream; the dark mountain, from whose brown crest a wreath of thin blue smoke was rising,—were all there smiling yet sadly, like her own sons, across whose lowering brow some fitful flash of fancy ever playing, dallies like sunbeams on a darkening stream, nor marks the depth that lies below.

I sat musing over the strange harmony of nature with the temperament of man, every phase of his passionate existence seeming to have its type in things inanimate, when a loud cheer from the land aroused me, and the words "Charley! cousin Charley!" came wafted over the water to where I lay.

For some time I could but distinguish the faint outline of some figures on the shore, but, as I came nearer, I recognized my fair cousin Baby, who, with a younger brother of some eight or nine years old, was taking an evening walk.

"Do you know, Charley," said she, "the boys have gone over to the castle to look for you; we want you particularly this evening."

"Indeed, Baby! Well, I fear you must make my excuses."

"Then, once for all, I will not. I know this is one of your sulky moods, and I tell you frankly I'll not put up with them any more."

"No, no, Baby, not so: out of spirits if you will, but not out of temper."

"The distinction is much too fine for me, if there be any; but there now, do be a good fellow; come up with us—come up with *me!*"

As she said this she placed her arm within mine. I thought too—perhaps it was but a thought—she pressed me gently. I know she blushed and turned away her head to hide it.

"I don't pretend to be proof to your entreaty, cousin Baby," said I, with half-affected gallantry, putting her fingers to my lips.

"There, how can you be so foolish; look at William, yonder; I am sure he must have seen you." But William, God bless him! was bird's-nesting, or butterfly-hunting, or daisy-picking, or something of that kind.

Oh ye young brothers, who, sufficiently old to be deemed companions and *chaperons*, but yet young enough to be regarded as having neither eyes nor ears, what mischief have ye to answer for! what a long reckoning of tender speeches—of soft looks—of pressed hands, lies at your door! What an incentive to flirtation is the wily imp who turns ever and anon from his careless gambols to throw his laughter-loving eyes upon you, calling up the mantling blush to both your cheeks! He seems to chronicle the hours of your dalliance, making your secrets known unto each other. We have gone through our share of flirtation in this life: match-making mothers, prying aunts, choleric uncles, benevolent and open-hearted fathers, we understand to the life, and care no more for such mantraps than a Melton man, well mounted on his strong-boned thorough-bred, does for a four-barred ox-fence that lies before him. Like him, we take them flying: never relaxing the slapping stride of our loose gallop, we go straight ahead, never turning aside, except for a laugh at those who flounder in the swamps we sneer at. But we confess honestly, we fear the little brother, the small urchin who, with nankeen trowsers and three rows of buttons, performs the part of Cupid. He strikes real terror into our heart; he it is who, with a cunning wink, or sly smile, seems to confirm the soft nonsense we are weaving; by some slight gesture he seems to check off the long reckoning of our attentions, bringing us every moment nearer to the time when the score must be settled and the debt paid. He it is, who, by a memory delightfully oblivious of his task and his table-book, is tenacious to the life of what you said to Fanny; how you put your head under Lucy's bonnet; he can imitate to perfection the way you kneeled upon the grass; and the wretch has learnt to smack his lips like a *gourmand*, that he may convey another stage of your proceeding.

Oh, for infant schools for everything under the age of ten! Oh, for factories for the children of the rich! The age of prying curiosity is from four-and-a-half to nine, and Fouché himself might get a lesson in *police* from an urchin in his alphabet.

I contrived soon, however, to forget the presence of even the little brother. The night was falling; Baby appeared getting fatigued with her walk, for she leaned somewhat more heavily upon my arm, and I—I cannot tell wherefore—fell into that train of thinking aloud, which somehow, upon a summer's eve, with a fair girl be-

side one, is the very nearest thing to love-making.

"There, Charley—don't now—ah, don't—do let go my hand—they are coming down the avenue."

I had scarcely time to obey the injunction, when Mr. Blake called out:

"Well, indeed! Charley, this is really fortunate; we have got a friend to take tea with us, and wanted you to meet him."

Muttering an internal prayer for something not exactly the welfare of the aforesaid friend, whom I judged to be some Galway squire, I professed aloud the pleasure I felt in having come in so opportunely.

"He wishes particularly to make your acquaintance."

"So much the worse," thought I to myself; "it rarely happens that this feeling is mutual."

Evidently provoked at the little curiosity I exhibited, Blake added,

"He's on his way to Fermoy with a detachment."

"Indeed! what regiment, pray?"

"The 28th Foot."

"Ah! I don't know them."

By this time we reached the steps of the hall-door, and, just as we did so, the door opened suddenly, and a tall figure in uniform presented himself. With one spring he seized my hand and nearly wrung it off.

"Why, what," said I, "can this be? Is it really—"

"Sparks," said he—"your old friend Sparks, my boy; I've changed into the infantry, and here I am. Heard by chance you were in the neighborhood—met Mr. Blake, your friend here, at the inn, and accepted his invitation to meet you."

Poor Sparks, albeit the difference of his costume, was the same as ever. Having left the Fourteenth soon after I quitted them, he knew but little of their fortunes; and he himself had been on recruiting stations nearly the whole time since we had met before.

While we each continued to extol the good fortune of the other—he mine as being no longer in the service, and I his for still being so—we learned the various changes which had happened to each of us during our separation. Although his destination was ultimately Fermoy, Portumna was ordered to be his present quarter; and I felt delighted to have once more an old companion within reach, to chat over former days of campaigning and nights of merriment in the Peninsula.

Sparks soon became a constant visitor and guest at Gurt-na-Morra; his good temper, his easy habits, his simplicity of character, rapidly enabled him to fall into all their ways; and, although evidently not what Baby would call "the man for Galway," he endeavored with all his might to please every one, and certainly succeeded to a considerable extent.

Baby alone seemed to take pleasure in tormenting the poor sub. Long before she met with him, having heard much from me of his exploits abroad, she was continually bringing up some anecdote of his unhappy loves or misplaced passions; which he evidently smarted under the more, from the circumstance that he appeared rather inclined to like my fair cousin.

As she continued this for some time, I remarked that Sparks, who at first was all gayety and high spirits, grew gradually more depressed and dispirited. I became convinced that the poor fellow was in love; very little management on my part was necessary to obtain his confession; and, accordingly, the same evening the thought first struck me, as we were riding slowly home toward O'Malley Castle, I touched at first generally upon the merits of the Blakes, their hospitality, &c.; then diverged to the accomplishments and perfections of the girls; and, lastly, Baby herself, in all form, came up for sentence.

"Ah, yes!" said Sparks, with a deep sigh, "it is quite as you say; she is a lovely girl; and that liveliness in her character, that elasticity in her temperament, chastened down as it might be by the feeling of respect for the man she loved! I say, Charley, is it a very long attachment of yours?"

"A long attachment of mine! Why, my dear Sparks, you can't suppose that there is anything between us! I pledge you my word most faithfully."

"Oh no, don't tell me that; what good can there be in mystifying me?"

"I have no such intention, believe me. My cousin Baby, however I like and admire her, has no other place in my affection than a very charming girl, who has lightened a great many dreary and tiresome hours, and made my banishment from the world less irksome than I should have found it without her."

"And you are really not in love?"

"Not a bit of it!"

"Nor going to marry her either?"

"Not the least notion of it!—a fact. Baby and I are excellent friends, for the very reason that we were never lovers; we have had no *petits jeux* of fallings out and makings up; no hide-and-seek trials of affected indifference and real disappointments; no secrets, no griefs nor grudges;

neither quarrels nor keepsakes. In fact, we are capital cousins; quizzing every one for our own amusement; riding, walking, boating together; in fact, doing and thinking of everything save sighs and declarations; always happy to meet, and never broken-hearted when we parted. And I can only add, as a proof of my sincerity, that, if you feel as I suspect you do from your questions, I'll be your ambassador to the court of Gurt-na-Morra with sincere pleasure."

"Will you really?—Will you, indeed, Charley, do this for me?—Will you strengthen my wishes by your aid, and give me all your influence with the family?"

I could scarcely help smiling at poor Sparks's eagerness, or the unwarrantable value he put upon my alliance, in a case where his own unassisted efforts did not threaten much failure.

"I repeat it, Sparks, I'll make a proposal for you in all form, aided and abetted by everything recommendatory and laudatory I can think of; I'll talk of you as a Peninsular of no small note and promise; and observe rigid silence about your Welsh flirtation and your Spanish elopement."

"You'll not blab about the Dalrymples, I hope?"

"Trust me; I only hope you will be always equally discreet: but now—when shall it be?—Should you like to consider the matter more?"

"Oh no! nothing of the kind; let it be to-morrow; at once, if I am to fail; even that, anything's better than suspense."

"Well then, to-morrow be it," said I.

So I wished him a good-night, and a stout heart to hear his fortune withal.

CHAPTER CXV.

A MISTAKE.

I ORDERED my horses at an early hour; and long before Sparks—lover that he was—had opened his eyes to the light, was already on my way toward Gurt-na-Morra. Several miles slipped away before I well determined how I should open my negotiations; whether to papa Blake, in the first instance, or to madam, to whose peculiar province these secrets of the home department belonged; or why not at once to Baby? because, after all, with her it rested finally to accept or refuse. To address myself to the heads of the department seemed the more formal course; and, as I was acting entirely as an "Envoy Extraordinary," I deemed this the fitting mode of proceeding.

It was exactly eight o'clock as I drove up to the door. Mr. Blake was standing at the open window of the breakfast-room, sniffing the fresh air of the morning. The Blake mother was busily engaged with the economy of the tea-table; a very simple style of morning costume, and a nightcap with a flounce like a petticoat, marking her unaffected toilet. Above stairs, more than one head *en papillote* took a furtive peep between the curtains; and the butler of the family, in corduroys and a fur cap, was weeding turnips in the lawn before the door.

Mrs. Blake had barely time to take a hurried departure, when her husband came out upon the steps to bid me welcome. There is no physiognomist like your father of a family, or your mother with marriageable daughters. Lavater was nothing to them, in reading the secret springs of action—the hidden sources of all character. Had there been a good respectable bump allotted by Spurzheim to "honorable intentions," the matter had been all fair and easy,—the very first salute of the gentleman would have pronounced upon his views: but, alas! no such guide is forthcoming; and the science, as it now exists, is enveloped in doubt and difficulty. The gay, laughing temperament of some, the dark and serious composure of others; the cautious and reserved, the open and the candid, the witty, the sententious, the clever, the dull, the prudent, the reckless—in a word, every variety which the innumerable hues of character imprint upon the human face divine are their study. Their convictions are the slow and patient fruits of intense observation and great logical accuracy. Carefully noting down every lineament and feature,—their change, their action, and their development,—they track a lurking motive with the scent of a bloodhound, and run down a growing passion with an unrelenting speed. I have been in the witness-box, exposed to the licensed badgering and privileged impertinence of a lawyer; winked, leered, frowned, and sneered at with all the long-practiced tact of a *nisi prius* torturer; I have stood before the cold, fish-like, but searching eye of a prefect of police, as he compared my passport with my person, and thought he could detect a discrepancy in both: but I never felt the same sense of total exposure as when glanced at by the half-cautious, half-prying look of a worthy father or mother, in a family where there

are daughters to marry, and "nobody coming to woo."

"You're early, Charley," said Mr. Blake, with an affected mixture of carelessness and warmth. "You have not had breakfast?"

"No, sir. I have come to claim a part of yours; and, if I mistake not, you seem a little later than usual."

"Not more than a few minutes. The girls will be down presently; they're early risers, Charley; good habits are just as easy as bad ones; and, the Lord be praised! my girls were never brought up with any other."

"I am well aware of it, sir; and, indeed, if I may be permitted to take advantage of the *à propos*, it was on the subject of one of your daughters that I wished to speak to you this morning, and which brought me over at this uncivilized hour, hoping to find you alone."

Mr. Blake's look for a moment was one of triumphant satisfaction; it was but a glance, however, and repressed the very instant after, as he said, with a well got-up indifference,

"Just step with me into the study, and we're sure not to be interrupted."

Now, although I have little time or space for such dallying, I cannot help dwelling for a moment upon the aspect of what Mr. Blake dignified with the name of his study. It was a small apartment with one window, the panes of which, independent of all aid from a curtain, tempered the daylight through the medium of cobwebs, dust, and the ill-trained branches of some wall-tree without.

Three oak chairs and a small table were the only articles of furniture, while around, on all sides, lay the *disjecta membra* of Mr. Blake's hunting, fishing, shooting, and coursing equipments—old top boots, driving whips, old spurs, a racing saddle, a blunderbuss, the helmet of the Galway Light Horse, a salmon net, a large map of the county with a marginal index to several mortgages marked with a cross, a stable lantern, the rudder of a boat, and several other articles representative of his daily associations; but not one book, save an odd volume of Watty Cox's Magazine, whose pages seemed as much the receptacle of brown hackles for trout-fishing as the resource of literary leisure.

"Here we'll be quite cozy, and to ourselves," said Mr. Blake, as, placing a chair for me, he sat down himself, with the air of a man resolved to assist, by advice and counsel, the dilemma of some dear friend.

After a few preliminary observations, which, like a breathing canter before a race, serves to get your courage up, and settle you well in your seat, I opened my negotiation by some very broad and sweeping truism about the misfortunes of a bachelor existence, the discomforts of his position, his want of home and happiness, the necessity for his one day thinking seriously about marriage; it being in a measure almost as inevitable a termination of the free-and-easy career of his single life as transportation for seven years is to that of a poacher. "You cannot go on, sir," said I, "trespassing forever upon your neighbors' preserves; you must be apprehended sooner or later; therefore, I think, the better way is to take out a license."

Never was a small sally of wit more thoroughly successful. Mr. Blake laughed till he cried, and, when he had done, wiped his eyes with a snuffy handkerchief, and cried till he laughed again. As, somehow, I could not conceal from myself a suspicion as to the sincerity of my friend's mirth, I merely consoled myself with the French adage, that "he laughs best who laughs last;" and went on:

"It will not be deemed surprising, sir, that a man should come to the discovery I have just mentioned much more rapidly by having enjoyed the pleasure of intimacy with your family; not only by the example of perfect domestic happiness presented to him, but by the prospect held out that a heritage of the fair gifts which adorn and grace a married life, may reasonably be looked for among the daughters of those themselves the realization of conjugal felicity."

Here was a canter, with a vengeance; and as I felt blown, I slackened my pace, coughed, and resumed:

"Miss Mary Blake, sir, is, then, the object of my present communication; she it is who has made an existence that seemed fair and pleasurable before, appear blank and unprofitable without her. I have, therefore, to come at once to the point, visited you this morning, formally to ask her hand in marriage: her fortune, I may observe at once, is perfectly immaterial—a matter of no consequence (so Mr. Blake thought also); a competence fully equal to every reasonable notion of expenditure—"

"There—there; don't—don't," said Mr. Blake, wiping his eyes, with a sob like a hiccup; "don't speak of money. I know what you would say; a handsome settlement—a well-secured jointure, and all that. Yes, yes, I feel it all."

"Why yes, sir, I believe I may add, that

everything in this respect will answer your expectations."

"Of course; to be sure. My poor dear Baby! How to do without her, that's the rub. You don't know, O'Malley, what that girl is to me—you can't know it; you'll feel it one day though—that you will."

"The devil I shall!" said I to myself. "The great point is, after all, to learn the young lady's disposition in the matter—"

"Ah, Charley! none of this with me, you sly dog! You think I don't know you. Why, I've been watching—that is, I have seen—no, I mean I've heard—they—they,—people will talk, you know."

"Very true, sir. But, as I was going to remark—"

Just at this moment the door opened, and Miss Baby herself, looking most annoyingly handsome, put in her head.

"Papa, we're waiting breakfast. Ah, Charley, how d'ye do?"

"Come in, Baby," said Mr. Blake; "you haven't given me my kiss this morning."

The lovely girl threw her arms around his neck, while her bright and flowing locks fell richly upon his shoulder. I turned rather sulkily away, the thing always provokes me. There is as much cold, selfish cruelty in such *coram publico* endearments, as in the luscious display of rich rounds and sirloins in a chop-house to the eyes of the starved and penniless wretch without, who, with dripping rags and watering lip, eats imaginary slices, while the pains of hunger are torturing him!

"There's Tim!" said Mr. Blake, suddenly. "Tim Cronin!—Tim!" shouted he to, as it seemed to me, an imaginary individual outside; while, in the eagerness of pursuit, he rushed out of the study, banging the door as he went, and leaving Baby and myself to our mutual edification.

I should have preferred it being otherwise; but, as the Fates willed it thus, I took Baby's hand, and led her to the window. Now, there is one feature of my countrymen which, having recognized strongly in myself, I would fain proclaim; and, writing as I do—however little people may suspect me—solely for the sake of a moral, would gladly warn the unsuspecting against. I mean, a very decided tendency to become the consoler, the confidant of young ladies; seeking out opportunities of assuaging their sorrow, reconciling their afflictions, breaking eventful passages to their ears; not from any inherent pleasure in the tragic phases of the intercourse, but for the semi-tenderness of manner, that harmless hand-squeezing, that innocent waist-pressing, without which consolation is but like salmon without lobster—a thing maimed, wanting, and imperfect.

Now, whether this with me was a natural gift, or merely a "way we have in the army," as the song says, I shall not pretend to say; but I venture to affirm that few men could excel me in the practice I speak of some five-and-twenty years ago. Fair reader, do pray, if I have the happiness of being known to you, deduct them from my age before you subtract from my merits.

"Well, Baby dear, I have just been speaking about you to papa. Yes, dear—don't look so incredulous—even of your own sweet self. Well, do you know, I almost prefer your hair worn that way; those same silky masses look better falling thus heavily—"

"There, now, Charley! ah, don't!"

"Well, Baby, as I was saying, before you stopped me, I have been asking your papa a very important question, and he has referred me to you for the answer. And now will you tell me, in all frankness and honesty, your mind on the matter?"

She grew deadly pale as I spoke these words; then suddenly flushed up again, but said not a word. I could perceive, however, from her heaving chest and restless manner, that no common agitation was stirring her bosom. It was cruelty to be silent, so I continued:

"One who loves you well, Baby dear, has asked his own heart the question, and learned that without you he has no chance of happiness; that your bright eyes are to him bluer than the deep sky above him; that your soft voice, your winning smile—and what a smile it is!—have taught him that he loves, nay, adores you! Then, dearest—what pretty fingers those are! Ah! what is this? Whence came that emerald? I never saw that ring before, Baby!"

"Oh, that," said she, blushing deeply—"that is a ring the foolish creature Sparks gave me a couple of days ago; but I don't like it—I don't intend to keep it."

So saying, she endeavored to draw it from her finger, but in vain.

"But why, Baby, why take it off? Is it to give him the pleasure of putting it on again? There, don't look angry; we must not fall out, surely."

"No, Charley, if you are not vexed with me—if you are not—"

"No, no, my dear Baby; nothing of the kind. Sparks was quite right in not trusting his entire fortune to my diplomacy; but, at least, he ought to have told me that

he had opened the negotiation. Now, the question simply is—Do you love him? or, rather, because that shortens matters, Will you accept him?"

"Love who?"

"Love whom? Why Sparks, to be sure!"

A flash of indignant surprise passed across her features, now pale as marble; her lips were slightly parted, her large full eyes were fixed upon me steadfastly, and her hand, which I had held in mine, she suddenly withdrew from my grasp.

"And so—and so it is of Mr. Sparks's cause you are so ardently the advocate?" said she, at length, after a pause of most awkward duration.

"Why, of course, my dear cousin. It was at his suit and solicitation I called on your father; it was he himself who entreated me to take this step; it was he—"

But before I could conclude, she burst into a torrent of tears, and rushed from the room.

Here was a situation! What the deuce was the matter? Did she, or did she not, care for him? Was her pride or her delicacy hurt at my being made the means of the communication to her father? What had Sparks done or said to put himself and me in such a devil of a predicament? Could she care for any one else?

"Well, Charley!" cried Mr. Blake, as he entered, rubbing his hands in a perfect paroxysm of good temper—"well, Charley, has love-making driven breakfast out of your head?"

"Why faith, sir, I greatly fear I have blundered my mission sadly. My cousin Mary does not appear so perfectly satisfied; her manner—"

"Don't tell me such nonsense. The girl's manner! Why, man, I thought you were too old a soldier to be taken in that way."

"Well then, sir, the best thing, under the circumstances, is, to send over Sparks himself. Your consent, I may tell him, is already obtained."

"Yes, my boy; and my daughter's is equally sure. But I don't see what we want with Sparks at all. Among old friends and relatives, as we are, there is, I think, no need of a stranger."

"A stranger! Very true, sir, he is a stranger; but when that stranger is about to become your son-in-law—"

"About to become what?" said Mr. Blake, rubbing his spectacles, and placing them leisurely on his nose to regard me—"to become what?"

"Your son-in-law. I hope I have been sufficiently explicit, sir, in making known Mr. Sparks's wishes to you."

"Mr. Sparks! Why, damn me, sir—that is—I beg pardon for the warmth—you—you never mentioned his name to-day till now. You led me to suppose that—in fact, you told me most clearly—"

Here, from the united effects of rage and a struggle for concealment, Mr. Blake was unable to proceed, and walked the room with a melodramatic stamp perfectly awful.

"Really, sir," said I at last, "while I deeply regret any misconception or mistake I have been the cause of, I must, in justice to myself, say, that I am perfectly unconscious of having misled you. I came here this morning with a proposition for the hand of your daughter in behalf of—"

"Yourself, sir. Yes, yourself. I'll be—no! I'll not swear; but—but just answer me, if you ever mentioned one word of Mr. Sparks—if you ever alluded to him till the last few minutes?"

I was perfectly astounded. It might be; alas! it was exactly as he stated. In my unlucky effort at extreme delicacy, I became only so very mysterious, that I left the matter open for them to suppose that it might be the Khan of Tartary was in love with Baby.

There was but one course now open. I most humbly apologized for my blunder; repeated, by every expression I could summon up, my sorrow for what had happened; and was beginning a renewal of negotiation "*in re* Sparks," when, overcome by his passion, Mr. Blake could hear no more, but snatched up his hat and left the room.

Had it not been for Baby's share in the transaction I should have laughed outright. As it was, I felt anything but mirthful; and the only clear and collected idea in my mind was, to hurry home with all speed, and fasten a quarrel on Sparks, the innocent cause of the whole mishap. Why this thought struck me let physiologists decide.

A few moments' reflection satisfied me that, under present circumstances, it would be particularly awkward to meet with any others of the family. Ardently desiring to secure my retreat, I succeeded, after some little time, in opening the window-sash; consoling myself for any injury I was about to inflict upon Mr. Blake's young plantation in my descent, by the thought of the service I was rendering him while admitting a little fresh air into his sanctum.

For my patriotism's sake I will not record my sensations as I took my way through the shrubbery toward the stable.

Men are ever so prone to revenge their faults and their follies upon such inoffensive agencies as time and place, wind or weather, that I was quite convinced that to any other but Galway ears my *exposé* would have been perfectly clear and intelligible; and that in no other country under heaven would a man be expected to marry a young lady from a blunder in his grammar.

"Baby may be quite right," thought I; "but one thing is assuredly true—if I'll never do for Galway, Galway will never do for me. No, hang it! I have endured enough for above two years. I have lived in banishment, away from society, supposing that, at least, if I isolated myself from the pleasures of the world, I was exempt from its annoyances." But no; in the seclusion of my remote abode troubles found their entrance as easily as elsewhere, so that I determined at once to leave home; where for, I knew not. If life had few charms, it had still fewer ties for me. If I was not bound by the bonds of kindred, I was untrammeled by their restraints.

The resolution once taken I burned to put it into effect; and so impatiently did I press forward, as to call forth more than one remonstrance on the part of Mike at the pace we were proceeding at. As I neared home, the shrill but stirring sounds of drum and fife met me; and, shortly after, a crowd of country people filled the road. Supposing it some mere recruiting party, I was endeavoring to press on, when the sounds of a full military band, in the exhilarating measure of a quick-step, convinced me of my error; and, as I drew to one side of the road, the advanced guard of an infantry regiment came forward. The men's faces were flushed, their uniform dusty and travel-stained, their knapsacks strapped firmly on, and their gait the steady tramp of the march. Saluting the subaltern, I asked if anything of consequence had occurred in the south, that the troops were so suddenly under orders. The officer stared at me for a moment or two without speaking; and, while a slight smile half curled his lip, answered:

"Apparently, sir, you seem very indifferent to military news, otherwise you can scarcely be ignorant of the cause of our route."

"On the contrary," said I, "I am, though a young man, an old soldier, and feel most anxious about everything connected with the service."

"Then it is very strange, sir, you should not have heard the news. Bonaparte has returned from Elba, has arrived at Paris, been received with the most overwhelming enthusiasm, and at this moment the preparations for war are resounding from Venice to the Vistula. All our forces, disposable, are on the march for embarkation. Lord Wellington has taken the command, and already, I may say, the campaign has begun."

The tone of enthusiasm in which the young officer spoke, the astounding intelligence itself, contrasting with the apathetic indolence of my own life, made me blush deeply, as I muttered some miserable apology for my ignorance.

"And you are now *en route?*"

"For Fermoy; from which we march to Cove for embarkation. The first battalion of our regiment sailed for the West Indies a week since, but a frigate has been sent after them to bring them back; and we hope all to meet in the Netherlands before the month is over. But I must beg your pardon for saying adieu. Good-by, sir."

"Good-by, sir; good-by," said I, as, still standing in the road, I was so overwhelmed with surprise that I could scarcely credit my senses.

A little farther on, I came up with the main body of the regiment, from whom I learned the corroboration of the news, and also the additional intelligence that Sparks had been ordered off with his detachment early in the morning, a veteran battalion being sent into garrison in the various towns of the south and west.

"Do you happen to know a Mr. O'Malley, sir?" said the Major, coming up with a note in his hand.

"I beg to present him to you," said I, bowing.

"Well, sir, Sparks gave me this note, which he wrote with a pencil as we crossed each other on the road this morning. He told me you were an old Fourteenth man; but your regiment is in India, I believe; at least Power said they were under orders when we met him."

"Fred Power! are you acquainted with him? Where is he now, pray?"

"Fred is on the staff with General Vandeleur, and is now in Belgium."

"Indeed!" said I, every moment increasing my surprise at some new piece of intelligence. "And the Eighty-eighth?" said I, recurring to my old friends in that regiment.

"Oh, the Eighty-eighth are at Gibraltar, or somewhere in the Mediterranean: at least, I know they are not near enough to open the present campaign with us. But if you'd like to hear any more news, you

must come over to Borrisokane; we stop there to-night."

"Then I'll certainly do so."

"Come at six, then, and dine with us."

"Agreed," said I; "and now, good-morning."

So saying, I once more drove on; my head full of all that I had been hearing, and my heart bursting with eagerness to join the gallant fellows now bound for the campaign.

CHAPTER CXVI.

BRUSSELS.

I MUST not protract a tale already far too long, by the recital of my acquaintance with the gallant Twenty-sixth. It is sufficient that I should say that, having given Mike orders to follow me to Cove, I joined the regiment on their march, and accompanied them to Cork. Every hour of each day brought us in news of moment and importance; and, amid all the stirring preparations for the war, the account of the splendid spectacle of the *Champ de Mai* burst upon astonished Europe, and the intelligence spread far and near that the enthusiasm of France never rose higher in favor of the Emperor; and, while the whole world prepared for the deadly combat, Napoleon surpassed even himself, by the magnificient conceptions for the coming conflict, and the stupendous nature of those plans by which he resolved on resisting combined and united Europe.

While our admiration and wonder of the mighty spirit that ruled the destinies of the Continent rose high, so did our own ardent and burning desire for the day when the open field of fight should place us once more in front of each other.

Every hard-fought engagement of the Spanish war was thought of and talked over; from Talavera to Toulouse, all was remembered; and while among the old Peninsulars the military ardor was so universally displayed, among the regiments who had not shared the glories of Spain and Portugal, an equal, perhaps a greater, impulse was created for the approaching campaign.

When we arrived at Cork, the scene of bustle and excitement exceeded anything I ever witnessed; troops were mustering in every quarter; regiments arriving and embarking; fresh bodies of men pouring in; drills, parades, and inspections going forward; arms, ammunition, and military stores distributing; and, amid all, a spirit of burning enthusiasm animated every rank for the approaching glory of the newly-arisen war.

While thus each was full of his own hopes and expectations, I alone felt depressed and downhearted. My military caste was lost to me forever; my regiment many, many a mile from the scene of the coming strife; though young, I felt like one already old and by-gone. The last-joined ensign seemed, in his glowing aspiration, a better soldier than I, as, sad and dispirited, I wandered through the busy crowds, surveying with curious eye each gallant horseman as he rode proudly past. What was wealth and fortune to me? What had they ever been, compared with all they cost me?—the abandonment of the career I loved—the path in life I sought and panted for. Day after day I lingered on, watching with beating heart each detachment as they left the shore; and when their parting cheer rang high above the breeze, turned sadly back to mourn over a life that had failed in its promise, and an existence now shorn of its enjoyment.

It was on the evening of the 3d of June that I was slowly wending my way back toward my hotel; latterly I had refused all invitations to dine at the mess; and, by a strange spirit of contradiction, while I avoided society, could yet not tear myself away from the spot where every remembrance of my past life was daily imbittered by the scenes around me. But so it was; the movement of the troops, their reviews, their arrivals and departures, possessed the most thrilling interest for me; while I could not endure to hear the mention of the high hopes and glorious vows each brave fellow muttered.

It was, as I remember, on the evening of the 3d of June, I entered my hotel, lower in spirits even than usual: the bugles of the gallant Seventy-first, as they dropped down with the tide, played a well-known march I had heard the night before Talavera; all my bold and hardy days came rushing madly to my mind; and my present life seemed no longer endurable. The last army list and the newspapers lay on my table, and I turned to read the latest promotions with that feeling of bitterness by which an unhappy man loves to tamper with his misery.

Almost the first paragraph I threw my eyes upon ran thus:

"OSTEND, MAY 24th.—The *Vixen* sloop-of-war, which arrived in our port this morning, brought, among several other

officers of inferior note, Lieutenant-General Sir George Dashwood, appointed as Assistant Adjutant-General on the staff of his Grace the Duke of Wellington. The gallant General was accompanied by his lovely and accomplished daughter, and his military secretary and aide-de-camp, Major Hammersley of the 2d Life Guards. They partook of a hurried *déjeûné* with the Burgomaster, and left immediately after for Brussels."

Twice I read this over, while a burning, hot sensation settled upon my throat and temples. "So Hammersley still persists—he still hopes. And what then?—what can it be to me?—my prospects have long since faded and vanished! doubtless, ere this, I am as much forgotten as though we had never met,—would that we never had!" I threw up the window-sash; a light breeze was gently stirring, and, as it fanned my hot and bursting head, I felt cool and relieved. Some soldiers were talking beneath the window, and among them I recognized Mike's voice.

"And so you sail at daybreak, sergeant?"

"Yes, Mr. Free; we have our orders to be on board before the flood-tide. The *Thunderer* drops down the harbor to-night, and we are merely here to collect our stragglers."

"Faix, it's little I thought I'd ever envy a sodger any more; but, someway, I wish I was going with you."

"Nothing easier, Mike," said another, laughing.

"Oh, true for you, but that's not the way I'd like to do it. If my master, now, would just get over his low spirits, and spake a word to the Duke of York, devil a doubt but he'd give him his commission back again, and then one might go in comfort."

"Your master likes his feather pillow better than a mossy stone under his head, I'm thinking; and he ain't far wrong, either."

"Ye're out there, neighbor. It's himself cares as little for hardship as any one of you; and sure it's not becoming me to say it, but the best blood and the best bred was always the last to give in for either cold or hunger, ay, or even complain of it."

Mike's few words shot upon me a new and a sudden conviction—what was to prevent my journey once more? Obvious as such a thought now was, yet never until this moment did it present itself so palpably. So habituated does the mind become to a certain train of reasoning, framing its convictions according to one preconceived plan, and making every fact and every circumstance concur in strengthening what often may be but a prejudice,—that the absence of the old Fourteenth in India, the sale of my commission, the want of rank in the service, all seemed to present an insurmountable barrier to my re-entering the army. A few chance words now changed all this, and I saw that, as a volunteer, at least, the path of glory was still open, and the thought was no sooner conceived, than the resolve to execute it. While, therefore, I walked hurriedly up and down, devising, planning, plotting, and contriving, each instant I would stop to ask myself how it happened I had not determined upon this before.

As I summoned Mike before me, I could not repress a feeling of false shame, as I remembered how suddenly so natural a resolve must seem to have been adopted; and it was with somewhat of hesitation that I opened the conversation.

"And so, sir, you are going, after all?—long life to you! But I never doubted it. Sure, you wouldn't be your father's son, and not join divarsion when there was any going."

The poor fellow's eyes brightened up, his look gladdened, and, before he reached the foot of the stairs, I heard his loud cheer of delight, that once more we were off to the wars.

The packet sailed for Liverpool the next morning; by it we took our passage, and on the third morning I found myself in the waiting-room at the Horse Guards, expecting the moment of his Royal Highness's arrival; my determination being to serve as a volunteer in any regiment the Duke might suggest, until such time as a prospect presented itself of entering the service as a subaltern.

The room was crowded by officers of every rank and arm in the service: the old, gray-headed general of division; the tall, stout-looking captain of infantry; the thin and boyish figure of the newly-gazetted cornet, were all there; every accent, every look that marked each trait of national distinction in the empire, had its representative: the reserved and distant Scotchman; the gay, laughing, exuberant Patlander; the dark-eyed and dark-browed North Briton, collected in groups, talked eagerly together; while every instant, as some new arrival would enter, all eyes would turn to the spot, in eager expectation of the Duke's coming. At last the clash of arms, as the guard turned out, apprised us of his approach, and we had

scarcely time to stand up and stop the buzz of voices, when the door opened, and an aide-de-camp proclaimed in a full tone,

"His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief!"

Bowing courteously on every side, he advanced through the crowd, turning his rapid and piercing look here and there through the room, while with that tact, the essential gift of his family, he recognized each person by his name, directing from one to the other some passing observation.

"Ah, Sir George Cockburn, how d'ye do?—your son's appointment is made out. Major Conyers, that application shall be looked to. Forbes, you must explain, that I cannot possibly put men in the regiment of their choice—the service is the first thing. Lord L——, your memorial is before the Prince Regent—the cavalry command will, I believe, however, include your name."

While he spoke thus, he approached the place where I was standing, when, suddenly checking himself, he looked at me for a moment somewhat sternly.

"Why not in uniform, sir?"

"Your Royal Highness, I am not in the army."

"Not in the army—not in the army? And why, may I beg to know, have you—, but I'm speaking to *Captain* O'Malley, if I mistake not?"

"I held that rank, sir, once, but family necessities compelled me to sell out; I have now no commission in the service, but am come to beseech your Royal Highness's permission to serve as a volunteer."

"As a volunteer, eh—a volunteer? Come, that's right, I like that; but still, we want such fellows as you—the man of Ciudad Rodrigo. Yes, my Lord L——, this is one of the stormers; fought his way through the trench among the first; must not be neglected. Hold yourself in readiness, Captain —— hang it, I was forgetting—Mr. O'Malley, I mean—hold yourself in readiness for a staff appointment. Smithson, take a note of this." So saying, he moved on; and I found myself in the street, with a heart bounding with delight, and a step proud as an emperor's.

With such rapidity the events of my life now followed one upon the other, that I could take no note of time as it passed. On the fourth day after my conversation with the Duke I found myself in Brussels. As yet, I heard nothing of the appointment, nor was I gazetted to any regiment or any situation on the staff. It was strange enough, too, I met but few of my old associates, and not one of those with whom I had been most intimate in my Peninsular career; but it so chanced that very many of the regiments who most distinguished themselves in the Spanish campaigns, at the peace of 1814 were sent on foreign service. My old friend Power was, I learned, quartered at Courtrai; and, as I was perfectly at liberty to dispose of my movements at present, I resolved to visit him there.

It was a beautiful evening on the 12th of June. I had been inquiring concerning post-horses for my journey, and was returning slowly through the park. The hour was late—near midnight—but a pale moonlight, a calm, unruffled air, and stronger inducements still, the song of the nightingales that abound in this place, prevailed on many of the loungers to prolong their stay; and so, from many a shady walk and tangled arbor, the clank of a sabre would strike upon the ear, or the low, soft voice of woman would mingle her dulcet sound with the deep tones of her companion. I wandered on, thoughtful and alone; my mind preoccupied so completely with the mighty events passing before me, I totally forgot my own humble career, and the circumstances of my fortune. As I turned into an alley which leads from the Great Walk toward the Palace of the Prince of Orange, I found my path obstructed by three persons who were walking slowly along in front of me. I was, as I have mentioned, deeply absorbed in thought, so that I found myself close behind them before I was aware of their presence. Two of the party were in uniform, and by their plumes, upon which a passing ray of moonlight flickered, I could detect they were general officers; the third was a lady. Unable to pass them, and unwilling to turn back, I was unavoidably compelled to follow, and, however unwilling, to overhear somewhat of their conversation.

"You mistake, George, you mistake. Depend upon it, this will be no lengthened campaign; victory will soon decide for one side or the other. If Napoleon beats the Prussians one day, and beat us the next, the German states will rally to his standard, and the old confederation or the Rhine will spring up once more, in all the plenitude of its power. The *Champ de Mai* has shown the enthusiasm of France for their emperor. Louis XVIII. fled from his capital, with few to follow, and none to say 'God bless him!' The warlike spirit of the nation is roused again; the interval of peace, too short to teach habits of patient and enduring industry, is yet

sufficient to whet the appetite for carnage; and nothing was wanting, save the presence of Napoleon alone, to restore all the brilliant delusions and intoxicating splendors of the empire."

"I confess," said the other, "I take a very different view from yours in this matter: to me, it seems that France is as tired of battles as of the Bourbons—"

I heard no more; for, though the speaker continued, a misty confusion passed across my mind. The tones of his voice, well remembered as they were by me, left me unable to think; and, as I stood motionless on the spot, I muttered half aloud, "Sir George Dashwood." It was he, indeed; and she who leaned upon his arm could be no other than Lucy herself. I know not how it was; for many a long month I had schooled my heart, and taught myself to believe that time had dulled the deep impression she had made upon me, and that, were we to meet again, it would be with more sorrow on my part for my broken dream of happiness than of attachment and affection for her who inspired it; but now, scarcely was I near her—I had not gazed upon her looks, I had not even heard her voice—and yet, in all their ancient force, came back the early passages of my love; and, as her footfall sounded gently upon the ground, my heart beat scarce less audibly. Alas! I could no longer disguise from myself the avowal that she it was, and she only, who implanted in my heart the thirst for distinction; and the moment was ever present to my mind in which, as she threw her arms around her father's neck, she muttered, "Oh, why not a soldier?"

As I thus reflected, an officer in full dress passed me hurriedly, and taking off his hat as he came up with the party before me, bowed obsequiously.

"My Lord ——, I believe, and Sir George Dashwood?" They replied by a bow. "Sir Thomas Picton wishes to speak with you both for a moment; he is standing beside the 'Basin.' If you will permit—" said he, looking toward Lucy.

"Thank you, sir," said Sir George; "if you will have the goodness to accompany us, my daughter will wait our coming here. Sit down, Lucy, we shall not be long away."

The next moment she was alone. The last echoes of their retiring footsteps had died away in the grassy walk, and in the calm and death-like stillness I could hear every rustle of her silk dress. The moonlight fell in fitful, straggling gleams between the leafy branches, and showed me her countenance, pale as marble. Her eyes were upturned slightly; her brown hair, divided upon her fair forehead, sparkled with a wreath of brilliants, which heightened the lustrous effect of her calm beauty; and now I could perceive her dress bespoke that she had been at some of the splendid entertainments which followed day after day in the busy capital.

Thus I stood within a few paces of *her*, to be near to whom, a few hours before, I would willingly have given all I possessed in the world; and yet now a barrier, far more insurmountable than time and space, intervened between us; still, it seemed as though fortune had presented this incident as a last farewell between us. Why should I not take advantage of it? Why should I not seize the only opportunity that might ever occur of rescuing myself from the apparent load of ingratitude which weighed on my memory? I felt in the cold despair of my heart that I could have no hold upon her affection; but a pride, scarce less strong than the attachment that gave rise to it, urged me to speak. By one violent effort I summoned up my courage; and, while I resolved to limit the few words I should say merely to my vindication, I prepared to advance. Just at this instant, however, a shadow crossed the path; a rustling sound was heard among the branches, and the tall figure of a man in a dragoon cloak stood before me. Lucy turned suddenly at the sound; but scarcely had her eyes been bent in the direction, when, throwing off his cloak, he sprang forward, and dropped at her feet. All my feeling of shame at the part I was performing was now succeeded by a sense of savage and revengeful hatred. It was enough that I should be brought to look upon her whom I had lost forever without the added bitterness of witnessing her preference for a rival. The whirlwind passion of my brain stunned and stupefied me. Unconsciously I drew my sword from my scabbard, and it was only as the pale light fell upon the keen blade that the thought flashed across me, "What could I mean to do?"

"No, Hammersley"—it was he indeed—said she, "it is unkind, it is unfair, nay, it is unmanly to press me thus; I would not pain you, were it not that, in sparing you now, I should entail deeper injury upon you hereafter. Ask me to be your sister—your friend; ask me to feel proudly in your triumphs—to glory in your success; all this I do feel; but, oh! I beseech you as you value your happiness—as you prize mine—ask me no more than this."

There was a pause of some seconds; and, at length, the low tones of a man's voice, broken and uncertain in their utterance, said,

"I know it—I feel it—my heart never bade me hope—and now—'tis over."

He stood up as he spoke, and while he threw the light folds of his mantle round him, a gleam of light fell upon his features. They were pale as death; two dark circles surrounded his sunken eyes, and his bloodless lip looked still more ghastly, from the dark moustache that drooped above it.

"Farewell!" said he, slowly, as he crossed his arms sadly upon his breast; "I will not pain you more."

"Oh! go not thus from me," said she, as her voice became tremulous with emotion; "do not add to the sorrow that weighs upon my heart. I cannot, indeed I cannot, be other than I am; and I do but hate myself to think that I cannot give my love where I have given all my esteem. If time—" But before she could continue further, the noise of approaching footsteps was heard, and the voice of Sir George, as he came near. Hammersley disappeared at once, and Lucy, with rapid steps, advanced to meet her father, while I remained riveted upon the spot. What a torrent of emotions then rushed upon my heart! What hopes, long dead or dying, sprang up to life again! What visions of long-abandoned happiness flitted before me! Could it be, then? dare I trust myself to think it, that Lucy cared for me? The thought was maddening! With a bounding sense of ecstasy, I dashed across the park, resolving, at all hazards, to risk everything upon the chance, and wait the next morning upon Sir George Dashwood. As I thought thus, I reached my hotel, where I found Mike in waiting with a letter. As I walked toward the lamp in the *porte cochère*, my eye fell upon the address. It was General Dashwood's hand; I tore it open, and read as follows:

"DEAR SIR,—Circumstances into which you will excuse me entering, having placed an insurmountable barrier to our former terms of intimacy, you will, I trust, excuse me declining the honor of any nearer acquaintance, and also forgive the liberty I take in informing you of it, which step, however unpleasant to my feelings, will save us both the great pain of meeting.

"I have only this moment heard of your arrival in Brussels, and take thus the earliest opportunity of communicating with you.

"With every assurance of my respect for you personally, and an earnest desire to serve you in your military career,

"I beg to remain,

"Very faithfully yours,

"GEORGE DASHWOOD."

"Another note, sir," said Mike, as he thrust into my unconscious hands a letter he had just received from an orderly.

Stunned, half stupefied, I broke the seal. The contents were but three lines:

"SIR,—I have the honor to inform you, that Sir Thomas Picton has appointed you an extra aide-de-camp on his personal staff. You will, therefore, present yourself to-morrow morning at the Adjutant-General's office, to receive your appointment and instructions.

"I have the honor to be, etc.,

"G. FITZROY."

Crushing the two letters in my fevered hand, I retired to my room, and threw myself, dressed as I was, upon my bed. Sleep, that seems to visit us in the saddest as in the happiest times of our existence, came over me, and I did not wake until the bugles of the Ninety-fifth were sounding the *réveil* through the park, and the bright beams of the morning sun were peering through the window.

CHAPTER CXVII.

AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

"MR. O'MALLEY," said a voice, as my door opened, and an officer in undress entered. "Mr. O'Malley, I believe you received your appointment last night on General Picton's staff?"

I bowed in reply, as he resumed:

"Sir Thomas desires you will proceed to Courtrai with these dispatches in all haste. I don't know if you are well mounted, but I recommend you, in any case, not to spare your cattle."

So saying, he wished me a good-morning, and left me, in a state of no small doubt and difficulty, to my own reflections. What the deuce was I to do? I had no horse; I knew not where to find one. What uniform should I wear? For, although appointed on the staff, I was not gazetted to any regiment that I knew of, and hitherto had been wearing an undress frock and a foraging cap; for I could not bring myself to appear as a civilian among so many military acquaintances. No time

was, however, to be lost; so I proceeded to put on my old Fourteenth uniform, wondering whether my costume might not cost me a reprimand in the very outset of my career. Meanwhile I dispatched Mike to see after a horse, caring little for the time, the merits, or the price of the animal, provided he served my present purpose.

In less than twenty minutes my worthy follower appeared beneath my window, surrounded by a considerable mob, who seemed to take no small interest in the proceedings.

"What the deuce is the matter?" cried I, as I opened the sash, and looked out.

"Mighty little's the matter, your honor; it's the savages here that's admiring my horsemanship," said Mike, as he belabored a tall, scraggy-looking mule with a stick which bore an uncommon resemblance to a broom-handle.

"What do you mean to do with that beast?" said I. "You surely don't expect me to ride a mule to Courtrai?"

"Faith, and if you don't, you are likely to walk the journey; for there isn't a horse to be had for love or money in the town: but I am told that Mr. Marsden is coming up to-morrow with plenty, so that you may as well take the journey out of the soft horns as spoil a better; and if he only makes as good use of his forelegs as he does of the hind ones, he'll think little of the road."

A vicious lash out behind served in a moment to corroborate Mike's assertion, and to scatter the crowd on every side.

However indisposed to exhibit myself with such a turn-out, my time did not admit of any delay; and so, arming myself with my dispatches, and having procured the necessary information as to the road, I set out from the Belle Vue, amid an ill-suppressed titter of merriment from the mob, which nothing but fear of Mike and his broomstick prevented becoming a regular shout of laughter.

It was near nightfall, as, tired and weary of the road, I entered the little village of Halle. All was silent and noiseless in the deserted streets; not a lamp threw its glare upon the pavement, nor even a solitary candle flickered through the casement. Unlike a town garrisoned by troops, neither sentry nor outpost was to be met with; nothing gave evidence that the place was held by a large body of men; and I could not help feeling struck, as the footsteps of my mule were echoed along the causeway, with the silence almost of desolation around me. By the creaking of a sign, as it swung mournfully to and fro, I was directed to the door of the village inn, where, dismounting, I knocked for some moments, but without success. At length, when I had made an uproar sufficient to alarm the entire village, the casement above the door slowly opened, and a head enveloped in a huge cotton nightcap—so, at least, it appeared to me from the size—protruded itself. After muttering a curse in about the most barbarous French I ever heard, he asked me what I wanted there; to which I replied most nationally, by asking, in return, where the British dragoons were quartered?

"They have left for Nivelle, this morning, to join some regiments of your own country."

"Ah! ah!" thought I, "he mistakes me for a Brunswicker;" to which, by the uncertain light, my uniform gave me some resemblance. As it was now impossible for me to proceed further, I begged to ask where I could procure accommodation for the night.

"At the Burgomaster's. Turn to your left at the end of this street, and you will soon find it. They have got some English officers there, who, I believe in my soul, never sleep."

This was, at least, pleasant intelligence, and promised a better termination to my journey than I had begun to hope for; so, wishing my friend a good-night, to which he willingly responded, I resumed my way down the street. As he closed the window, once more leaving me to my own reflections, I began to wonder within myself to what arm of the service belonged these officers to whose convivial gifts he bore testimony. As I turned the corner of the street, I soon discovered the correctness of his information. A broad glare of light stretched across the entire pavement from a large house with a clumsy stone portico before it. On coming nearer, the sound of voices, the roar of laughter, the shouts of merriment that issued forth, plainly bespoke that a jovial party were seated within. The half-shutter which closed the lower part of the windows prevented my obtaining a view of the proceedings; but, having cautiously approached the casement, I managed to creep on the window-sill, and look into the room.

There the scene was certainly a curious one. Around a large table sat a party of some twenty persons, the singularity of whose appearance may be conjectured, when I mention that all those who appeared to be British officers were dressed in the robes of the *échevins* (or aldermen) of the village; while some others, whose looks

bespoke them as sturdy Flemings, sported the cocked hats and cavalry helmets of their associates. He who appeared the ruler of the feast sat with his back toward me, and wore, in addition to the dress of burgomaster, a herald's tabard, which gave him something the air of a grotesque screen at its potations. A huge fire blazed upon the ample hearth, before which were spread several staff uniforms, whose drabbled and soaked appearance denoted the reason of the party's change of habiliments. Every imaginable species of drinking-vessel figured upon the board, from the rich flagon of chased silver to the humble *cruche* we see in a Teniers picture. As well as I could hear, the language of the company seemed to be French, or, at least, such an imitation of that language which served as a species of neutral territory for both parties to meet in.

He of the tabard spoke louder than the others, and although, from the execrable endeavors he made to express himself in French, his natural voice was much altered, there was yet something in his accents which seemed perfectly familiar to me.

"*Mosheer l'Abbey,*" said he, placing his arm familiarly on the shoulder of a portly personage, whose shaven crown strangely contrasted with a pair of corked moustachios—"*Mosheer l'Abbey, nous sommes frères, et moi, savez-vous, suis évêque,*—'pon my life it's true; I might have been Bishop of Saragossa, if I only consented to leave the Twenty-third. *Jé suis bong Catholique.* Lord bless you, if you saw how I loved the nunneries in Spain! *J'ai très* jolly *souvenirs* of those nunneries; a goodly company of little silver saints; and this waistcoat you see—*mong gilet*—was a satin petticoat of our Lady of Loretto."

Need I say, that before this speech was concluded, I had recognized in the speaker nobody but that inveterate old villain, Monsoon himself.

"*Permettez, votre Excellence,*" said a hale, jolly-looking personage on his left, as he filled the Major's goblet with obsequious politeness.

"*Bong engfong,*" replied Monsoon, tapping him familiarly on the head. "Burgomaster, you are a trump; and when I get my promotion, I'll make you prefect in a wine district. Pass the lush, and don't look sleepy! 'Drowsiness,' says Solomon, 'clothes a man in rags;' and no man knew the world better than Solomon. Don't you be laughing, you raw boys. Never mind them, *Abbey; ils sont petits garçongs*—fags from Eton and Harrow; better judges of mutton broth than sherry negus."

"I say, Major, you are forgetting this song you promised us."

"Yes, yes," said several voices together; "the song, Major! the song!"

"Time enough for that; we're doing very well as it is. Upon my life, though, they hold a deal of wine. I thought we'd have had them fit to bargain with before ten; and see, it's near midnight; and I must have my forage accounts ready for the Commissary-General by to-morrow morning."

This speech having informed me the reason of the Major's presence there, I resolved to wait no longer a mere spectator of their proceedings; so, dismounting from my position, I commenced a vigorous attack upon the door.

It was some time before I was heard; but at length the door was opened, and I was accosted by an Englishman, who, in a strange compound of French and English, asked "what the devil I meant by all that uproar?" Determining to startle my old friend the Major, I replied, that "I was an aide-de-camp to General Picton, and had come down on very unpleasant business." By this time the noise of the party within had completely subsided, and, from a few whispered sentences, and their thickened breathing, I perceived that they were listening.

"May I ask, sir," continued I, "if Major Monsoon is here?"

"Yes," stammered out the Ensign, for such he was.

"Sorry for it, for his sake," said I; "but my orders are peremptory."

A deep groan from within, and a muttered request to pass down the sherry, nearly overcame my gravity; but I resumed:

"If you will permit me, I will make the affair as short as possible. The Major, I presume, is here?"

So saying, I pushed forward into the room, where now a slight scuffling noise and murmur of voices had succeeded silence. Brief as was the interval of our colloquy, the scene within had, notwithstanding, undergone considerable change. The English officers, hastily throwing off their aldermanic robes, were busily arraying themselves in their uniforms, while Monsoon himself, with a huge basin of water before him, was endeavoring to wash the cork from his countenance in the corner of his tabard.

"Very hard upon me, all this; upon my life, so it is. Picton is always at me, just as if we had not been school-fellows. The

service is getting worse every day. *Regardez-moi, Curey, mong face est propre?* Eh? There, thank you. Good fellow the Curey is, but takes a deal of fluid. Oh, Burgomaster! I fear it is all up with me! No more fun, no more jollification, no more plunder—and how I did do it! Nothing like watching one's little chances! 'The poor is hated even by his neighbor.' *Oui, Curey,* it is Solomon says that, and they must have had a heavy poor-rate in his day to make him say so. Another glass of sherry!"

By this time I approached the back of his chair, and, slapping him heartily on the shoulder, called out,

"Major! old boy, how goes it?"

"Eh?—what?—how!—who is this? It can't be—egad, sure it is, though. Charley! Charley O'Malley, you scapegrace, where have you been? When did you join?"

"A week ago, Major. I could resist it no longer. I did my best to be a country gentleman, and behave respectably, but the old temptation was too strong for me. Fred Power and yourself, Major, had ruined my education; and here I am once more amongst you."

"And so Picton, and the arrest, and all that, was nothing but a joke?" said the old fellow, rolling his wicked eyes with a most cunning expression.

"Nothing more, Major; set your heart at rest."

"What a scamp you are," said he, with another grin. "*Il est mon fils—il est mon fils, Curey,*" presenting me as he spoke, while the Burgomaster, in whose eyes the Major seemed no inconsiderable personage, saluted me with profound respect.

Turning at once toward this functionary, I explained that I was the bearer of important dispatches, and that my horse—I was ashamed to say my mule—having fallen lame, I was unable to proceed.

"Can you procure me a remount, Monsieur?" said I, "for I must hasten on to Courtrai."

"In half an hour you shall be provided, as well as with a mounted guide for the road. *Le fils de son Excellence,*" said he, with emphasis, bowing to the Major as he spoke; who, in his turn, repaid the courtesy with a still lower obeisance.

"Sit down, Charley; here is a clean glass. I am delighted to see you, my boy! They tell me you have got a capital estate, and plenty of ready. Lord! we so wanted you, as there's scarcely a fellow with sixpence among us. Give me the lad that can do a bit of paper at three months, and always be ready for a renewal! You haven't got a twenty-pound note?" This was said *sotto voce.* "Never mind, ten will do; you will give me the remainder at Brussels. Strange, is it not, I have not seen a bit of clean bank paper like this for above a twelvemonth!" This was said as he thrust his hand into his pocket, with one of those peculiar leers upon his countenance which, unfortunately, betrayed more satisfaction at his success than gratitude for the service. "You are looking fat—too fat, I think," said he, scrutinizing me from head to foot; "but the life we are leading just now will soon take that off. The slave-trade is luxurious indolence compared to it. Post haste to Nivelle one day; down to Ghent the next; forty miles over a paved road in a hand-gallop, and an aide-de-camp with a watch in his hand at the end of it, to report if you are ten minutes too late. And there is Wellington has his eye everywhere; there is not a truss of hay served to the cavalry, nor a pair of shoes half-soled in the regiment, that he don't know of it. I've got it over the knuckles already."

"How so, Major?—how was that?"

"Why, he ordered me to picket two squadrons of the Seventh, and a supper was waiting. I didn't like to leave my quarters, so I took up my telescope and pitched upon a sweet little spot of ground on a hill; rather difficult to get up, to be sure, but a beautiful view when you're on it. 'There is your ground, Captain,' said I, as I sent one of my people to mark the spot. He did not like it much; however, he was obliged to go. And, would you believe it?—so much for bad luck!—there turned out to be no water within two miles of it—not a drop, Charley; and so, about eleven at night, the two squadrons moved down into Grammont to wet their lips, and, what is worse, to report me to the commanding officer. And, only think! they put me under arrest because Providence did not make a river run up a mountain!"

Just as the Major finished speaking, the distant clatter of horses' feet and the clank of cavalry was heard approaching. We all rushed eagerly to the door; and scarcely had we done so, when a squadron of dragoons came riding up the street, at a fast trot.

"I say, good people," cried the officer in French, "where does the Burgomaster live here?"

"Fred Power, 'pon my life!" shouted the Major.

"Eh, Monsoon! that you? Give me a

tumbler of wine, old boy; you are sure to have some, and I am desperately blown."

"Get down, Fred, get down; we have an old friend here."

"Who the deuce d'ye mean?" said he, as, throwing himself from the saddle, he strode into the room. "Charley O'Malley! by all that's glorious!"

"Fred, my gallant fellow!" said I.

"It was but this morning, Charley, that I so wished for you here. The French are advancing, my lad: they have crossed the frontier; Ziethen's corps have been attacked, and driven in; Blucher is falling back upon Ligny; and the campaign is opened. But I must press forward: the regiment is close behind me, and we are ordered to push for Brussels in all haste."

"Then these dispatches," said I, showing my packet, "'tis unnecessary to proceed with?"

"Quite so. Get into the saddle, and come back with us."

The Burgomaster had kept his word with me; so, mounted upon a strong hackney, I set out with Power on the road to Brussels. I have had occasion more than once to ask pardon of my reader for the prolixity of my narrative, so I shall not trespass on him here by the detail of our conversation as we jogged along. Of me and my adventures he already knows enough—perhaps too much. My friend Power's career, abounding as it did in striking incidents, and all the light and shadow of a soldier's life, yet not bearing upon any of the characters I have presented to your acquaintance, except in one instance, of that only shall I speak.

"And the Senhora, Fred, how goes your fortune in that quarter?"

"Gloriously, Charley! I am every day expecting the promotion in my regiment which is to make her mine."

"You have heard from her lately, then?"

"Heard from her! Why, man, she is in Brussels."

"In Brussels?"

"To be sure. Don Emanuel is in high favor with the Duke, and is now Commissary-General with the army; and the Senhora is the *belle* of the Rue Royale, or, at least, it's a divided sovereignty between her and Lucy Dashwood. And now, Charley, let me ask, what of her? There—there, don't blush, man; there is quite enough moonlight to show how tender you are in that quarter."

"Once for all, Fred, pray spare me on that subject. You have been far too fortunate in your *affaire de cœur*, and I too much the reverse, to permit much sympathy between us."

"Do you not visit, then? or is it a cut between you?"

"I have never met her since the night of the masquerade of the Villa—at least, to speak to—"

"Well, I must confess, you seem to manage your own affairs much worse than your friends'; not but that in so doing you are exhibiting a very Irish feature of your character. In any case, you will come to the ball? Inez will be delighted to see you; and I have got over all my jealousy."

"What ball? I never heard of it."

"Never heard of it! Why, the Duchess of Richmond's, of course. Pooh, pooh! man; not invited?—of course you are invited; the staff are never left out on such occasions. You will find your card at your hotel on your return."

"In any case, Fred—"

"I shall insist upon your going. I have no *arrière pensée* about a reconciliation with the Dashwoods; no subtle scheme, on my honor; but simply I feel that you will never give yourself fair chances in the world, by indulging your habit of shrinking from every embarrassment. Don't be offended, boy; I know you have pluck enough to storm a battery; I have seen you under fire before now. What avails your courage in the field if you have not presence of mind in the drawing-room? Besides, everything else out of the question, it is a breach of etiquette toward your chief to decline such an invitation."

"You think so?"

"Think so?—no; I am sure of it."

"Then, as to uniform, Fred?"

"Oh, as to that, easily managed. And, now I think of it, they have sent me an unattached uniform, which you can have; but remember, my boy, if I put you in my coat, I don't want you to stand in my shoes. Don't forget, also, that I am your debtor in horse-flesh, and fortunately able to repay you. I have got such a charger; your own favorite color, dark chestnut, and, except one white leg, not a spot about him; can carry sixteen stone over a five-foot fence, and as steady as a rock under fire."

"But, Fred, how are you—"

"Oh, never mind me; I have six in my stable, and intend to share with you. The fact is, I have been transferred from one staff to another for the last six months, and four of my number are presents. Is Mike with you? Ah! glad to hear it: you will never get on without that fellow. Besides, it is a capital thing to have such a

connecting link with one's nationality. No fear of your ever forgetting Ireland with Mr. Free in your company. You are not aware that we have been correspondents?—a fact, I assure you. Mike wrote me two letters; and such letters they were! The last was a Jeremiad over your decline and fall, with a very ominous picture of a certain Miss Baby Blake."

"Confound the rascal!"

"By Jove, though, Charley, you were coming it rather strong with Baby. Inez saw the letter, and as well as she could decipher Mike's hieroglyphics, saw there was something in it; but the name Baby puzzled her immensely, and she set the whole thing down to your great love of children. I don't think that Lucy quite agreed with her."

"Did she tell it to Miss Dashwood?" I inquired with fear and trembling.

"Oh, that she did; in fact, Inez never ceases talking of you to Lucy. But come, lad, don't look so grave; let's have another brush with the enemy; capture a battery of their guns; carry off a French marshal or two; get the Bath for your services, and be thanked in general orders, and I will wager all my *châteaux en Espagne* that everything goes well."

Thus chatting away, sometimes over the past, of our former friends and gay companions, of our days of storm and sunshine; sometimes indulging in prospects for the future, we trotted along, and, as the day was breaking mounted the ridge of low hills, from whence, at the distance of a couple of leagues, the city of Brussels came into view.

CHAPTER CXVIII.

THE DUCHESS OF RICHMOND'S BALL.

WHETHER we regard the illustrious and distinguished personages who thronged around, or we think of the portentous moment in which it was given, the Duchess of Richmond's ball, on the night of the 15th of June, 1815, was not only one of the most memorable, but, in its interest, the most exciting entertainment that the memory of any one now living can compass.

There is always something of no common interest in seeing the bronzed and war-worn soldier mixing in the crowd of light-hearted and brilliant beauty. To watch the eye whose proud glance has flashed o'er the mail-clad squadrons, now bending meekly beneath the look of some timid girl; to hear the voice that, high above the battle or the breeze, has shouted the hoarse word "Charge!" now subdued into the low, soft murmur of flattery or compliment; this, at any time, is a picture full of its own charm; but when we see these heroes of a hundred fights; when we look upon these hardy veterans, upon whose worn brow the whitened locks of time are telling, indulging themselves in the careless gayety of a moment, snatched, as it were, from the arduous career of their existence, while the tramp of the advancing enemy shakes the very soil they stand on, and where it may be doubted whether each aide-de-camp who enters comes a new votary of pleasure or the bearer of tidings that the troops of the foe are advancing, and already the work of death has begun;—this is, indeed, a scene to make the heart throb, and the pulse beat high; this is a moment, second in its proud excitement only to the very crash and din of battle itself; and into this entrancing whirlwind of passion and of pleasure, of brilliant beauty and ennobled greatness of all that is lovely in woman, and all that is chivalrous and heroic in man, I brought a heart which, young in years, was yet tempered by disappointment; still, such was the fascination, such the brilliancy of the spectacle, that scarcely had I entered, than I felt a change come over me—the old spirit of my boyish ardor—that high-wrought enthusiasm to do something—to be something which men may speak of—shot suddenly through me, and I felt my cheek tingle, and my temples throb, as name after name of starred and titled officers were announced, to think that to me, also, the path of glorious enterprise was opening.

"Come along, come along," said Power, catching me by the arm, "you've not been presented to the Duchess; I know her, I'll do it for you—or perhaps it is better Sir Thomas Picton should; in any case, '*filez*' after me, for the dark-eyed Senhora is surely expecting us. There, do you see that dark, intelligent-looking fellow leaning over the end of the sofa? that is Alava; and there, you know who that is, that *beau idéal* of a hussar? Look how jauntingly he carries himself; see the careless but graceful sling with which he edges through the crowd; and look!—mark his bow!—did you see that, Charley?—did you catch the quick glance he shot yonder, and the soft smile that showed his white teeth? Depend upon it, boy, some fair heart is not the better nor the easier for that look."

"Who is it?" said I.

"Lord Uxbridge, to be sure; the handsomest fellow in the service: and there

goes Vandeleur, talking with Vivian; the other, to the left, is Ponsonby."

"But stay, Fred, tell me who that is?" For a moment or two, I had some difficulty in directing his attention to the quarter I desired. The individual I pointed out was somewhat above the middle size; his uniform of blue and gold, though singularly plain, had a look of richness about it; besides that, among the orders which covered his breast, he wore one star of great brilliancy and size. This, however, was his least distinction; for although surrounded on every side by those who might be deemed the very types and pictures of their *caste*, there was something in the easy but upright carriage of his head, the intrepid character of his features, the bold and vigorous flashing of his deep blue eye, that marked him as no common man. He was talking with an old and prosy-looking personage, in civilian dress; and while I could detect an anxiety to get free from a tiresome companion, there was an air of deferential, and even kind attention in his manner, absolutely captivating.

"A thorough gentleman, Fred, whoever he be," said I.

"I should think so," replied Power, dryly, "and as our countrymen would say, 'The devil thank him for it!' That is the Prince of Orange; but see, look at him now, his features have learned another fashion." And true it was; with a smile of the most winning softness, and with a voice, whose slightly foreign accent took nothing from its interest, I heard him engaging a partner for a waltz.

There was a flutter of excitement in the circle as the lady rose to take his arm, and a muttered sound of, "How very beautiful, *quelle est belle! c'est un ange!*" on all sides. I leaned forward to catch a glance as she passed—it was Lucy Dashwood. Beautiful beyond anything I had ever seen her, her lovely features lit up with pleasure and with pride, she looked in every way worthy to lean upon the arm of royalty. The graceful majesty of her walk, the placid loveliness of her gentle smile, struck every one as she passed on. As for me, totally forgetting all else, not seeing or hearing aught around me, I followed her with my eye until she was lost amongst the crowd, and then, with an impulse of which I was not master, followed in her steps.

"This way, this way," said Power; "I see the Senhora." So saying, we entered a little boudoir, where a party was playing at cards. Leaning on the back of a chair, Inez was endeavoring, with that mixture of coquetry and half malice she possessed, to distract the attention of the player. As Power came near, she scarcely turned her head to give him a kind of saucy smile; while, seeing me, she held out her hand with friendly warmth, and seemed quite happy to meet me.

"Do, pray, take her away: get her to dance, to eat ice, or flirt with you, for Heaven's sake!" said the half-laughing voice of her victim. "I have revoked twice, and misdealt four times, since she has been here. Believe me, I shall take it as the greatest favor, if you will—"

As he got thus far he turned round toward me, and I perceived it was Sir George Dashwood. The meeting was as awkward for him as for me; and, while a deep flush covered my face, he muttered some unintelligible apology, and Inez burst into a fit of laughter at the ludricous *contretemps* of our situation.

"I will dance with you now, if you like," said she, "and that will be punishing all three. Eh, Master Fred?"

So saying, she took my arm as I led her toward the ball-room.

"And so you really are not friends with the Dashwoods! How very provoking, and how foolish, too! But, really, Chevalier, I must say you treat ladies very ill. I don't forget your conduct to me. Dear me, I wish we could move forward, there is some one pushing me dreadfully!"

"Get on, ma'am, get on!" said a sharp, decided voice behind me. I turned, half smiling, to see the speaker. It was the Duke of Wellington himself, who, with his eye fixed upon some person at a distance, seemed to care very little for any intervening obstruction. As I made way for him to pass between us, he looked hardly at me, while he said, in a short, quick way,

"Know your face very well: how d'ye do?" With this brief recognition he passed on, leaving me to console Inez for her crushed sleeve, by informing her who had done it.

The ball was now at its height. The waltzers whirled past in the wild excitement of the dance. The inspiriting strains of the music, the sounds of laughter, the din, the tumult, all made up that strange medley which, reacting upon the minds of those who cause it, increases the feeling of pleasurable abandonment, making the old feel young, and the young intoxicated with delight.

As the Senhora leaned upon me, fatigued with waltzing, I was endeavoring to sustain a conversation with her; while my thoughts were wandering with my eyes to where I had last seen Lucy Dashwood.

"It must be something of importance; I'm sure it is," said she, at the conclusion of a speech of which I had not heard one word. "Look at General Picton's face!"

"Very pretty, indeed," said I; "but the hair is unbecoming," replying to some previous observation she had made, and still lost in a reverie. A hearty burst of laughter was her answer, as she gently shook my arm, saying,

"You really are too bad! You never listened to one word I've been telling you, but keep continually staring with your eyes here and there, turning this way, and looking that; and the dull and vacant unmeaning smile; answering at random, in the most provoking manner. There, now, pray pay attention, and tell me what that means." As she said this, she pointed with her fan to where a dragoon officer, in splashed and spattered uniform, was standing, talking to some three or four general officers. "But here comes the Duke; it can't be anything of consequence."

At the same instant the Duke of Wellington passed with the Duchess of Richmond on his arm.

"No, Duchess; nothing to alarm you. Did you say ice?"

"There, you heard that, I hope?" said Inez; "there is nothing to alarm us."

"Go to General Picton at once; but don't let it be remarked," said an officer, in a whisper, as he passed close by me.

"Inez, I have the greatest curiosity to learn what that new arrival has to say for himself; and, if you will permit me, I'll leave you with Lady Gordon for one moment—"

"Delighted, of all things. You are, without exception, the most tiresome—Good-by."

"*Sans adieu*," said I, as I hurried through the crowd toward an open window, on the balcony outside of which Sir Thomas Picton was standing.

"Ah, Mr. O'Malley! have you a pencil? There, that'll do. Ride down to Etterbeeck with this order for Godwin. You have heard the news, I suppose, that the French are in advance? The Seventy-ninth will muster in the Grande Place. The Ninety-second and the Twenty-eighth along the Park and the Boulevard. Napoleon left Fresne this morning. The Prussians have fallen back. Ziethen has been beaten. We march at once."

"To-morrow, sir?"

"No, sir; to-night. There! don't delay. But, above all, let everything be done quietly and noiselessly. The Duke will remain here for an hour longer, to prevent suspicion. When you've executed your orders, come back here."

I mounted the first horse I could find at the door, and galloped with top speed over the heavy causeway to Etterbeeck. In two minutes the drum beat to arms, and the men were mustering as I left. Thence I hastened to the barracks of the Highland brigade and the 28th Regiment; and, before half an hour, was back in the ball-room, where, from the din and tumult, I guessed the scene of pleasure and dissipation continued unabated. As I hurried up the staircase, a throng of persons were coming down, and I was obliged to step aside to let them pass.

"Ah! come here, pray," said Picton, who, with a lady, cloaked and hooded, leaning upon his arm, was struggling to make way through the crowd. "The very man!"

"Will you excuse me, if I commit you to the care of my aide-de-camp, who will see you to your carriage? The Duke has just desired to see me." This he said in a hurried and excited tone; and the same moment beckoned to me to take the lady's arm.

It was with some difficulty I succeeded in reaching the spot, and had only time to ask whose carriage I should call for, ere we arrived in the hall.

"Sir George Dashwood's," said a low, soft voice, whose accents sank into my very heart. Heaven! it was Lucy herself; it was her arm that leaned on mine, her locks that fluttered beside me, her hand that hung so near, and yet I could not speak. I tried one word; but a choking feeling in my throat prevented utterance, and already we were upon the door-steps.

"Sir George Dashwood's carriage," shouted the footman, and the announcement was repeated by the porter. The steps were hurried down; the footman stood, door in hand; and I led her forward, mute and trembling. Did she know me? I assisted her as she stepped in; her hand touched mine: it was the work of a second; to me it was the bliss of years. She leaned a little forward, and, as the servant put up the steps, said, in her soft, sweet tone, "Thank you, sir. Good-night."

I felt my shoulder touched by some one, who, it appeared, was standing close to me for some seconds; but so occupied was I in gazing at her, that I paid no attention to the circumstance. The carriage drove away, and disappeared in the thick darkness of a starless night. I turned to re-enter the house, and, as I did so, the night lamp of the hall fell upon the features of

the man beside me, and showed me the pale and corpse-like face of Fred Hammersley. His eye was bent upon me with an expression of fierce and fiery passion, in which the sadness of long suffering also mingled. His bloodless lips parted, moved as though speaking, while yet no sound issued; and his nostril, dilating and contracting by turns, seemed to denote some deep and hidden emotion that worked within him.

"Hammersley," said I, holding out my hand toward him. "Hammersley, do not always mistake me."

He shook his head mournfully as it fell forward upon his breast; and, covering his arm, moved slowly away without speaking.

General Picton's voice, as he descended the stairs, accompanied by Generals Vandeleur and Vivian, aroused me at once, and I hurried toward him.

"Now, sir; to horse. The troops will defile by the Namur gate; and meet me there in an hour. Meanwhile tell Colonel Cameron that he must march with the light companies of his own and the Ninety-second at once."

"I say, Picton, they'll say we were taken by surprise in England; won't they?" said a sharp, strong voice, in a half-laughing tone, from behind.

"No, your Grace," said Sir Thomas, bowing slightly; "they'll scarcely do so, when they hear the time we took to get under arms."

I heard no more; but, throwing myself into the saddle of my troop-horse, once more rode back to the Belle Vue, to make ready for the road.

The thin pale crescent of a new moon, across which masses of dark and inky clouds were hurrying, tipped with its faint and sickly light the tall minarets of the Hôtel de Ville, as I rode into the "Grande Place." Although midnight, the streets were as crowded as at noonday; horse, foot, and dragoons passing and hurrying hither; the wild pibroch of the Highlander; the mellow bugle of the Seventy-first; the hoarse trumpet of the cavalry; the incessant roll of the drum, mingled their sounds with the tide of human voices, in which every accent was heard, from the reckless cheer of anticipated victory, to the heart-piercing shriek of woman's agony. Lights gleamed from every window; from the doors of almost every house poured forth a crowd of soldiers and townsfolk. The sergeants on one side might be seen telling off their men, their cool and steady countenances evidencing no semblance of emotion; while near them, some young ensign, whose beardless cheek and vacant smile bespoke the mere boy, looked on, with mingled pride and wonder, at the wild scene before him. Every now and then some general officer, with his staff, came cantering past; and, as the efforts to muster and form the troops grew more pressing, I could mark how soon we were destined to meet the enemy.

There are few finer monuments of the architecture of the middle ages than the Grande Place of Brussels: the rich façade of the Hôtel de Ville, with its long colonnade of graceful arches, upon every keystone of which some grim, grotesque head is peering; the massive cornices; the heavy corbels carved into ten thousand strange and uncouth fancies; but, finer than all, the taper and stately spire, fretted and perforated like some piece of silver filagree, stretches upward toward the sky, its airy pinnacle growing finer and more beautiful as it nears the stars it points to. How full of historic associations is every dark embrasure, every narrow casement around! Here may have stood the great Emperor Charles the Fifth, meditating upon that greatness he was about to forego forever; here, from this tall window, may have looked the sad and sickly features of Jeanne Laffolle, as, with wandering eye and idiot smile, she gazed upon the gorgeous procession beneath. There is not a stone that has not echoed to the tread of haughty prince or bold baron; yet never, in the palmiest days of ancient chivalry, did those proud dwellings of the great of old look out upon a braver and more valiant host than now thronged beneath their shadow. It was indeed a splendid sight, where the bright gleams of torch and lantern threw the red light around, to watch the measured tread and steady tramp of the Highland regiments as they defiled into the open space; each footstep, as it met the ground, seeming, in its proud and firm tread, to move in more than sympathy with the wild notes of their native mountains; silent and still they moved along; no voice spoke within their ranks, save that of some command to "Close up—take ground—to the right—rear rank—close order." Except such brief words as these, or the low muttered praise of some veteran general as he rode down the line, all was orderly and steady as on a parade. Meanwhile, from an angle of the square, the band of an approaching regiment was heard; and to the inspiriting quickness of "The Young May Moon," the gallant Twenty-eighth came forward, and took up their ground opposite to the Highlanders.

The deep bell of the Hôtel de Ville tolled one. The solemn sound rang out and died away in many an echo, leaving upon the heart a sense of some unknown depression; and there was something like a knell in the deep cadence of its bay; and over many a cheek a rapid trace of gloomy thought now passed; and true—too true, alas!—how many now listened for the last time!

"March! march!" passed from front to rear; and, as the bands burst forth again in streams of spirit-stirring harmony, the Seventy-ninth moved on; the Twenty-eighth followed; and as they debouched from the "Place" the Seventy-first and the Ninety-second succeeded them. Like wave after wave, the tide of armed men pressed on, and mounted the steep and narrow street toward the upper town of Brussels. Here Pack's brigade was forming in the Place Royale; and a crowd of staff officers dictating orders, and writing hurriedly on the drum-heads, were also seen. A troop of dragoons stood beside their horses at the door of the Belle Vue, and several grooms with led horses walked to and fro.

"Ride forward, sir, to the Bois de Cambre," said Picton, "and pivot the troops on the road to Mont St. Jean. You will then wait for my coming up, or further orders."

This command, which was given to me, I hastened to obey; and with difficulty forcing my way through the opposing crowd, at length reached the Namur gate. Here I found a detachment of the Guards, who as yet had got no orders to march, and were somewhat surprised to learn the forward movement. Ten minutes' riding brought me to the angle of the wood, whence I wrote a few lines to my host of the Belle Vue, desiring him to send Mike after me with my horses and my kit. The night was cold, dark, and threatening: the wind howled with a low and wailing cry through the dark pine-trees; and as I stood alone and in solitude, I had time to think of the eventful hours before me, and of that field which ere long was to witness the triumph or the downfall of my country's arms. The road which led through the forest of Soignies caught an additional gloom from the dark, dense woods around. The faint moon only showed at intervals; and a lowering sky, without a single star, stretched above us. It was an awful and a solemn thing to hear the deep and thundering roll of that mighty column, awakening the echoes of the silent forest as they went. So hurried was the movement, that we had scarcely any artillery, and that of the lightest caliber; but the clash and clank of the cavalry, the heavy monotonous tramp of infantry, were there; and as division followed after division, staff officers rode hurriedly to and fro, pressing the eager troops still on.

"Move up there, Ninety-fifth. Ah! Forty-second, we've work before us!" said Picton, as he rode up to the head of his brigade. The air of depression which usually sat upon his careworn features now changed for a light and laughing look, while his voice was softened and subdued into a low and pleasing tone. Although it was midsummer, the roads were heavy and deep with mud. For some weeks previously the weather had been rainy: and this, added to the haste and discomfort of the night march, considerably increased the fatigue of the troops. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, not a murmur nor complaint was heard on any side.

"I'm unco glad to get a blink o' them, onyhow," said a tall, raw-boned sergeant, who marched beside me.

"Faith, and maybe you won't be overpleased at the expression of their faces, when you see them," said Mike, whose satisfaction at the prospect before him was still as great as that of any other amid the thousands there.

The day was slowly breaking, as a Prussian officer, splashed and covered with foam, came galloping up at full speed past us. While I was yet conjecturing what might be the intelligence he brought, Power rode up to my side.

"We're in for it, Charley," said he. "The whole French army are in march; and Blucher's aide-de-camp, who has arrived, gives the number at one hundred and fifty thousand men. The Prussians are drawn up between Saint Amand and Sombref, and the Nassau and Dutch troops are at Quatre Bras, both expecting to be attacked."

"Quatre Bras was the original rallying spot for our troops, was it not?" said I.

"Yes, yes. It is that we're now marching upon; but our Prussian friend seems to think we shall arrive too late. Strong French corps are already at Fresnes, under the command, it is said, of Marshal Ney."

The great object of the British Commander-in-Chief was to arrive at Quatre Bras in sufficient time to effect his junction with Blucher before a battle should be fought. To effect this no exertion was spared: efforts almost superhuman were made; for, however prepared for a forward

movement, it was impossible to have anticipated anything until the intentions of Napoleon became clearly manifest. While Nivelles and Charleroi were exposed to him on one side, Namur lay open on the other; and he could either march upon Brussels, by Mons or Halle, or, as he subsequently attempted, by Quatre Bras and Waterloo. No sooner, however, were his intentions unmasked, and the line of his operations manifested, than Lord Wellington, with an energy equal to the mighty occasion that demanded it, poured down with the whole force under his command to meet him.

The march was a most distressing one: upward of three-and-twenty miles, with deep and cut-up roads, in hot, oppressive weather, in a country almost destitute of water. Still the troops pressed forward, and by noon came within hearing of the heavy cannonade in front, which indicated the situation of the battle. From this time aide-de-camp followed aide-de-camp in quick succession, who, from their scared looks and hurried gestures, seemed to bode but ill fortune to the cause we cared for. What the precise situation of the rival armies might be we knew not; but we heard the French were in overwhelming numbers; that the Dutch troops had abandoned their position; the Hanoverians being driven back, the Duke of Brunswick—the brave sovereign of a gallant people—fell charging at the head of his black hussars. From one phrase which constantly met our ears, it seemed that the Bois de Bossu was the key of the position. This had been won and lost repeatedly by both sides; and as we neared the battle-field a dispatch hurriedly announced to Picton the importance of at once recovering this contested point. The Ninety-fifth were ordered up to the attack. Scarcely was the word given, when fatigue, thirst, and exhaustion were forgotten: with one cheer the gallant regiment formed into line, and advanced upon the wood. Meanwhile, the Highland brigade moved down toward the right; the Royals and the Twenty-eighth debouched upon the left of the road; and in less than half an hour after our arrival our whole force was in action.

There is something appalling, to the bravest army, in coming up to battle at the time that an overwhelming and conquering foe are carrying victory triumphantly before them: such was our position at Quatre Bras. Bravely and gloriously as the forces of the Prince of Orange fought, the day, however, was not theirs. The Bois de Bossu, which opened to the enemy the road to Brussels, was held by their tirailleurs; the valley to the right was rode over by their mounted squadrons, who with lance and sabre carried all before them; their dark columns pressed steadily on; and a death-dealing artillery swept the allied ranks from flank to flank. Such was the field when the British arrived, and, throwing themselves into squares, opposed their unaided force to the dreadful charges of the enemy. The batteries showered down their storms of grape; Milhaud's heavy dragoons, assisted by crowds of lancers, rushed upon the squares, but they stood unbroken and undaunted, as sometimes upon three sides of their position the infuriated horsemen of the enemy came down. Once, and once only, were the French successful; the 42d, who were stationed amid tall corn-fields, were surrounded with cavalry before they knew it. The word was given to form square; the Lancers were already among them, and, fighting back to back, the gallant Highlanders met the foe. Fresh numbers poured down upon them, and already half the regiment was disabled and their colonel killed. These brave fellows were rescued by the 44th, who, throwing in a withering volley, fixed bayonets and charged. Meanwhile, the 95th had won and lost the wood, which, now in the possession of the French tirailleurs, threatened to turn the left of our position. It was at this time that a body of cavalry were seen standing to the left of the Enghien road, as if in observation. An officer sent forward to reconnoitre, returned with the intelligence that they were British troops, for he had seen their red uniforms.

"I can't think it, sir," said Picton. "It is hardly possible that any regiment from Enghien could have arrived already. Ride forward, O'Malley, and, if they be our fellows, let them carry that height yonder; there are two guns there cutting the 92d to pieces."

I put spurs to my horse, cleared the road at once, and dashing across the open space to the left of the wood, rode on in the direction of the horsemen. When I came within the distance of three hundred yards I examined them with my glass, and could plainly detect the scarlet coats and bright helmets. "Ha," thought I, "the 1st Dragoon Guards, no doubt." Muttering to myself thus much, I galloped straight on; and waving my hand as I came near, announced that I was the bearer of an order. Scarcely had I done so, when four horsemen, dashing spurs into their steeds, plunged hastily out from the line, and,

before I could speak, surrounded me; while the foremost called out, as he flourished his sabre above his head, "*Rendez-vous!*" At the same moment I was seized on each side, and led back a captive into the hands of the enemy.

"We guess your mistake, Capitaine," said the French officer before whom I was brought. "We are the regiment of Berg, and our scarlet uniform cost us dearly enough yesterday."

This allusion, I afterward learnt, was in reference to a charge by a cuirassier regiment, which, in mistaking them for English, poured a volley into them, and killed and wounded about twenty of their number.

CHAPTER CXIX.

QUATRE BRAS.

THOSE who have visited the field of Quatre Bras will remember that on the left of the high-road, and nearly at the extremity of the Bois de Bossu, stands a large Flemish farm-house, whose high, pitched roof, pointed gables, and quaint, old-fashioned chimneys, remind one of the architecture so frequently seen in Teniers's pictures. The house, which, with its dependencies of stables, granaries, and out-houses, resembles a little village, is surrounded by a large, straggling orchard of aged fruit-trees, through which the approach from the high-road leads. The interior of this quaint dwelling, like all those of its class, is only remarkable for a succession of small, dark, low-ceiled rooms, leading one into another; their gloomy aspect increased by the dark oak furniture, the heavy armories, and old-fashioned presses, carved in the grotesque taste of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Those who visit it now may mark the trace of cannon-shot here and there through the building; more than one deep crack will attest the force of the dread artillery. Still the traveler will feel struck with the rural peace and quietude of the scene: the speckled oxen that stand lowing in the deep meadows; the splash of the silvery trout as he sports in the bright stream that ripples along over its gravelly bed; the cawing of the old rooks in the tall beech-trees; but, more than all, the happy laugh of children—speak of the spot as one of retired and tranquil beauty; yet, when my eyes oped upon it on the morning of the 17th of June, the scene presented features of a widely different interest. The day was breaking as the deep, full sound of the French bugles announced the *réveil*. Forgetful of where I was, I sprang from my bed and rushed to the window; the prospect before me at once recalled me to my recollection, and I remembered that I was a prisoner. The exciting events around left me but little time and as little inclination to think over my old misfortunes; and I watched, with all the interest of a soldier, the movement of the French troops in the orchard beneath. A squadron of dragoons, who seemed to have passed the night beside their horses, lay stretched or seated in all the picturesque groupings of a bivouac: some, already up and stirring; others, leaned half listlessly upon their elbows, and looked about as if unwilling to believe the night was over; and some, stretched in deep slumber, woke not with the noise and tumult around them. The room in which I was confined looked out upon the road to Charleroi; I could therefore see the British troops; and as the French army had fallen back during the night, only an advance guard maintaining the position, I was left to my unaided conjectures as to the fortune of the preceding day of battle. What a period of anxiety and agitation was that morning to me; what would I not have given to learn the result of the action since the moment of my capture! Stubborn as our resistance had been, we were evidently getting the worst of it; and, if the Guards had not arrived in time, I knew we must have been beaten.

I walked up and down my narrow room, tortured and agonized by my doubts, now stopping to reason over the possibilities of success, now looking from the window to try if, in the gesture and bearing of those without, I could conjecture anything that passed. Too well I knew the vaunting character of the French soldier, in defeat as in victory, to put much confidence in their bearing. While, however, I watched them with an eager eye, I heard the tramp of horsemen coming along the paved causeway. From the moment my ear caught the sound to that of their arrival at the gate of the orchard, but few minutes elapsed; their pace was indeed a severe one, and, as they galloped through the narrow path that led to the farm-house, they never drew rein till they reached the porch. The party consisted of about a dozen persons, whose plumed hats bespoke them staff officers; but their uniforms were concealed beneath their great-coats. As they came along the picket sprang to their feet, and the guard at the door

beneath presented arms: this left no doubt upon my mind that some officer of rank was among them, and, as I knew that Ney himself commanded on the preceding day, I thought it might be he. The sound of voices beneath informed me that the party occupied the room under that in which I was; and, although I listened attentively, I could hear nothing but the confused murmur of persons conversing together without detecting even a word. My thoughts now fell into another channel, and, as I ruminated over my old position, I heard the noise of the sentry at my door as he brought his musket to the shoulder, and the next moment an officer in the uniform of the Chasseurs of the Guard entered. Bowing politely as he advanced to the middle of the room, he addressed me thus:

"You speak French, sir?" and, as I replied in the affirmative, continued:

"Will you then have the goodness to follow me this way?"

Although burning with anxiety to learn what had taken place, yet somehow I could not bring myself to ask the question. A secret pride mingled with my fear that all had not gone well with us, and I durst not expose myself to hear of our defeat from the lips of an enemy. I had barely time to ask into whose presence I was about to be ushered, when, with a slight smile of a strange meaning, he opened the door and introduced me into the saloon. Although I had seen at least twelve or fourteen horsemen arrive, there were but three persons in the room as I entered. One of these, who sat writing at a small table near the window, never lifted his head on my entrance, but continued assiduously his occupation. Another, a tall, fine-looking man of some sixty years or upward, whose high, bald forehead and drooping moustache, white as snow, looked in every way the old soldier of the empire, stood leaning upon his sabre; while the third, whose stature, somewhat below the middle size, was yet cast in a strong and muscular mold, stood with his back to the fire, holding on his arms the skirts of a gray surtout which he wore over his uniform; his legs were cased in the tall *bottes à l'écuyère* worn by the *chasseur à cheval*, and on his head a low cocked hat, without plume or feather, completed his costume. There was something which, at the very moment of my entrance, struck me as uncommon in his air and bearing, so much so that when my eyes had once rested on his pale but placid countenance, his regular, handsome, but somewhat stern features, I totally forgot the presence of the others and looked only at him.

"What's your rank, sir?" said he, hurriedly, and with a tone which bespoke command.

"I have none at present, save—"

"Why do you wear your epaulettes then, sir?" said he harshly, while from his impatient look and hurried gesture I saw that he put no faith in my reply.

"I am an aide-de-camp to General Picton, but without regimental rank."

"What was the British force under arms yesterday?"

"I do not feel myself at liberty to give you any information as to the number or the movements of our army."

"*Diantre! Diantre!*" said he, slapping his boot with his horsewhip, "do you know what you've been saying there, eh? Cambronne, you heard him, did you?"

"Yes, sire, and if your Majesty would permit me to deal with him, I would have his information, if he possess any, and that ere long, too."

"Eh, *gaillard*," said he, laughing, as he pinched the old general's ear in jest, "I believe you, with all my heart."

The full truth flashed upon my mind. I was in presence of the Emperor himself. As, however, up to this moment, I was unconscious of his presence, I resolved now to affect ignorance of it throughout.

"Had you dispatches, sir?" said he, turning toward me with a look of stern severity. "Were any dispatches found upon him when he was taken?" This latter question was directed to the aide-de-camp who introduced me, and who still remained at the door.

"No, sire, nothing was found upon him except this locket."

As he said these words he placed in Napoleon's hands the keepsake which St. Croix had left with me years before in Spain, and which, as the reader may remember, was a miniature of the Empress Josephine.

The moment the Emperor threw his eyes upon it, the flush which excitement had called into his cheek disappeared at once: he became pale as death, his very lips as bloodless as his wan cheek.

"Leave me, Lefebvre; leave me, Cambronne, for a moment; I will speak with this gentleman alone."

As the door closed upon them he leaned his arm upon the mantelpiece, and, with his head sunk upon his bosom, remained some moments without speaking.

"*Augure sinistre!*" muttered he within his teeth, as his piercing gaze was riveted upon the picture before him. "*Voilà la*

troisième fois; peut-être la dernière." Then suddenly rousing himself, he advanced close to me, and, seizing me by the arm with a grasp like iron, inquired:

"How came you by this picture? The truth, sir: mark me, the truth."

Without showing any sign of feeling hurt at the insinuation of this question, I detailed, in as few words as I could, the circumstance by which the locket became mine. Long before I had concluded, however, I could mark that his attention flagged, and finally wandered far away from the matter before him.

"Why will you not give me the information I look for? I seek for no breach of faith. The campaign is all but over. The Prussians were beaten at Ligny, their army routed, their artillery captured, ten thousand prisoners taken. Your troops and the Dutch were conquered yesterday, and they are in full retreat on Brussels. By to-morrow evening I shall date my bulletin from the palace at Laeken. Antwerp will be in my possession within twenty-four hours. Namur is already mine. Cambronne, Lefebvre," cried he, "*cet homme-là n'en sait rien,*" pointing to me as he spoke. "Let us see the other." With this he motioned slightly with his hand, as a sign for me to withdraw, and the next moment I was once more in the solitude of my prison-room, thinking over the singular interview I had just had with the great Emperor.

How anxiously pass the hours of one who, deprived of other means of information, is left to form his conjectures by some passing object or some chance murmur. The things which, in the ordinary course of life, are passed by unnoticed and unregarded, are now matters of moment: with what scrutiny he examines the features of those whom he dare not question; with what patient ear he listens to each passing word. Thus to me, a prisoner, the hours went by tardily yet anxiously: no sabre clanked; no war-horse neighed; no heavy-booted cuirassier tramped in the court-yard beneath my window, without setting a hundred conjectures afloat as to what was about to happen. For some time there had been a considerable noise and bustle in and about the dwelling. Horsemen came and went continually. The sounds of galloping could be heard along the paved causeway; then the challenge of the sentry at the gate; then the nearer tread of approaching steps, and many voices speaking together, would seem to indicate that some messenger had arrived with dispatches. At length all these sounds became hushed and still; no longer were the voices heard; and except the measured tread of the heavy cuirassier, as he paced on the flags beneath, nothing was to be heard. My state of suspense, doubly greater now than when the noise and tumult suggested food for conjecture, continued till toward noon, when a soldier in undress brought me some breakfast, and told me to prepare speedily for the road.

Scarcely had he left the room, when the rumbling noise of wagons was heard below, and a train of artillery-carts moved into the little court-yard, loaded with wounded men. It was a sad and frightful sight to see these poor fellows, as, crammed side by side in the straw of the *charrette*, they lay, their ghastly wounds opening with every motion of the wagon, while their wan, pale faces were convulsed with agony and suffering. Of every rank, from the sous-lieutenant to the humble soldier, from every arm of the service, from the heavy Cuirassier of the Guard to the light and intrepid tirailleur, they were there. I well remember one, an artilleryman of the Guard, who, as they lifted him forth from the cart, presented the horrifying spectacle of one both of whose legs had been carried away by a cannon-shot; pale, cold, and corpse-like, he lay in their arms; his head lay heavily to one side, and his arms fell passively, as in death. It was at this moment a troop of lancers, the advanced guard of D'Erlon's division, came trotting up the road; the cry of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" burst from them as they approached; its echo rang within the walls of the farm-house, when suddenly the dying man, as though some magic touch had called him back to life and vigor, sprang up erect between his bearers, his filmy eye flashing fire, a burning spot of red coloring his bloodless cheek; he cast one wild and hurried look around him, like one called back from death to look upon the living; and, as he raised his blood-stained hand above his head, shouted, in a heart-piercing cry, "*Vive l'Empereur!*" The effort was his last. It was the expiring tribute of allegiance to the chief he adored. The blood spouted in cataracts from his half-closed wounds, a convulsive spasm worked through his frame, his eyes rolled fearfully, as his outstretched hands seemed striving to clutch some object before them—and he was dead. Fresh arrivals of wounded continued to pour in; and now I thought I could detect at intervals the distant noise of a cannonade: the wind, however, was from the southward, and the sounds were too indistinct to be relieved on.

"*Allons! allons! mon cher,*" said a rough but good-humored looking fellow, as he strode into my room: he was the quartermaster of Milhaud's dragoons, under whose care I was now placed, and came to inform me that we were to set out immediately.

Monsieur Bonnard was a character in his way; and if it were not so near the conclusion of my history, I should like to present him to my readers. As it is, I shall merely say he was a thorough specimen of one class of his countrymen—a loud talker, a louder swearer, a vaporing, boasting, overbearing, good-natured, and even soft-hearted fellow, who firmly believed that Frenchmen were the climax of the species, and Napoleon the climax of Frenchmen. Being a great *bavard*, he speedily told me all that had taken place during the last two days. From him I learned that the Prussians had really been beaten at Ligny, and had fallen back, he knew not where: they were, however, he said, hotly pursued by Grouchy, with thirty-five thousand men, while the Emperor himself was now following the British and Dutch armies with seventy thousand more.

"You see," continued he, "*l'affaire est faite!* who can resist the Emperor?"

These were sad tidings for me; and, although I did not place implicit confidence in my informant, I had still my fears that much of what he said was true.

"And the British, now," said I; "what direction have they taken?"

"Bah! they're in retreat on Brussels, and will probably capitulate to-morrow."

"Capitulate!"

"*Oui, oui: ne vous fâchez pas, camarade,*" said he, laughing. "What could you do against Napoleon? you did not expect to beat him, surely? But come, we must move on; I have my orders to bring you to Planchenoit this evening, and our horses are tired enough already."

"Mine, methinks, should be fresh," said I.

"*Parbleu, non,*" replied he: "he has twice made the journey to Fresnes this morning with dispatches for Marshal Ney; the Emperor is enraged with the Marshal for having retreated last night, having the wood in his possession; he says he should have waited till daybreak, and then fallen upon your retreating columns. As it is, you are getting away without much loss. *Sacristie*, that was a fine charge!" These last words he muttered to himself; adding, between his teeth, "sixty-four killed and wounded."

"What was that? who were they?" said I.

"Our fellows," replied he, frankly; "the Emperor ordered up two twelve-pounders, and eight squadrons of lancers; they fell upon your light dragoons in a narrow part of the high-road. But suddenly we heard a noise in front; your hussars fell back, and a column of your heavy dragoons came thundering down upon us. *Parbleu!* they swept over us as if we were broken infantry; and there! there!" said he, pointing to the court-yard, from whence the groans of the wounded still rose, "there are the fruits of that terrible charge."

I could not restrain an outbreak of triumphant pleasure at this gallant feat of my countrymen.

"Yes, yes," said the honest quartermaster, "it was a fine thing; but a heavy reckoning is at hand. But come, now, let us take the road."

In a few moments more I found myself seated upon a heavy Norman horse, whose lumbering demi-peak saddle was nearly cleft in two by a sabre-cut.

"Ay, ay," said Monsieur Bonnard, as he saw my eye fixed on the spot, "it was one of your fellows did that; and the same cut clove poor Pierre from the neck to the seat."

"I hope," said I, laughing, "the saddle may not prove an unlucky one."

"No, no," said the Frenchman, seriously; "it has paid its debt to fate."

As we pressed on our road, which, broken by the heavy guns, and plowed up in many places by the artillery, was nearly impassable, we could distinctly hear from time to time the distant boom of the large guns, as the retiring and pursuing armies replied to each other; while behind us, but still a long way off, a dark mass appeared on the horizon: they were the advancing columns of Ney's division.

"Have the troops come in contact more than once this morning?"

"Not closely," said the quartermaster; "the armies have kept a respectful distance; they were like nothing I can think of," said the figurative Frenchman, "except two hideous serpents wallowing in mire, and vomiting at each other whole rivers of fire and flame."

As we approached Planchenoit, we came up to the rear-guard of the French army; from them we learned that Ney's division, consisting of the eighth corps, had joined the Emperor; that the British were still in retreat, but that nothing of any importance had occurred between the rival armies, the French merely firing their heavy guns from time to time, to ascertain by the reply the position of the retreating forces; the rain

poured down in torrents; gusts of cold and stormy wind swept across the wide plains, or moaned sorrowfully through the dense forest. As I rode on by the side of my companion, I could not help remarking how little the effects of a fatiguing march and unfavorable weather were apparent on those around me. The spirit of excited gayety pervaded every rank; and, unlike the stern features which the discipline of our service inforces, the French soldiers were talking, laughing, and even singing, as they marched; the canteens passed freely from hand to hand, and jests and toasts flew from front to rear along the dark columns; many carried their loaves of dark rye-bread on the tops of their bayonets; and to look upon that noisy and tumultuous mass as they poured along, it would have needed a practiced eye to believe them the most disciplined of European armies.

The sun was just setting as, mounting a ridge of high land beside the high-road, my companion pointed with his finger to a small farm-house, which, standing alone in the plain, commands an extensive view on every side of it.

"There," said he, "there is the *quartier général;* the Emperor sleeps there to-night. The King of Holland will afford him a bed to-morrow night."

The dark shadows of the coming night were rapidly falling as I strained my eyes to trace the British position. A hollow, rumbling sound announced the movement of artillery in our front.

"What is it, Arnotte?" said the Quartermaster to a dragoon officer who rode past.

"It is nothing," replied the other, laughing, "but a *ruse* of the Emperor. He wishes to ascertain if the enemy are in force, or if we have only a strong rear-guard before us."

As he spoke, fifteen heavy guns opened their fire, and the still air reverberated with a loud thunder. The sound had not died away—the very smoke lay yet heavily upon the moist earth—when forty pieces of British cannon rang out their answer, and the very plain trembled beneath the shock.

"Ha! they are there, then," exclaimed the dragoon, as his eyes flashed with ecstasy. "Look! see! the artillery are limbering up already. The Emperor is satisfied."

And so it was. A dark column of twelve hundred horse that accompanied the guns into the plain, now wheeled slowly round, and wound their long track far away to the right. The rain fell in torrents; the wind was hushed; and, as the night fell in darkness, the columns moved severally to their destinations. The bivouacs were formed, the watch-fires were lighted, and seventy thousand men and two hundred pieces of cannon occupied the heights of Planchenoit.

"My orders are to bring you to La Caillon," said the Quartermaster; "and if you only can spur your jaded horse into a trot we shall soon reach it."

About a hundred yards from the little farm-house stood a small cottage of a peasant. Here some officers of Marshal Soult's staff had taken up their quarters; and thither my guide now bent his steps.

"*Comment! Bonnard,*" said an aide-de-camp, as we rode up, "another prisoner? *Sacrebleu!* we shall have the whole British staff among us. You are in better luck than your countryman, the general, I hope," said the aide-de-camp; "his is a sad affair; and I'm sorry for it, too; he's a fine, soldier-like looking fellow."

"Pray, what has happened?" said I. "To what do you allude?"

"Merely to one of your people who has just been taken with some letters and papers of Bourmont's in his possession. The Emperor is in no very amicable humor toward that traitor, and resolves to pay off some part of his debt on his British correspondent."

"How cruel! how unjust!"

"Why, yes, it is hard, I confess, to be shot for the fault of another. *Mais, que voulez-vous?*"

"And when is this atrocious act to take place?"

"By daybreak to-morrow," said he, bowing as he turned toward the hut. "Meanwhile, let me counsel you, if you would not make another in the party, to reserve your indignation for your return to England."

"Come along," said the Quartermaster; "I find they have got quarters for you in the granary of the farm. I'll not forget you at supper time."

So saying, he gave his horse to an orderly, and led me by a little path to a back entrance of the dwelling. Had I time or inclination for such a scene, I might have lingered long to gaze at the spectacle before me. The guard held their bivouac around the quarters of the Emperor; and here, beside the watch-fires, sat the bronzed and scarred veterans who had braved every death and danger from the Pyramids to the Kremlin. On every side I heard the names of those whom history has already consigned to immortality; and, as the fitful

blaze of a wood-fire flashed from within the house, I could mark the figure of one who, with his hands behind his back, walked leisurely to and fro, his head leaned a little forward, as though in deep thought; but as the light fell upon his pale and placid feaeures, there was nothing there to indicate the stormy strife of hope and fear that raged beneath. From the rapid survey I took around I was roused by an officer, who, saluting me, politely desired me to follow him. We mounted a flight of stone steps, which, outside the wall of the building, led to the upper story of a large but ruined granary. Here a sentry was posted, who, permitting us to pass forward, I found myself in a small, mean-looking apartment, whose few articles of coarse furniture were dimly lighted by the feeble glimmer of a lamp. At the further end of the room sat a man, wrapped in a large blue cavalry cloak, whose face, covered with his hands as he bent downward, was completely concealed from view. The noise of the opening door did not appear to arouse him, nor did he notice my approach. As I entered, a faint sigh broke from him, as he turned his back upon the light; but he spoke not a word.

I sat for some time in silence, unwilling to obtrude myself upon the sorrows of one to whom I was unknown; and, as I walked up and down the gloomy chamber, my thoughts became riveted so completely upon my own fortunes that I ceased to remember my fellow-prisoner. The hours passed thus lazily along, when the door suddenly opened, and an officer in the dress of a lancer of the Guard stood for an instant before me, and then springing forward, clasped me by both hands, and called out:

"Charles, *mon ami, c'est bien toi?*"

The voice recalled to my recollection what his features, altered by time and years, had failed to do. It was Jules St. Croix, my former prisoner in the Peninsula. I cannot paint the delight with which I saw him again; his presence now, while it brought back the memory of some of my happiest days, also assured me that I was not friendless.

His visit was a brief one, for he was in attendance on Marshal Lobau's staff. In the few minutes, however, of his stay, he said:

"I have a debt to pay, Charles, and have come to discharge it. In an hour hence I shall leave this with dispatches for the left of our line. Before I go I'll come here with two or three others, as it were, to wish you a good-night: I'll take care to carry a second cloak and a foraging cap: I'll provide a fast horse; you shall accompany us for some distance. I'll see you safe across our pickets; for the rest, you must trust to yourself. *C'est arrangé, n'est-ce pas?*"

One firm grasp of his hand, to which I responded by another, followed, and he was gone.

Everything concurred to show me that a tremendous battle must ensue on the morrow, if the British forces but held their position. It was then with a feeling of excitement approaching to madness that I saw my liberty before me; that once more I should join in the bold charge and the rude shock of arms, hear the wild cry of my gallant countrymen, and either live to triumph with them in victory, or wait not to witness our defeat. Thus flew my hopes as, with increasing impatience, I waited St. Croix's coming, and with anxious heart listened to every sound upon the stairs which might indicate his approach. At length he came. I heard the gay and laughing voices of his companions as they came along: the door opened, and affecting the familiarity of old acquaintance, to deceive the sentry, they all shook me by the hand, and spoke in terms of intimacy.

"Labedoyère is below," said St. Croix, in a whisper; "you must wait here a few moments longer, and I'll return for you; put on the cloak and cap, and speak not a word as you pass out. The sentry will suppose that one of our party has remained behind; for I shall call out as if speaking to him, as I leave the room."

The voice of an officer calling in tones of impatience for the party to come down, cut short the interview, and again assuring me of their determination to stand by me, they left the chamber, and descended into the court. Scarcely had the door closed behind them, when my fellow-prisoner, whom I had totally forgotten, sprang on his legs, and came toward me. His figure screening the lamplight as he stood, prevented my recognizing his features; but the first tones of his voice told me who he was.

"Stay, sir," cried he, as he placed his hand upon my arm; "I have overheard your project. In an hour hence you will be free. Can you—will you perform a service for one who will esteem it not the less that it will be the last that man can render him? The few lines which I have written here with my pencil are for my daughter."

I could bear no more, and called out in a voice broken as his own,

"Oh, be not deceived, sir. Will you, even in an hour like this, accept a service from one whom you have banished from your house?"

The old man started as I spoke; his hand trembled till it shook my very arm, and, after a pause and with an effort to seem calm and collected, he added:

"My hours are few. Some dispatches of General Bourmont with which the Duke intrusted me were found in my possession. My sentence is a hurried one—and it is death! By to-morrow's sunrise—"

"Stay, stay!" said I. "You shall escape; my life is in no danger. I have, as you see, even friends among the staff; besides, I have done nothing to compromise or endanger my position."

"No, sir," said he sternly, "I will not act such a part as this. The tears you have seen in these old eyes are not for myself. I fear not death. Better it were it should have come upon the field of glorious battle; but as it is, my soldier's honor is intact, untainted."

"You refuse the service on account of him who proffers it," said I, as I fell heavily upon a seat, my head bowed upon my bosom.

"Not so, not so, my boy," replied he, kindly; "the near approach of death, like the fading light of day, gives us a longer and a clearer view before us. I feel that I have wronged you; that I have imputed to you the errors of others; but, believe me, if I have wronged you, I have punished my own heart; for, Charles, I have loved you like a son."

"Then prove it," said I, "and let me act toward you as toward a father. You will not? You refuse me still? Then, by Heaven, I remain to share your fate! I well know the temper of him who has sentenced you, and that, by one word of mine, my destiny is sealed forever."

"No, no, boy! This is but rash and insane folly. Another year or two, nay, perhaps a few months more, and in the common course of nature I had ceased to be; but you, with youth, with fortune, and with hope—"

"Oh, not with hope!" said I, in a voice of agony.

"Nay, say not so," replied he, calmly, while a sickly smile played sadly over his face; "you will give this letter to my daughter, you will tell her that we parted as friends should part; and if, after that, when time shall have smoothed down her grief, and her sorrow be rather a dark dream of the past than a present suffering; if, then, you love her, and if—"

"Oh, tempt me not thus!" said I, as the warm tears gushed from my eyes; "lead me not thus astray from what my honor tells me I should do. Hark! they are coming already. I hear the clank of their sabres; they are mounting the steps; not a moment is to be lost! Do you refuse me still?"

"I do," replied he, firmly; "I am resolved to bide my fate."

"Then so do I," cried I, as, folding my arms, I sat down beside the window, determined on my course.

"Charley, Charley," said he, stooping over me, "my friend, my last hope, the protector of my child—"

"I will not go," said I, in a hollow whisper.

Already they were at the door; I heard their voices as they challenged the sentry; I heard his musket as he raised it to his shoulder. The thought flashed across me—I jumped up, and, throwing the loose mantle of the French dragoon around him, and replacing his own with the foraging cap of St. Croix, I sprang into a corner of the room, and, seating myself so as to conceal my face, waited the result. The door opened, the party entered, laughing and talking together.

"Come, Eugène," said one, taking Sir George by the arm, "you have spent long enough time here to learn the English language. We shall be late at the outpost. *Messieurs les Anglais*, good-night, good-night!"

This was repeated by the others as they passed out with Sir George Dashwood among them, who, seeing that my determination was not to be shaken, and that any demur on his part must necessarily compromise both, yielded to a *coup de main* what he never would have consented to from an appeal to his reason. The door closed; their steps died away in the distance. Again a faint sound struck my ear; it was the challenge of the sentry beneath, and I heard the tramp of horses' feet. All was still, and in a burst of heartfelt gratitude I sank upon my knees, and thanked God that he was safe.

So soundly did I sleep, that not before I was shaken several times by the shoulder could I awake on the following morning.

"I thought there were two prisoners here," said a gruff voice, as an old moustached-looking veteran cast a searching look about the room. "However, we shall have enough of them before sunset. Get—get up; *Monsieur le Duc de Dalmatie* desires some information you can give him.

As he said this, he led me from the

room, and, descending the flight of stone steps, we entered the court-yard. It was but four o'clock, the rain still falling in torrents, yet every one was up and stirring.

"Mount this horse," said my gruff friend, "and come with me toward the left; the Marshal has already gone forward."

The heavy mist of the morning, darkened by the lowering clouds which almost rested on the earth, prevented our seeing above a hundred yards before us; but the hazy light of the watch-fires showed me the extent of the French position, as it stretched away along the ridge toward the Halle road. We rode forward at a trot, but in the deep clayey soil we sank at each moment to our horses' fetlocks. I turned my head as I heard the tramp and splash of horsemen behind, and perceived that I was followed by two dragoons, who, with their carbines on the rest, kept their eyes steadily upon me to prevent any chance of escape. In a slight hollow of the ground before us stood a number of horsemen, who conversed together in a low tone as we came up.

"There! that is the Marshal," said my companion, in a whisper, as we joined the party.

"Yes, Monsieur le Duc," said an engineer colonel, who stood beside Soult's horse, with a colored plan in his hand—"Yes, that is the *Château de Goumont*, yonder. It is, as you perceive, completely covered by the rising ground marked here; they will, doubtless, place a strong artillery force in this quarter."

"Ah! who is this?" said the Marshal, turning his eyes suddenly upon me, and then casting a look of displeasure around him, lest I should have overheard any portion of their conversation. "You are deficient in cavalry, it would appear, sir?" said he to me.

"You must feel, Monsieur le Duc," said I, calmly, "how impossible it is for me, as a man of honor and a soldier, to afford you any information as to the army I belong to."

"I do not see that, sir. You are a prisoner in our hands; your treatment, your fortune, your very life depends on us. Besides, sir, when French officers fall into the power of your people, I have heard they meet not very ceremonious treatment."

"Those who say so, say falsely," said I, "and wrong both your countrymen and mine. In any case—"

"The Guards are an untried force in your service," said he, with a mixture of inquiry and assertion.

I replied not a word.

"You must see, sir," continued he, "that all the chances are against you. The Prussians beaten, the Dutch discouraged, the Belgians only waiting for victory to incline to our standard, to desert your ranks, and pass over to ours; while your troops, scarcely forty thousand, nay, I might say, not more than thirty-five thousand. Is it not so?"

Here was another question, so insidiously conveyed that even a change of feature on my part might have given the answer. A half smile, however, and at slight bow was all my reply; while Soult muttered something between his teeth, which called forth a laugh from those around him.

"You may retire, sir, a little," said he, dryly, to me.

Not sorry to be freed from the awkwardness of my position, I fell back to the little rising ground behind. Although the rain poured down without ceasing, the rising sun dispelled, in part, the heavy vapor, and by degrees different portions of the wide plain presented themselves to view; and, as the dense masses of fog moved slowly along, I could detect, but still faintly, the outline of the large, irregular building which I had heard them call the *Château de Goumont*, and from whence I could hear the clank of masonry, as, at intervals, the wind bore the sounds toward me. These were the sappers piercing the walls for musketry; and this I could now perceive was looked upon as a position of no small importance. Surrounded by a straggling orchard of aged fruit-trees, the château lay some hundred yards in advance of the British line, commanded by two eminences; one of which, in the possession of the French, was already occupied by a park of eleven guns; of the other I knew nothing, except the passing glance I had obtained of its position on the map. The second corps, under Jerome Bonaparte, with Foy and Kellermann's brigade of light artillery, stretched behind us. On the right of these came D'Erlon's corps, extending to a small wood, which my companion told me was Frischermont; while Lobau's division was stationed to the extreme right toward St. Lambert, to maintain the communication with Grouchy at Wavre, or, if need be, to repel the advance of the Prussians, and prevent their junction with the Anglo-Dutch army. The Imperial Guard with the cavalry formed the reserve. Such was, in substance, the information given me by my guide, who seemed to expatiate with pleasure

over the magnificent array of battle, while he felt a pride in displaying his knowledge of the various divisions and their leaders.

"I see the Marshal moving toward the right," said he; "we had better follow him."

It was now about eight o'clock, as from the extremity of the line I could see a party of horsemen advancing at a sharp canter.

"That must be Ney," said my companion. "See how rashly he approaches the English lines!"

And so it was. The party in question rode fearlessly down the slope, and did not halt until they reached within about three hundred yards of what appeared a ruined church.

"What is that building yonder?"

"That—that," replied he, after a moment's thought, "that must be La Haye Sainte; and yonder, to the right of it, is the road to Brussels. There, look now! your people are in motion. See! a column is moving toward the right, and the cavalry are defiling on the other side of the road. I was mistaken—that cannot be Ney. *Sacre Dieu!* it was the Emperor himself, and here he comes."

As he spoke, the party galloped forward, and pulled up short within a few yards of where we stood.

"Ha!" cried he, as his sharp glance fell upon me, "there is my taciturn friend of Quatre Bras. You see, sir, I can dispense with your assistance now; the chessboard is before me;" and then added, in a tone he intended not to be overheard, "Everything depends on Grouchy."

"Well, Haxo," he called out to an officer who galloped up, *chapeau* in hand, "what say you? are they intrenched in that position?"

"No, sire, the ground is open, and in two hours more will be firm enough for the guns to maneuver."

"Now, then, for breakfast," said Napoleon, as with an easy and tranquil smile he turned his horse's head, and cantered gently up the heights toward La Belle Alliance. As he approached the lines, the cry of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" burst forth. Regiment after regiment took it up; and from the distant wood of Frischermont to the far left beside Merke-braine, the shout resounded. So sudden, so simultaneous the outbreak, that he himself, accustomed as he well was to the enthusiasm of his army, seemed, as he reined in his horse, and looked with proud and elated eye upon the countless thousands, astounded and amazed. He lifted with slow and graceful action his unplumed hat above his head, and, while he bowed that proud front before which kings have trembled, the acclamation burst forth anew, and rent the very air.

At this moment the sun shone brilliantly out from the dark clouds, and flashed upon the shining blades and glistening bayonets along the line. A dark and lowering shadow hung gloomily over the British position, while the French sparkled and glittered in the sunbeams. His quick glance passed with lightning speed from one to the other; and I thought that, in his look, upturned to heaven, I could detect the flitting thought which bade him hope it was an augury. The bands of the Imperial Guard burst forth in joyous and triumphant strains; and amid the still repeated cries of "*l'Empereur! l'Empereur!*" he rode slowly along toward La Belle Alliance.

CHAPTER CXX.

WATERLOO.

NAPOLEON'S first intention was, to open the battle by an attack upon the extreme right; but Ney, who returned from an observation of the ground, informed him that a rivulet, swollen by the late rains, had now become a foaming torrent, perfectly impassable to infantry. To avoid this difficulty he abandoned his favorite maneuver of a flank movement, and resolved to attack the enemy by the center. Launching his cavalry and artillery by the road to Brussels, he hoped thus to cut off the communication of the British with their own left, as well as with the Prussians, for whom he trusted that Grouchy would be more than a match.

The reserves were in consequence all brought up to the center. Seven thousand cavalry and a massive artillery assembled upon the heights of La Belle Alliance, and waited but the order to march. It was eleven o'clock, and Napoleon mounted his horse and rode slowly along the line; again the cry of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" resounded, and the bands of the various regiments struck up their spirit-stirring strains as the gorgeous staff moved along. On the British side all was tranquil; and still the different divisions appeared to have taken up their ground, and the long ridge from Terla-Haye to Merke-braine bristled with bayonets. Nothing could possibly be more equal than the circumstances of the field. Each army possessed an eminence whence

their artillery might play. A broad and slightly undulating valley lay between both. The ground permitted in all places both cavalry and infantry movements, and except the crumbling walls of the Château of Hougoumont, or the farm-house of La Haye Sainte, both of which were occupied by the British, no advantage either by nature or art inclined to either side. It was a fair stand-up fight. It was the mighty tournament, not only of the two greatest nations, but the two deadliest rivals and bitterest enemies, led on by the two greatest military geniuses that the world has ever seen: it might not be too much to say, or ever will see. As for me, condemned to be an inactive spectator of the mighty struggle, doomed to witness all the deep-laid schemes and well-devised plans of attack which were destined for the overthrow of my country's arms, my state was one of torture and suspense. I sat upon the little rising ground of Rossomme: before me, in the valley, where yet the tall corn waved in ripe luxuriance, stood the quiet and peaceful-looking old Château of Hougoumont, and the blossoming branches of the orchard; the birds were gayly singing their songs, the shrill whistle of the fatal musketry was to be heard, and through my glass I could detect the uniform of the soldiers who held the position, and my heart beat anxiously and proudly as I recognized the Guards. In the orchard and the garden were stationed some riflemen—at least their dress and the scattered order they assumed bespoke them such. While I looked, the tirailleurs of Jerome's division advanced from the front of the line, and, descending the hill in a sling trot, broke into scattered parties, keeping up, as they went, a desultory and irregular fire. The English skirmishers, less expert in this peculiar service, soon fell back, and the head of Reille's brigade began their march toward the château. The English artillery is unmasked and opens its fire. Kellermann advances at a gallop his twelve pieces of artillery; the château is concealed from view by the dense smoke, and as the attack thickens, fresh troops pour forward, the artillery thundering on either side; the entire lines of both armies stand motionless spectators of the terrific combat, while every eye is turned toward that devoted spot from whose dense mass of cloud and smoke the bright glare of artillery is flashing, as the crashing masonry, the burning rafters, and the loud yell of battle add to the frightful interest of the scene. For above an hour the tremendous attack continues without cessation; the artillery stationed upon the height has now found its range, and every ringing shot tells upon the tottering walls; some wounded soldiers return faint and bleeding from the conflict, but there are few who escape. A crashing volley of fire-arms is now heard from the side where the orchard stands; a second, and a third succeed, one after the other, as rapid as lightning itself. A silence follows, when, after a few moments, a deafening cheer bursts forth, and an aide-de-camp gallops up to say that the orchard has been carried at the point of the bayonet, the Nassau sharpshooters who held it having, after a desperate resistance, retired before the irresistible onset of the French infantry. "*A moi! maintenant!*" said General Foy, as he drew his sabre, and rode down to the head of his splendid division, which, anxious for the word to advance, were standing in the valley. "*En avant! mes braves,*" cried he, while, pointing to the château with his sword, he dashed boldly forward. Scarcely had he advanced a hundred yards, when a cannon-shot, "ricocheting" as it went, struck his horse in the counter, and rolled him dead on the plain. Disengaging himself from the lifeless animal, at once he sprang to his feet, and hurried forward. The column was soon hid from my view, and I was left to mourn over the seemingly inevitable fate that impended over my gallant countrymen.

In the intense interest which chained me to this part of the field, I had not noticed till this moment that the Emperor and his staff were standing scarcely thirty yards from where I was. Napoleon, seated upon a gray, almost white, Arabian, had suffered the reins to fall loosely on the neck, as he held with both hands his telescope to his eye; his dress, the usual green coat with white facings, the uniform of the *chasseurs à cheval*, was distinguished merely by the cross of the legion; his high boots were splashed and mud-stained, from riding through the deep and clayey soil; his compact and clean-bred charger looked also slightly blown and heated, but he himself, and I watched his features well, looked calm, composed, and tranquil. How anxiously did I scrutinize that face; with what a throbbing heart did I canvass every gesture, hoping to find some passing trait of doubt, of difficulty, or of hesitation; but none was there: unlike one who looked upon the harrowing spectacle of a battle-field, whose all was depending on the game before him; gambling with one throw his last, his only stake, and that the empire of the world. Yet, could I picture

to myself one who felt at peace within himself—nought of reproach, nought of regret to move or stir his spirit, whose tranquil bark had glided over the calm sea of life, unruffled by the breath of passion—I should have fancied such was he.

Beside him sat one whose flashing eye and changing features looked in every way his opposite; watching with intense anxiety the scene of the deadly struggle round the château, every look, every gesture told the changing fortune of the moment; his broad and brawny chest glittered with orders and decorations, but his heavy brow and lowering look, flushed almost black with excitement, could not easily be forgotten. It was Soult, who, in his quality of major-general, accompanied the Emperor throughout the day.

"They have lost it again, sire," said the Marshal, passionately; "and see, they are forming beneath the cross-fire of the artillery; the head of the column keeps not its formation two minutes together: why does he not move up?"

"Domont, you know the British; what troops are those in the orchard? They use the bayonet well."

The officer addressed pointed his glass for a moment to the spot. Then, turning to the Emperor, replied, as he touched his hat, "They are the Guards, sire."

During this time Napoleon spoke not a word; his eye ever bent upon the battle, he seemed to pay little if any attention to the conversation about him. As he looked, an aide-de-camp, breathless and heated, galloped up.

"The columns of attack are formed, sire; everything is ready, and the Marshal only waits the order."

Napoleon turned upon his saddle, and, directing his glass toward Ney's division, looked fixedly for some moments at them. His eye moved from front to rear slowly, and at last carrying his telescope along the line, he fixed it steadily upon the far left. Here, toward St. Lambert, a slight cloud seemed to rest on the horizon, as the Emperor continued to gaze steadfastly at it. Every glass of the staff was speedily turned in that direction.

"It is nothing but a cloud; some exhalation from the low grounds in that quarter," whispered one.

"To me," said another, "they look like trees, part of the Bois de Wavre."

"They are men," said the Emperor, speaking for the first time. "*Est-ce Grouchy? Est-ce Blucher?*"

Soult inclines to believe it to be the former, and proceeds to give his reasons, but the Emperor, without listening, turns toward Domont, and orders him with a division of light cavalry and Subervie's brigade, to proceed thither at once. He is to be Grouchy, to establish a junction with him; to resist, should it prove to be the advanced guard of Marshal Blucher. Scarcely is the order given when a column of cavalry, wheeling "fours about," unravels itself from the immense mass, and seems to serpentine like an enormous snake between the squares of the mighty army. The pace increases at every moment, and at length we see them emerge from the extreme right and draw up, as if on parade, above half a mile from the wood. This movement, by its precision and beauty, had attracted our entire attention, not only from the attack upon Hougoumont, but also an incident which had taken place close beside us. This was the appearance of a Prussian hussar who had been taken prisoner between Wavre and Planchenoit: he was the bearer of a letter from Bulow to Wellington, announcing his arrival at St. Lambert, and asking for orders.

This at once explains the appearance on the right; but the prisoner also adds, that the three Prussian corps were at Wavre, having pushed their patrols two leagues from that town without ever encountering any portion of the force under the command of Grouchy. For a moment not a word is spoken. A silence like a panic pervades the staff; the Emperor himself is the first to break it.

"This morning," said he, turning toward Soult, "the chances were ninety to one in our favor; Bulow's arrival has already lost us thirty of the number: but the odds are still sufficient, if Grouchy but repair the *horrible fault* he has committed."

He paused for a moment, and, as he lifted up his own hand, and turned a look of indignant passion toward his staff, added in a voice the sarcasm of whose tone there is no forgetting:

"*Il s'amuse à Gembloux!* Still," said he, speaking rapidly and with more energy than I had hitherto noticed, "Bulow may be entirely cut off. Let an officer approach. Take this letter, sir,"—giving, as he spoke, Bulow's letter to Lord Wellington—"give this letter to Marshal Grouchy; tell him that at this moment he should be before Wavre; tell him that already, had he obeyed his orders—but no, tell him to march at once, to press forward his cavalry, to come up in two hours, in three at furthest. You have but five leagues to ride:

see, sir, that you reach him within an hour."

As the officer hurries away at the top of his speed, an aide-de-camp from General Domont confirms the news; they are the Prussians whom he has before him. As yet, however, they are debouching from the wood, and have attempted no forward movement.

"What's Bulow's force, Marshal?"

"Thirty thousand, sire."

"Let Lobau take ten thousand, with the Cuirassiers of the Young Guard, and hold the Prussians in check."

"*Maintenant pour les autres.*" This he said with a smile, as he turned his eyes once more toward the field of battle. The aide-de-camp of Marshal Ney, who, bare-headed and expectant, sat waiting for orders, presented himself to view. The Emperor turned toward him as he said, with a clear and firm voice:

"Tell the Marshal to open the fire of his batteries; to carry La Haye Sainte with the bayonet, and leaving an infantry division for its protection, to march against La Papelotte and La Haye. They must be carried by the bayonet."

The aide-de-camp was gone; Napoleon's eye followed him as he crossed the open plain and was lost in the dense ranks of the dark columns. Scarcely five minutes elapsed when eighty guns thundered out together, and, as the earth shook and trembled beneath, the mighty movement of the day began its execution. From Hougoumont, where the slaughter and the carnage continued unslackened and unstayed, every eye was now turned toward the right. I knew not what troops occupied La Haye Sainte, or whether they were British who crowned the heights above it; but in my heart how fervently did I pray that they might be so. Oh! in that moment of suspense and agonizing doubt, what would I not have given to know that Picton himself and the fighting Fifth were there; that behind that ridge the Grays, the Royals, and the Enniskilleners sat motionless, but burning to advance; and the breath of battle waved among the tartans of the Highlanders, and blew upon the flashing features of my own island countrymen. Had I known this, I could have marked the onset with a less failing spirit.

"There goes Marcognet's division," said my companion, springing to his legs; "they're moving to the right of the road. I should like to see the troops that will stand before them."

So saying, he mounted his horse, and, desiring me to accompany him, rode to the height beside La Belle Alliance. The battle was now raging from the Château de Hougoumont to St. Lambert, where the Prussian tirailleurs, as they issued from the wood, were skirmishing with the advance posts of Lobau's brigade. The attack upon the center, however, ingrossed all my attention, and I watched the dark columns as they descended into the plain, while the incessant roll of the artillery played about them. To the right of Ney's attack, D'Erlon advanced with three divisions, and the artillery of the Guard. Toward this part of the field my companion moved. General Le Vasseur desired to know if the division on the Brussels road were English or Hanoverian troops, and I was sent for to answer the question. We passed from square to square until at length we found ourselves upon the flank of D'Erlon's division. Le Vasseur, who at the head of his cuirassiers waited but the order to charge, waved impatiently with his sword for us to approach. We were now to the right of the high-road, and about four hundred yards from the crest of the hill where, protected by a slight hedge, Picton with Kempt's brigade waited the attack of the enemy.

Just at this moment an incident took place which, while in itself one of the most brilliant achievements of the day, changed in a signal manner my own fortunes. The head of D'Erlon's column pressed with fixed bayonets up the gentle slope. Already the Belgian infantry give way before them. The brave Brunswickers, overwhelmed by the heavy cavalry of France, at first begin to waver; then are broken; and at last retreat in disorder up the road, a whirlwind of pursuing squadrons thundering behind them. "*En avant! en avant! la victoire est à nous,*" is shouted madly through the impatient ranks; and the artillery is called up to play upon the British squares: upon which, fixed and immovable, the cuirassiers have charged without success. Like a thunderbolt, the flying artillery dashes to the front; but scarcely has it reached the bottom of the ascent, when, from the deep ground, the guns become imbedded in the soil: the wheels refuse to move. In vain the artillery drivers whip and spur their laboring cattle. Impatiently the leading files of the column prick with their bayonets the struggling horses. The hesitation is fatal; for Wellington, who, with eagle glance, watches from an eminence beside the high-road the advancing column, sees the accident. An order is given; and, with one fell swoop, the heavy cavalry brigade pour

down. Picton's division deploys into line; the bayonets glance above the ridge; and with a shout that tells above the battle, on they come, the fighting Fifth. One volley is exchanged; but the bayonet is now brought to the charge, and the French division retreat in close column, pursued by their gallant enemy. Scarcely have the leading divisions fallen back, and the rear pressed down upon, or thrown into disorder, when the cavalry trumpets sound a charge: the bright helmets of the Enniskilleners come dashing in the sunbeams, and the Scotch Grays, like a white-crested wave, are rolling upon the foe. Marcognet's division is surrounded; the dragoons ride them down on every side; the guns are captured; the drivers cut down, and two thousand prisoners are carried off. A sudden panic seems to sieze upon the French, as cavalry, infantry, and artillery are hurried back on each other. Vainly the French attempt to rally: the untiring enemy press madly on; the household brigade, led on by Lord Uxbridge, came thundering down the road, riding down with their gigantic force the mailed cuirassiers of France. Borne along with the retreating torrents, I was carried on amidst the densely commingled mass. The British cavalry, which, like the lightnings that sever the thundercloud, pierce through in every direction, plunged madly upon us. The roar of battle grew louder, as hand to hand they fought. Milhaud's heavy dragoons, with the 4th Lancers, came up at a gallop. Picton presses forward, waving his plumed hat above his head; his proud eye flashes with the fire of victory. That moment is his last. Struck in the forehead by a musket-ball, he falls dead from the saddle; and the wild yell of the Irish regiments, as they ring his death-cry, are the last sounds which he hears. Meanwhile, the Life Guards are among us; prisoners of rank are captured on every side: and I, seizing the moment, throw myself among the ranks of my countrymen, and am borne to the rear with the retiring squadrons.

As we reached the crest of the hill above the road, a loud cheer in the valley beneath us burst forth, and from the midst of the dense smoke a bright and pointed flame shot up toward the sky. It was the farmhouse La Haye Sainte, which the French had succeeded in setting fire to with hot shot. For some time past the ammunition of the corps that held it had failed, and a dropping, irregular musketry was the only reply to the incessant rattle of the enemy. As the smoke cleared away we discovered that the French had carried the position; and, as no quarter was given in that deadly hand-to-hand conflict, not one returned to our ranks to tell the tale of their defeat.

"This is the officer that I spoke of," said an aide-de-camp, as he rode up to where I was standing, bareheaded and without a sword. "He has just made his escape from the French lines, and will be able to give your Lordship some information."

The handsome features and gorgeous costume of Lord Uxbridge were known to me; but I was not aware, till afterward, that a soldier-like, resolute-looking officer beside him was General Graham. It was the latter who first addressed me.

"Are you aware, sir," said he, "if Grouchy's force is arrived?"

"They had not: on the contrary, as, shortly before I escaped, an aide-de-camp was dispatched to Gembloux, to hasten his coming. And the troops, for they must be troops, were debouching from the wood yonder. They seem to form a junction with the corps to the right; they are the Prussians. They arrived there before noon from St. Lambert, and are part of Bulow's corps. Count Lobau and his division of ten thousand men were dispatched, about an hour since, to hold them in check."

"This is great news," said Lord Uxbridge. "Fitzroy must know it at once."

So saying, he dashed spurs into his horse, and soon disappeared amid the crowd on the hill-top.

"You had better see the Duke, sir," said Graham. "Your information is too important to be delayed. Captain Calvert, let this officer have a horse; his own is too tired to go much further."

"And a cap, I beg of you," added I, in an under tone, "for I have already found a sabre."

By a slight circuitous route we reached the road, upon which a mass of dismounted artillery-carts, baggage-wagons and tumbrils were heaped together as a barricade against the attack of the French dragoons, who more than once had penetrated to the very crest of our position. Close to this, and on a little rising gound, from which a view of the entire field extended, from Hougoumont to the far left, the Duke of Wellington stood, surrounded by his staff. His eye was bent upon the valley before him, when the advancing columns of Ney's attack still pressed onward; while the fire of sixty great guns poured death and carnage into his lines. The second Belgian division, routed and broken, had fallen back upon the 27th Regiment, who

l merely time to throw themselves into
are, when Milhaud's cuirassiers, armed
h their terrible long, straight swords,
ne sweeping down upon them. A line
impassable bayonets, a living *chevaux-frise* of the best blood of Britain, stood
n and motionless before the shock. The
nch *mitraille* played mercilessly on the
ks, but the chasms were filled up like
gic, and in vain the bold horsemen of
l galloped round the bristling files. At
th the word "Fire!" was heard within
square, and, as the bullets at pistol-
e rattled upon them, the cuirass af-
d them no defense against the deadly
y. Men and horses rolled indiscrimi-
y upon the earth. Then would come
arge of our dashing squadrons, who,
g recklessly upon the foe, were in
turn to be repulsed by numbers, and
attacks poured down upon our un-
en infantry.

That column yonder is wavering. Why
he not bring up his supporting squad-
?" inquired the Duke, pointing to a
ian regiment of light dragoons, who
formed in the same brigade with the
Hussars.

He refuses to oppose his light cavalry
uirassiers, my Lord," said an aide-de-
p, who had just returned from the di-
on in question.

Tell him to march his men off the
and," said the Duke, with a quiet and
assive tone.

n less than ten minutes the "Belgian
iment" was seen to defile from the
s, and take the road to Brussels, to in-
se the panic of that city, by circulat-
and strengthening the report that the
glish were beaten, and Napoleon in full
rch upon the capital.

'What's Ney's force? can you guess,
?" said the Duke of Wellington, turn-
to me.

'About twelve thousand men, my Lord."

'Are the Guard among them?"

'No, sir; the Guard are in reserve
ve La Belle Alliance."

'In what part of the field is Bona-
rte?"

'Nearly opposite to where we stand."

'I told you, gentlemen, Hougoumont
er was the great attack. The battle
st be decided here," pointing, as he
ke, to the plain beneath us, where Ney
ll poured on his devoted columns, where
the French cavalry rode down upon
r firm squares.

As he spoke, an aide-de-camp rode up
m the valley.

'The Ninety-second requires support,
my Lord. They cannot maintain their position half an hour longer without it."

"Have they given way, sir?"

"No—"

"Well, then, they must stand where they are. I hear cannon toward the left; yonder, near Frischermont."

At this moment the light cavalry swept past the base of the hill on which we stood, hotly followed by the French heavy cuirassier brigade. Three of our guns were taken; and the cheering of the French infantry, as they advanced to the charge, presaged their hope of victory.

"Do it, then," said the Duke, in reply to some whispered question of Lord Uxbridge; and shortly after the heavy trot of advancing squadrons was heard behind.

They were the Life Guards and the Blues, who, with the 1st Dragoon Guards and the Enniskilleners, were formed into close column.

"I know the ground, my Lord," said I to Lord Uxbridge.

"Come along, sir, come along," said he, as he threw his hussar jacket loosely behind him, to give freedom to his sword-arm. "Forward, my men, forward; but steady, hold your horses in hand, threes about, and together, charge."

"Charge!" he shouted; while, as the word flew from squadron to squadron, each horseman bent upon his saddle, and that mighty mass, as though instinct with but one spirit, dashed like a thunderbolt upon the column beneath them. The French, blown and exhausted, inferior besides in weight, both of man and horse, offered but a short resistance. As the tall corn bends beneath the sweeping hurricane, wave succeeding wave, so did the steel-clad squadrons of France fall before the nervous arm of Britain's cavalry. Onward they went, carrying death and ruin before them, and never stayed their course until the guns were recaptured, and the cuirassiers, repulsed, disordered, and broken, had retired beneath the protection of their artillery.

There was, as a brilliant and eloquent writer on the subject mentions, a terrible sameness in the whole of this battle. Incessant charges of cavalry upon the squares of our infantry, whose sole maneuver consisted in either deploying into line to resist the attack of infantry, or falling back into square when the cavalry advanced; performing those two evolutions under the devastating fire of artillery, before the unflinching heroism of that veteran infantry, whose glories had been reaped upon the blood-stained fields of Austerlitz, Marengo, and Wagram, or opposing an unbroken

front to the whirlwind swoop of infuriated cavalry. Such were the enduring and devoted services demanded from the English troops, and such they failed not to render. Once or twice had temper nearly failed them, and the cry ran through the ranks, "Are we never to move forward? Only let us at them!" But the word was not yet spoken which was to undam the pent-up torrent, and bear down with unrelenting vengeance upon the now exulting columns of the enemy.

It was six o'clock: the battle had continued with unchanged fortune for three hours. The French, masters of La Haye Sainte, could never advance further into our position. They had gained the orchard of Hougoumont, but the château was still held by the British Guards, although its blazing roof and crumbling walls made its occupation rather the desperate stand of unflinching valor than the maintenance of an important position. The smoke which hung upon the field rolled in slow and heavy masses back upon the French lines, and gradually discovered to our view the entire of the army. We quickly perceived that a change was taking place in their position. The troops, which on their left stretched far beyond Hougoumont, were now moved nearer to the center. The attack upon the château seemed less vigorously supported, while the oblique direction of their right wing, which, pivoting upon Planchenoit, opposed a face to the Prussians, all denoted a change in their order of battle. It was now the hour when Napoleon, at last convinced that nothing but the carnage he could no longer support could destroy the unyielding ranks of British infantry; that although Hougoumont had been partially, La Haye Sainte completely won; that upon the right of the road the farm-houses Papelotte and La Haye were nearly surrounded by his troops, which with any other army must prove the forerunner of defeat, yet still the victory was beyond his grasp. The bold stratagems, whose success the experience of a life had proved, were here to be found powerless. The decisive maneuver of carrying one important point of the enemy's lines, of turning him upon the flank, or piercing him through the center, were here found impracticable. He might launch his avalanche of grape-shot, he might pour down his crashing columns of cavalry, he might send forth the iron storm of his brave infantry; but, though death in every shape heralded their approach, still were others found to fill the fallen ranks, and feed with their heart's blood the unslaked thirst for slaughter. Well might the gallant leader of this gallant host, as he watched the reckless onslaught of the untiring enemy, and looked upon the unflinching few who, bearing the proud badge of Britain, alone sustained the fight, well might he exclaim, "Night or Blucher!"

It was now seven o'clock, when a dark mass was seen to form upon the heights above the French center, and divide into three gigantic columns, of which the right occupied the Brussels road. These were the reserves, consisting of the Old and Young Guards, and amounting to twelve thousand—the *élite* of the French army—reserved by the Emperor for a great *coup de main*. These veterans of a hundred battles had been stationed, from the beginning of the day, inactive spectators of the fight; their hour was now come, and with a shout of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" which rose triumphantly over the din and crash of battle, they began their march. Meanwhile, aides-de-camp galloped along the lines, announcing the arrival of Grouchy, to reanimate the drooping spirits of the men; for, at last, a doubt of victory was breaking upon the minds of those who never before, in the most adverse hour of fortune, deemed *his* star could be set that led them on to glory.

"They are coming; the attack will be made on the center, my Lord," said Lord Fitzroy Somerset, as he directed his glass upon the column. Scarcely had he spoken, when the telescope fell from his hand, as his arm, shattered by a French bullet, fell motionless to his side.

"I see it," was the cool reply of the Duke, as he ordered the Guards to deploy into line, and lie down behind the ridge, which now the French artillery had found the range of, and were laboring at their guns. In front of them the Fifty-second, Seventy-first, and Ninety-fifth were formed; the artillery stationed above and partly upon the road, loaded with grape, and waited but the word to open.

It was an awful, a dreadful moment: the Prussian cannon thundered on our left, but so desperate was the French reistance, they made but little progress: the dark columns of the Guard had now commenced the ascent, and the artillery ceased their fire as the bayonets of the grenadiers showed themselves upon the slope. Then began that tremendous cheer from right to left of our line, which those who heard never can forget. It was the impatient, long-restrained burst of unslaked vengeance. With the instinct which valor teaches, they knew the hour of trial was

come; and that wild cry flew from rank to rank, echoing from the blood-stained walls of Hougoumont to the far-off valley of La Papelotte. "They come! they come!" was the cry; and the shout of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" mingled with the outburst of the British line.

Under an overwhelming shower of grape, to which succeeded a charge of cavalry of the Imperial Guard, the head of Ney's column fired its volley and advanced with the bayonet. The British artillery now opened at half range, and, although the plunging fire scathed and devastated the dark ranks of the Guard, on they came, Ney himself, on foot, at their head. Twice the leading division of that gallant column turned completely round, as the withering fire wasted and consumed them; but they were resolved to win.

Already they gained the crest of the hill, and the first line of the British were falling back before them. The artillery closes up; the flanking fire from the guns upon the road opens upon them; the head of their column breaks like a shell; the Duke seizes the moment, and advances on foot toward the ridge.

"Up, Guards, and at them!" he cried.

The hour of triumph and vengeance had arrived. In a moment the Guards were on their feet; one volley was poured in; the bayonets were brought to the charge; they closed upon the enemy: then was seen the most dreadful struggle that the history of all war can present. Furious with long-restrained passion, the Guards rushed upon the leading divisions; the Seventy-first, and Ninety-fifth, and Twenty-sixth overlapped them on the flanks. Their generals fell thickly on every side; Michel, Jamier, and Mallet are killed; Friant lies wounded upon the ground; Ney, his dress pierced and ragged with balls, shouts still to advance; but the leading files waver; they fall back; the supporting divisions thicken; confusion, panic succeeds; the British press down; the cavalry come galloping up to their assistance; and at last, pell-mell, overwhelmed and beaten, the French fall back upon the Old Guard. This was the decisive moment of the day—the Duke closed his glass, as he said,

"The field is won. Order the whole line to advance."

On they came, four deep, and poured like a torrent from the height.

"Let the Life Guards charge them," said the Duke; but every aide-de-camp on his staff was wounded, and I myself brought the order to Lord Uxbridge.

Lord Uxbridge had already anticipated his orders, and bore down with four regiments of heavy cavalry upon the French center. The Prussian artillery thundered upon their flank, and at their rear. The British bayonet was in their front; while a panic fear spread through their ranks, and the cry of "*Sauve qui peut!*" resounded on all sides. In vain Ney, the bravest of the brave; in vain Soult, Bertrand, Gourgaud, and Labedoyère, burst from the broken disorganized mass, and called on them to stand fast. A battalion of the Old Guard, with Cambronne at their head, alone obeyed the summons; forming into square, they stood between the pursuers and their prey, offering themselves a sacrifice to the tarnished honor of their arms: to the order to surrender they answered with a cry of defiance; and as our cavalry, flushed and elated with victory, rode round their bristling ranks, no quailing look, no craven spirit was there. The Emperor himself endeavored to repair the disaster; he rode with lightning speed hither and thither, commanding, ordering, nay imploring too; but already the night was falling, the confusion became each moment more inextricable, and the effort was a fruitless one. A regiment of the Guards and two batteries were in reserve behind Planchenoit: he threw them rapidly into position; but the overwhelming impulse of flight drove the mass upon them, and they were carried away upon the torrent of the beaten army. No sooner did the Emperor see this his last hope desert him, than he dismounted from his horse, and, drawing his sword, threw himself into a square, which the first regiment of Chasseurs of the Old Guard had formed with a remnant of the battalion. Jerome followed him, as he called out,

"You are right, brother: here should perish all who bear the name of Bonaparte."

The same moment the Prussian light artillery rend the ranks asunder, and the cavalry charge down upon the scattered fragments. A few of his staff, who never left him, place the Emperor upon a horse and fly through the death-dealing artillery and musketry. A squadron of the Life Guards, to which I had attached myself, came up at the moment, and as Blucher's hussars rode madly here and there, where so lately the crowd of staff officers had denoted the presence of Napoleon, expressed their rage and disappointment in curses and cries of vengeance.

Cambronne's battalion stood yet unbroken, and seemed to defy every attack that was brought against them. To the second

summons to surrender they replied as indignantly as at first; and Vivian's brigade was ordered to charge them. A cloud of British horse bore down on every face of the devoted square; but firm as in their hour of victory, the heroes of Marengo never quailed; and twice the bravest blood of Britain recoiled, baffled and dismayed. There was a pause for some minutes, and even then, as we surveyed our broken and blood-stained squadrons, a cry of admiration burst from our ranks at the gallant bearing of that glorious infantry. Suddenly the tramp of approaching cavalry was heard; I turned my head and saw two squadrons of the Second Life Guards. The officer who led them on was bareheaded; his long dark hair streaming wildly behind him and upon his pale features, to which not even the headlong enthusiasm of battle had lent one touch of color. He rode straight to where I was standing, his dark eyes fixed upon me with a look so fierce, so penetrating, that I could not look away: the features, save in this respect, had almost a look of idiocy. It was Hammersley.

"Ha!" he cried at last, "I have sought you out the entire day, but in vain. It is not yet too late. Give me your hand, boy. You once called on me to follow *you*, and I did not refuse; I trust you'll do the like by *me*. Is it not so?"

A terrible perception of his meaning shot through my mind as I clasped his clay-cold hand in mine, and for a moment I did not speak.

"I hoped for better than this," said he, bitterly, and as a glance of withering scorn flashed from his eye. "I did trust that he who was preferred before me was at least not a coward."

As the word fell from his lips I nearly leaped from my saddle, and mechanically raised my sabre to cleave him on the spot.

"Then follow me!" shouted he, pointing with his sword to the glistening ranks before us.

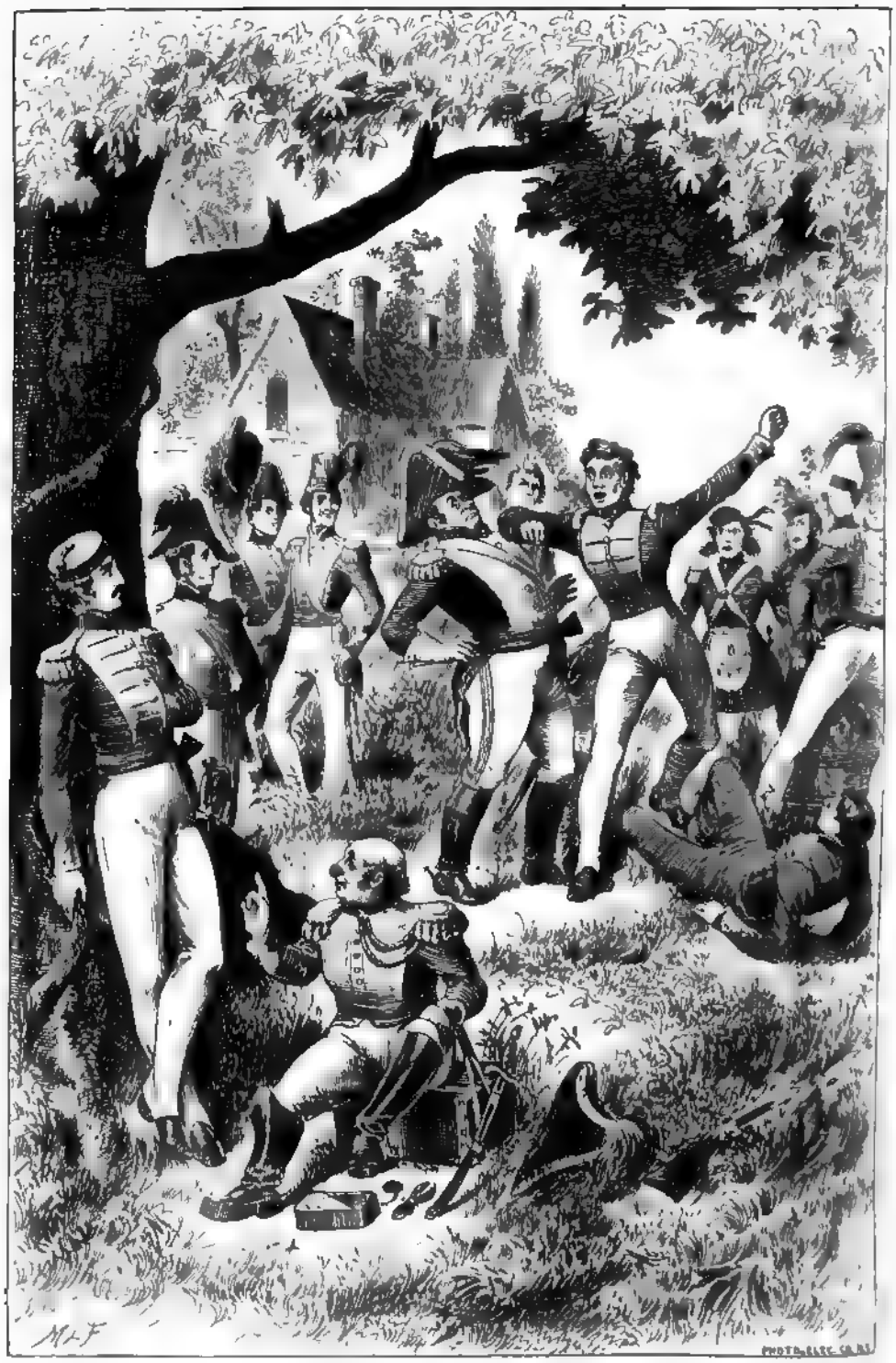
"Come on!" said I, with a voice hoarse with passion, while, burying my spurs in my horse's flanks, I sprang on a full length before him, and bore down upon the enemy. A loud shout, a deafening volley, the agonizing cry of the wounded and the dying, were all I heard, as my horse, rearing madly upward, plunged twice into the air, and then fell dead upon the earth, crushing me beneath his cumbrous weight, lifeless and insensible.

* * * * *

The day was breaking; the cold, gray light of morning was struggling through the misty darkness, when I once more recovered my consciousness. There are moments in life when memory can so suddenly conjure up the whole past before us, that there is scarcely time for a doubt ere the disputed reality is palpable to our senses. Such was this to me. One hurried glance upon the wide, bleak plain before me, and every circumstance of the battle-field was present to my recollection. The dismounted guns, the broken wagons, the heaps of dead or dying, the straggling parties who on foot or horseback traversed the field, and the dark litters which carried the wounded, all betokened the sad evidences of the preceding day's battle.

Close around me where I lay the ground was marked with the bodies of our cavalry, intermixed with the soldiers of the Old Guard. The broad brow and stalwart chest of the Saxon lay bleaching beside the bronzed and bearded warrior of Gaul, while the torn-up ground attested the desperation of that struggle which closed the day.

As my eye ranged over this harrowing spectacle, a dreadful anxiety shot through me as I asked myself whose had been the victory. A certain confused impression of flight and of pursuit remained in my mind: but, at the moment, the circumstances of my own position in the early part of the day increased the difficulty of reflection, and left me in a state of intense and agonizing uncertainty. Although not wounded, I had been so crushed by my fall that it was not without pain I got upon my legs. I soon perceived that the spot around me had not yet been visited by those vultures of the battle-field who strip alike the dead and dying. The distance of the place from where the great conflict of the battle had occurred was probably the reason; and now, as the straggling sunbeams fell upon the earth, I could trace the helmet of the Enniskilleners, or the tall bearskin of the Scotch Grays, lying in thick confusion where the steel cuirass and long sword of the French dragoons showed the fight had been hottest. As I turned my eyes hither and thither I could see no living thing near me. In every attitude of struggling agony they lay around; some buried beneath their horses, some bathed in blood, some, with clenched hands and darting eye-balls, seemed struggling even in death: but all was still—not a word, not a sigh, not a groan was there. I was turning to leave the spot, and, uncertain which way to direct my steps, looked once more around, when my glance rested upon the pale and marble features of one who, even in that moment of doubt and difficulty,



"TEAR AN AGES! DON'T HOWLD ME—THAT'S HIMSELF—DEVIL A ONE ELSE." (P. 1027.)

was no mistaking. His coat, torn
y open, was grasped in either hand,
his breast was shattered with balls,
athed in gore. Gashed and mutilat-
he lay, still the features wore no trace
ffering; cold, pale, motionless, but
the tranquil look of sleep, his eyelids
closed, and his half-parted lips seem-
to quiver in life. I knelt down be-
m; I took his hand in mine; I bent
id whispered his name; I placed my
ipon his heart, where even still the
iod was warm—but he was dead.
Hammersley. His was a gallant soul;
s I looked upon his blood-stained
my tears fell fast and hot upon his
o think how far I had myself been
ise of a life blighted in its hope, and
a like his.

CHAPTER CXXI.

BRUSSELS.

E more I would entreat my reader's
ence for the prolixity of a narrative
has grown beneath my hands to a
I had never intended. This shall,
er, be the last time for either the of-
r the apology. My story is now soon
ded.

r wandering about for some time,
ain which way to take, I at length
d the Charleroi road, now blocked
rriages and wagons conveying the
ed toward Brussels. Here I learnt,
first time, that we had gained the
and heard of the total annihilation
French army, and the downfall of
mperor. On arriving at the farm-
of Mont St. Jean, I found a number
ers, whose wounds prevented their
panying the army in its forward
ent. One of them, with whom I
ightly acquainted, informed me that
l Dashwood had spent the greater
f the night upon the field in search
and that my servant, Mike, was in a
f distraction at my absence that bor-
on insanity. While he was speak-
burst of laughter and the tones of a
membered voice behind attracted my
ion.

ade a very good thing of it, upon my
A dressing-case—not gold, you know,
lver-gilt—a dozen knives, with blood-
handles, and a little coffee-pot, with
nperial arms—not to speak of three
ed Naps in a green silk purse—Lord!
inds me of the Peninsula. Do you
those Prussians are mere barbarians
—haven't a notion of civilized war. Bless
your heart, my fellows in the Legion would
have ransacked the whole coach, from the
boot to the sword-case, in half the time
they took to cut down the coachman."

"The Major! as I live," said I. "How
goes it, Major?"

"Eh, Charley, when did you turn up?
Delighted to see you. They told me you
were badly wounded, or killed, or some-
thing of that kind; but I should have paid
the little debt to your executors all the
same."

"All the same, no doubt, Major; but
where, in Heaven's name, did you fall up-
on that mine of pillage you have just been
talking of?"

"In the Emperor's carriage, to be sure,
boy. While the Duke was watching all
day the advance of Ney's columns, and
keeping an anxious look-out for the Prus-
sians, I sat in a window in this old farm-
house, and never took my eye off the gar-
den at Planchenoit. I saw the imperial
carriage there in the morning—it was there
also at noon—and they never put the
horses to it till past seven in the evening.
The roads were very heavy, and the crowd
was great. I judged the pace couldn't be
a fast one; and with four of the Ennis-
killeners I charged it like a man. The
Prussians, however, had the start of us;
and if they hadn't thought, from my seat
on horseback and my general appearance,
that I was Lord Uxbridge, I should have
got but a younger son's portion. How-
ever, I got in first, filled my pockets with
a few little *souvenirs* of the Emperor, and
then, laying my hands upon what was
readiest, got out in time to escape being
shot; for two of Blucher's hussars, think-
ing I must be the Emperor, fired at me
through the window."

"What an escape you had!"

"Hadn't I though? Fortunate, too,
my Enniskilleners saw the whole thing;
for I intend to make the circumstance the
ground of an application for a pension.
Harkye, Charley, don't say anything about
the coffee-pot and the knives. The Duke,
you know, has strange notions of his own
on these matters. But isn't that your fel-
low fighting his way yonder?"

"Tear an ages! don't howld me—that's
himself—devil a one else."

This exclamation came from Mickey
Free, who, with his dress torn and dishev-
eled, his eyes bloodshot and strained, was
upsetting and elbowing all before him, as
he made his way toward me through the
crowd.

"Take that fellow to the guard-house!

Lay hold of him, sergeant. Knock him down! Who is the scoundrel?"

Such were the greetings he met with on every side. Regardless of everything and everybody, he burst his way through the dense mass.

"O murther! O Mary! O Moses! Is he safe here after all?"

The poor fellow could say no more, but burst into a torrent of tears. A roar of laughter around him soon, however, turned the current of his emotions; when, dashing the scalding drops from his eyelids, he glared fiercely like a tiger on every side.

"Ye're laughing at me, are ye?" cried he, "bekase I love the hand that fed me, and the master that stood to me. But let us see now which of us two has the stoutest heart; you with your grin on you, or myself with the salt tears on my face."

As he spoke, he sprang upon them like a madman, striking right and left at everything before him. Down they went beneath his blows, leveled with the united strength of energy and passion, till at length, rushing upon him in numbers, he was overpowered and thrown to the ground. It was with some difficulty I accomplished his rescue; for his enemies felt by no means assured how far his amicable propensities for the future could be relied upon; and, indeed, Mike himself had a most constitutional antipathy to binding himself by any pledge. With some persuasion, however, I reconciled all parties; and having, by the kindness of a brother-officer, provided myself with a couple of troop horses, I mounted, and set out for Brussels, followed by Mickey, who had effectually cured his auditory of any tendency to laughter at his cost.

As I rode up to the Belle Vue, I saw Sir George Dashwood in the window. He was speaking to the Ambassador, Lord Clancarty; but the moment he caught my eye, hurried down to meet me.

"Charley, safe—safe, my boy! Now am I really happy. The glorious day had been one of sorrow to me for the rest of my life had anything happened to you. Come up with me at once; I have more than one friend here who longs to thank you."

So saying, he hurried me along; and, before I could well remember where I was, introduced me to a number of persons in the saloon.

"Ah! very happy to know you, sir," said Lord Clancarty; "perhaps we had better walk this way. My friend Dashwood has explained to me the very pressing reasons there are for this step; and I, for my part, see no objection."

"What, in Heaven's name, can he mean!" thought I, as he stopped short, expecting me to say something, while, in utter confusion, I smiled, simpered, and muttered some common-places.

"Love and war, sir," resumed the Ambassador, "very admirable associates, and you certainly have contrived to couple them most closely together. A long attachment, I believe?"

"Yes, sir, a very long attachment," stammered I, not knowing which of us was about to become insane.

"A very charming person, indeed; I have seen the lady," replied his Lordship, as he opened the door of a small room, and beckoned me to follow. The table was covered with paper and materials for writing; but before I had time to ask for any explanation of this unaccountable mystery, he added, "Oh, I was forgetting; this must be witnessed: wait one moment."

With these words he left the room, while I, amazed and thunderstruck, vacillating between fear and hope, trembling lest the delusive glimmering of happiness should give way at every moment, and yet totally unable to explain by any possible supposition how fortune could so far have favored me.

While yet I stood hesitating and uncertain, the door opened, and the Senhora entered. She looked a little pale, though not less beautiful than ever; and her features wore a slight trace of seriousness, which rather heightened than took from the character of her loveliness.

"I heard you had come, Chevalier," said she, "and so I ran down to shake hands with you. We may not meet again for some time."

"How so, Senhora? You are not going to leave us, I trust?"

"Then you have not seen Fred. Oh, I forgot, you know nothing of our plans."

"Here we are at last," said the Ambassador, as he came in, followed by Sir George, Power, and two other officers. "Ah, *ma belle*, how fortunate to find you here! I assure you it is a matter of no small difficulty to get people together at such a time as this."

"Charley, my dear friend," cried Power, "I scarcely hoped to have had a shake hands with you ere I left."

"Do, Fred, tell me what all this means? I am in a perfect maze of doubt and difficulty, and cannot comprehend a word I hear about me."

"Faith, my boy, I have little time for explanation. The man who was at Waterloo yesterday, is to be married to-morrow,

o sail for India in a week, has quite
gh upon his hands."
olonel Power, you will please to put
signature here," said Lord Clancarty,
ssing himself to me.
f you will allow me," said Fred, "I
ther represent myself."
not this the Colonel, then? Why,
nd it, I have been wishing him joy
t quarter of an hour."
urst of laughter from the whole
in which it was pretty evident I took
t, followed this announcement.
nd so you are not Colonel Power?
ing to be married either?"
mmered out something, while, over-
ed with confusion, I stooped down
the paper. Scarcely had I done so,
a renewed burst of laughter broke
he party.
othing but blunders, upon my soul,"
e Ambassador, as he handed the pa-
m one to another.
t was my confusion to discover that,
l of Charles O'Malley, I had written
me Lucy Dashwood. I could bear
re. The laughing and raillery of
ends came upon my wounded and ir-
l feelings like the most poignant sar-
I seized my cap and rushed from the
Desirous of escaping from all that
me, anxious to bury my agitated and
ted thoughts in solitude and quiet, I
l the first door before me, and, see-
n empty and unoccupied room, threw
upon a sofa, and buried my head
my hands. Oh, how often had the
om of happiness passed within my
but still glided from my grasp!
often had I beheld the goal I aimed
it were before me, and the next mo-
all the bleak reality of my evil for-
vas lowering around me.
h, Lucy, Lucy!" I exclaimed aloud,
for you and a few words carelessly
n, I had never trod that path of am-
, whose end has been the wreck of all
ppiness. But for you, I had never
so fondly; I had never filled my
with one image which, excluding
other thought, leaves no pleasure but
alone. Yes, Lucy, but for you I
l have gone tranquilly down the
n of life with nought of grief or care,
uch as are inseparable from the pass-
hances of mortality: loved, perhaps,
ared for by some one who would have
d it no disgrace to have linked her
ne to my own. But for you, and I
ever been—"
soldier, you would say," whispered a
oice, as a light hand gently touched
my shoulder. "I had come," continued she,
"to thank you for a gift no gratitude can
repay,—my father's life; but, truly, I did
not think to hear the words you have spo-
ken; nor, having heard them, can I feel
their justice. No, Mr. O'Malley, deeply
grateful as I am to you for the service you
once rendered myself, bound as I am, by
every tie of thankfulness, by the greater
one to my father, yet do I feel that in the
impulse I had given to your life, if so be
that to me you owe it, I have done more
to repay my debt to you, than by all the
friendship, all the esteem I owe you; if,
indeed, by my means, you became a sol-
dier, if my few and random words raised
within your breast that fire of ambition
which has been your beacon-light to honor
and to glory, then am I indeed proud."

"Alas, alas! Lucy—Miss Dashwood I
would say—forgive me if I know not the
very words I utter. How has my career ful-
filled the promise that gave it birth? For
you, and you only, to gain your affection,
to win your heart, I became a soldier;
hardship, danger, even death itself were
courted by me, supported by the one
thought that you had cared for, or had
pitied me; and now, and now—"

"And now," said she, while her eyes
beamed upon me with a very flood of ten-
derness, "is it nothing that in my woman's
heart I have glowed with pride at triumphs
I could read of, but dared not share in?
Is it nothing that you have lent to my
hours of solitude and of musing the fervor
of that career, the maddening enthusiasm
of that glorious path my sex denied me?
I have followed you in my thoughts across
the burning plains of the Peninsula,
through the long hours of the march in
the dreary nights, even to the battle-field.
I have thought of you; I have dreamed of
you; I have prayed for you."

"Alas! Lucy, but not loved me."

The very words, as I spoke them, sank
with a despairing cadence upon my heart.
Her hand, which had fallen upon mine,
trembled violently; I pressed my lips upon
it, but she moved it not. I dared to look
up; her head was turned away, but her
heaving bosom betrayed her emotion.

"No, no, Lucy," cried I, passionately,
"I will not deceive myself; I ask for more
than you can give me. Farewell!"

Now, and for the last time, I pressed
her hand once more to my lips; my hot
tears fell fast upon it. I turned to go,
and threw one last look upon her. Our
eyes met—I cannot say what it was—but
in a moment the whole current of my
thoughts was changed; her look was bent

upon me beaming with softness and affection, her hand gently pressed my own, and her lips murmured my name.

The door burst open at this moment, and Sir George Dashwood appeared. Lucy turned one fleeting look upon her father, and fell fainting into my arms.

"God bless you, my boy!" said the old general, as he hurriedly wiped a tear from his eye; "I am now, indeed, a happy father."

CHAPTER CXXII.

CONCLUSION.

* * * * *

THE sun had set about half an hour. Already were the dusky shadows blending with the faint twilight, as on a lovely July evening we entered the little village of Portumna:—we, I say; for Lucy was beside me. For the last few miles of the way I had spoken little; thoughts of the many times I had traveled that same road, in how many moods, occupied my mind; and although, as we flew rapidly along, some well-known face would every now and then present itself, I had but time for the recognition ere we were passed. Arousing myself from my reverie, I was pointing out to Lucy certain well-known spots in the landscape, and directing her attention to places with the names of which she had been for some time familiar, when suddenly a loud shout rent the air, and the next moment the carriage was surrounded by hundreds of country people, some of whom brandished blazing pine torches; others carried rude banners in their hands; but all testified the most fervent joy as they bade us welcome. The horses were speedily unharnessed, and their places occupied by a crowd of every age and sex, who hurried us along through the straggling street of the village, now a perfect blaze of bonfires.

Mounds of turf, bog-fir, and tar-barrels sent up their ruddy blaze, while hundreds of wild, but happy faces, flitted around and through them—now dancing merrily in chorus; now plunging madly into the midst of the fire, and scattering the red embers on every side. Pipers were there too, mounted upon cars or turf-kishes; even the very roof-tops rang out their merry notes; the ensigns of the little fishing-craft waved in the breeze, and seemed to feel the general joy around them; while over the door of the village inn stood a brilliantly lighted transparency, representing the head of the *O'Mulleys* holding a very scantily robed young lady by the tips of the fingers; but whether this damsel was intended to represent the genius of the west, or my wife, I did not venture to inquire.

If the welcome were rude, assuredly it was a hearty one. Kind wishes and blessings poured in on every side, and even our own happiness took a brighter coloring from the beaming looks around us. The scene was wild: the lurid glare of the red torchlight, the frantic gestures, the maddening shouts, the forked flames rising amidst the dark shadows of the little hamlet, had something strange and almost unearthly in their effect; but Lucy showed no touch of fear: it is true she grasped my hand a little closer, but her fair cheek glowed with pleasure, and her eye brightened as she looked; and, as the rich light fell upon her beauteous features, how many a blessing, heartfelt and deep, how many a word of fervent praise was spoken.

"Ah! then, the Lord be good to you; it's yourself has the darling blue eyes. Look at them, Mary; ain't they like the blossoms on a peacock's tail?—Musha, may sorrow never put a crease in that beautiful cheek! The saints watch over you! for your mouth is like a moss-rose. Be good to her, yer honor, for she's a raal gem: devil fear you, Mr. Charles, but you'd have a beauty."

We wended our way slowly, the crowd ever thickening around us, until we reached the market-place. Here the procession came to a stand, and I could perceive, by certain efforts around me, that some endeavor was making to enforce silence.

"Whisht there; hould your prate; be still, Paddy. Tear an ages, Molly Blake, don't be holding me that way; let us hear his reverence: put him up on the barrel: haven't you got a chair for the priest? Run, and bring a table out of Mat Haley's. Here, father—here, your reverence;—take care, will you?—you'll have the holy man in the blaze!"

By this time I could perceive that my worthy old friend, Father Rush, was in the midst of the mob, with what appeared to be a written oration, as long as the tail of a kite, between his hands.

"Be aisy, there, ye savages—who's tearing the back of my neck?—howld me up straight—steady, now—hem!"

"Take the laste taste in life to wet your lips, your riverence," said a kind voice, while at the same moment a smoking tumbler of what seemed to be punch appeared on the heads of the crowd.

"Thank ye, Judy," said the father, as he drained the cup. "Howld the light

up higher; I can't read my speech; there now; be quiet, will ye? Here goes. Peter, stand to me now and give me the word."

This admonition was addressed to a figure on a barrel behind the priest, who, as well as the imperfect light would permit me to descry, was the coadjutor of the parish, Peter Nolan. Silence being perfectly established, Father Rush began:

"When Mars, the God of war, on high,
Of battles first did think,
He girt his sword upon his thigh,
And—

And—what is't, Peter?"

"And mixed a drop of drink."

"And mixed a drop of drink," quoth Father Rush, with great emphasis; when scarcely were the words spoken than a loud shout of laughter showed him his mistake, and he overturned upon the luckless curate the full vial of his wrath.

"What is it you mean, Father Peter? I'm ashamed of ye; faith it's maybe yourself, not Mars, you are speaking of."

The roar of merriment around prevented me hearing what passed; but I could see by Peter's gestures—for it was too dark to see his face—that he was expressing deep sorrow for the mistake. After a little time, order was again established, and Father Rush resumed:

"But love drove battles from his head
And sick of wounds and scars,
To Venus bright he knelt, and said—

And said—and said; what the blazes did he say?"

"I'll make you Mrs. Mars,"

shouted Peter, loud enough to be heard.

"Bad luck to you, Peter Nolan, it's yourself's the ruin of me this blessed night. Here have I come four miles with my speech in my pocket, '*per imbres et ignes.*'" Here the crowd crossed themselves devoutly. "Ay, just so; and he spoilt it for me entirely." At the earnest entreaty, however, of the crowd, Father Rush, with renewed caution to his unhappy prompter, again returned to the charge:

"Thus love compelled the god to yield
And seek for purer joys;
He laid aside his helm and shield,
And took—

Took—took—"

"And took to corduroys,"

cried Father Nolan.

This time, however, the good priest's patience could endure no more, and he leveled a blow at his luckless colleague, which, missing his aim, lost him his own balance, and brought him down from his eminence upon the heads of the mob.

Scarcely had I recovered the perfect convulsion of laughter into which this scene had thrown me, when the broad brim of Father Nolan's hat appeared at the window of the carriage. Before I had time to address him, he took it reverently from his head, disclosing in the act the ever-memorable features of Master Frank Webber!

"What! Eh!—can it be?" said I.

"It is surely not——" said Lucy, hesitating at the name.

"Your aunt, Miss Judy Macan, no more than the Rev. Peter Nolan, I assure you; though, I confess, it has cost me much more to personate the latter character than the former, and the reward by no means so tempting."

Here poor Lucy blushed deeply at the remembrance of the scene alluded to; and, anxious to turn the conversation, I asked by what stratagem he had succeeded to the functions of the worthy Peter?

"At the cost of twelve tumblers of the strongest punch ever brewed at the O'Malley Arms. The good father gave in only ten minutes before the oration began, and I had barely time to change my dress and mount the barrel, without a moment's preparation."

The procession once more resumed its march, and hurried along through the town; we soon reached the avenue. Here fresh preparations for welcoming us had also been made; but, regardless of blazing tar-barrels and burning logs, the reckless crowd pressed madly on, their wild cheers waking the echoes as they went. We soon reached the house, but with a courtesy which even the humblest and poorest native of this country is never devoid of, the preparations of noise and festivity had not extended to the precincts of the dwelling. With a tact which those of higher birth and older blood might be proud of, they limited the excesses of their reckless and careless merriment to their own village: so that, as we approached the terrace, all was peaceful, still, and quiet.

I lifted Lucy from the carriage, and, passing my arm around her, was assisting her to mount the steps, when a bright gleam of moonlight burst forth, and lit up the whole scene. It was, indeed, an im-

pressive one. Among the assembled hundreds there who stood bare-headed, beneath the cold moonlight, not a word was now spoken—not a whisper heard. I turned from the lawn, where the tall beech-trees were throwing their gigantic shadows, to where the river, peering at intervals through the foliage, was flowing on its silvery track, plashing amid the tall flaggers that lined its banks—all were familiar, all were dear to me from childhood. How doubly were they so now! I lifted up my eyes toward the door, and what was my surprise at the object before them! Seated in a large chair was an old man, whose white hair, flowing in straggling masses upon his neck and shoulders, stirred with the night air; his hands rested upon his knees, and his eyes, turned slightly upward, seemed to seek for some one he found it difficult to recognize. Changed as he was by time, heavily as years had done their work upon him, the stern features were not to be mistaken; but, as I looked, he called out, in a voice whose unshaken firmness seemed to defy the touch of time,

"Charley O'Malley! come here, my boy. Bring her to me, till I bless you both. Come here, Lucy: I may call you so. Come here, my children. I have tried to live on to see this day, when the head of an old house comes back with honor, with fame, and with fortune, to dwell amidst his own people in the old home of his fathers."

The old man bent above us, his white hair falling upon the fair locks of her who knelt beside him, and pressed his cold and quivering hand within her own.

"Yes, Lucy," said I, as I led her within the house, "this is home."

Here now ends my story. The patient reader who has followed me so far, deserves at my hands that I should not trespass upon his kindness one moment beyond the necessity; if, however, any lurking interest may remain for some of those who have accompanied me through this my history, it may be as well that I should say a few words further, ere they disappear forever.

Power went to India immediately after his marriage, distinguished himself repeatedly in the Burmese war, and finally rose to a high command that he this moment holds, with honor to himself and advantage to his country.

O'Shaughnessy, on half-pay, wanders about the Continent; passing his summers on the Rhine, his winters at Florence or Geneva. Known to and by everybody, his interest in the service keeps him *au courant* to every change and regulation, rendering him an invaluable companion to all to whom an army list is inaccessible. He is the same good fellow he ever was, and adds to his many excellent qualities the additional one of being the only man who can make a bull in French!

Monsoon, the Major, when last I saw him, was standing on the pier at Calais, endeavoring, with a cheap telescope, to make out the Dover cliffs, from a nearer prospect of which certain little family circumstances might possibly debar him. He recognized me in a moment, and held out his hand, while his eye twinkled with its ancient drollery.

"Charley, my son, how goes it? delighted to see you. What a pity I did not meet you yesterday! Had a little dinner at Crillon's. Harding, Vivian, and a few others. They all wished for you; 'pon my life they did."

"Civil, certainly," thought I, "as I have not the honor of being known to them."

"You are at Meurice's," resumed he; "a very good house, but give you bad wine, if they don't know you. They know me," added he, in a whisper; "never try any tricks upon me. I'll just drop in upon you at six."

"It is most unfortunate, Major; I can't have the pleasure you speak of; we start in half an hour."

"Never mind, Charley, never mind; another time. By-the-by, now I think of it, don't you remember something of a ten-pound note you owe me?"

"As well as I remember, Major, the circumstance was reversed: you are the debtor."

"Upon my life you are right: how droll! No matter, let me have the ten, and I'll give you a check for the whole."

The Major thrust his tongue into his cheek as he spoke, gave another leer, pocketed the note, and sauntered down the pier muttering something to himself about King David and greenhorns; but how they were connected I could not precisely overhear.

Baby Blake, or Mrs. Sparks, to call her by her more fitting appellation, is as handsome as ever, and not less good-humored and light-hearted, her severest trials being her ineffectual efforts to convert Sparks into something like a man for Galway.

Last of all, Mickey Free. Mike remains attached to our fortune firmly, as at first he opened his career; the same gay, rollicksome Irishman, making songs, making love, and occasionally making punch, he spends his days and his nights pretty much

as he was wont to do some thirty years ago. He obtains an occasional leave of absence for a week or so, but for what precise purpose, or with what exact object, I have never been completely able to ascertain. I have heard it as true, that a very fascinating companion and a most agreeable gentleman frequents a certain oyster-house in Dublin, called Burton Bindon's. I have also been told of a distinguished foreigner, whose black moustache and broken English were the admiration of Cheltenham for the last two winters. I greatly fear from the high tone of the conversation in the former, and for the taste in continental characters in the latter resort, that I could fix upon the individual whose convivial and socials gifts have won so much of their esteem and admiration; but were I to run on thus, I should recur to every character of my story, with each and all of whom you have, doubtless, grown well wearied: so here for the last time, and with every kind wish, I say—adieu!

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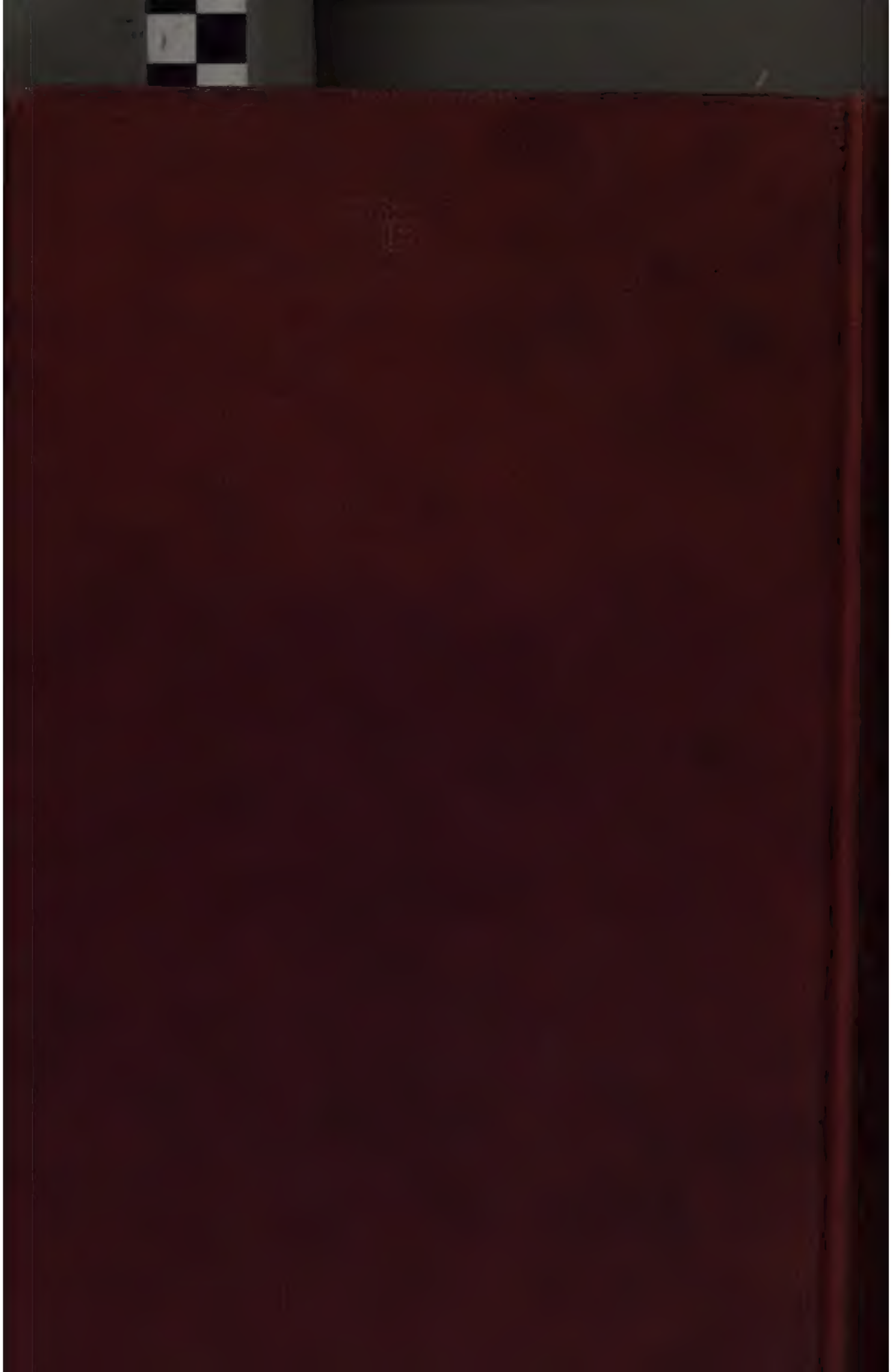
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